



Whitehorse City Council

AGENDA

Council Meeting

on

Monday 10 November 2025 at 7:00 PM

**To be held in the
Council Chamber
Nunawading Civic Centre**

Members: Cr Andrew Davenport Mayor
 Cr Prue Cutts Deputy Mayor
 Cr Peter Allan
 Cr Blair Barker
 Cr Daniel Griffiths
 Cr Jarrod Gunn
 Cr Kirsten Langford
 Cr Jason Martin
 Cr Kieran Simpson
 Cr Ben Stennett
 Cr Hayley Weller

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AGENDA

1 Welcome

Prayer for Council

We give thanks, O God, for the Men and Women of the past whose generous devotion to the common good has been the making of our City.

Grant that our own generation may build worthily on the foundations they have laid.

Direct our minds that all we plan and determine, is for the wellbeing of our City.

Amen.

Acknowledgement of Country

Whitehorse City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of the land we are meeting on and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders from communities who may be present today.

2 Apologies

3 Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

4 Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of the Council and Confidential Council Meeting 27 October 2025

RECOMMENDATION

That the minutes of the Council and Confidential Council Meeting 27 October 2025 be confirmed.

5 Urgent Business

6 Requests to Speak

7 Public Question Time

8 Petitions

8.1 Objecting to the Heritage Listing of 355-357 Whitehorse Road Nunawading

A petition was received on the 27 October 2025. The petition includes 100 signatures.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Notes
 - a) the petition
 - b) On 27 October 2025 resolved not to pursue application of the Heritage Overlay to the property at 355-357 Whitehorse Road, Nunawading.
2. Notifies the Head Petitioner of the outcome of this resolution.

9 Notices of Motion

9.1 Notice of Motion - Whitehorse Live Music Festival

That Council seek an Officers report on cost of delivering a multi-day, multi-venue Whitehorse Music Festival

10 Council Reports

10.1 Contract 30659 - Mirrabooka Reserve Pavilion Redevelopment Tender Evaluation Report

Department Project Delivery and Assets
Director Infrastructure

Attachment

SUMMARY

This report seeks Council approval to accept a tender for Contract 30659, Mirrabooka Reserve Pavilion Redevelopment.

The Tender Evaluation Report is provided as in Confidential Attachment 1.

Following a select Tender process utilising the Victorian Government Construction Supplier Register (CSR) and completion of a thorough evaluation and assessment process, the recommendation is made to accept a tender for the construction Contract for Mirrabooka Reserve Pavilion Redevelopment project.

The tender process, negotiations and evaluation of submissions was completed in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy 2021-2025.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Accepts the Tender for Contract 30659 Mirrabooka Pavilion Redevelopment received from Melbcon Pty Ltd (ABN 89 094 370 457) of 333 Maroondah Hwy, Croydon VIC 3136, trading as Melbcon Pty Ltd, for the tendered amount of \$5,079,944 excluding GST; as part of the total expected project expenditure of \$7,585,938 excluding GST; and
2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer or delegate to sign the necessary Contract documentation for Contract 30659 Mirrabooka Pavilion Redevelopment

KEY MATTERS

The purpose of Contract 30659 is to appoint a Head Contractor to demolish the existing sporting pavilion and construct a new sporting pavilion containing six change rooms (multi-configurable) and associated amenities, accessible change spaces, umpire changing rooms, first aid room, storage spaces, multi-purpose room, community meeting room and kitchen / kiosk servery.

DISCUSSION, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS

Background

The existing Mirrabooka Reserve pavilion cannot provide the require level of service for the growing user clubs. The building has reached an age where it requires increasing maintenance and does not support women and gender diverse participants. The Mirrabooka Pavilion Redevelopment project is included in the 10-year Capital Works Plan and supported by State and Federal grant

10.1 (cont)

funding contributions that will provide improved amenity for the future precinct demands.

The playing fields will remain operational for use during the construction period for both winter and summer sports. Temporary amenities are being provided for sporting club use during the construction phase.

On 3 March 2025, Council considered the project and resolved the following regarding the budget allocation to this project:

“That Council:

- 1. Endorses the Mirrabooka Reserve Pavilion Redevelopment as outlined in this report with an estimated Total Project cost of \$7.8 million;*
- 2. Allocates an additional \$0.8 million to Council’s contribution to the Mirrabooka Reserve Pavilion Redevelopment as part of the 2025/26 Budget development process; and*
- 3. Endorses the Mirrabooka Reserve Pavilion Redevelopment project to progress to tendering for construction mid 2025.*

Carried Unanimously”

A select tender process was undertaken inviting bids from contractors listed on the Victorian Government Construction Supplier Register (CSR).

Officers selected tenderers that best suited the project requirements. Contractors provided demonstrated experience delivering projects of a similar nature, ensuring quality, capability and value for money.

The tender evaluation process incorporated input from subject matter experts, including internal Council departments, Project Architect, Consulting Engineers and the Project Cost Planner.

In accordance with the Procurement Plan:

- Seven pre-qualified Contractors were selected from the CSR to tender for the project.
- Tenderers were invited on 07 August 2025 via Council’s e-tender portal, and submissions closed on 03 September 2025
- Five Contractors provided submissions
- All five Tenders were evaluated against the assessment criteria approved within the Procurement Plan.

Tenders were evaluated against the following criteria aligned with Council’s Procurement Policy:

- The Tender Offer (Financial)
- Capability
- Credibility
- Local Content
- Social and Environmental Sustainability and,
- Occupational Health & Safety, Equal Opportunity, and Business Viability (Pass/Fail).

10.1 (cont)

Consultation

Representatives from the sporting clubs, as well as internal Council stakeholders and community members have been consulted during the pavilion design process.

A Project Working Group (PWG) was formed comprising the tenant clubs, the architect and Council Officers from the Leisure and Recreation Services and the Buildings Project Management teams. The tenant club representatives have provided significant input throughout the development of the design and planning stages.

Funding bodies have been notified of the project progress via milestone reporting updates, required under the executed agreements securing grant contributions.

Community information will be provided regarding the site construction activities.

Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Report Details

Strategic Alignment	Strategic Direction 4 - 'Our Built Environment, Movement and Public Places' The project supports the following objectives within the above strategic direction: • Objective 1: Assets, facilities, and urban design of a quality that provides the highest levels of utility and enhances the connection between the built natural, heritage and social environments; and • Objective 2: Foster development that has access to a range of facilities services and amenities to meet future community needs.
Financial and Resource Implications	All financial or resource implications arising from the recommendation contained in this report are included in Confidential Attachment 1. The recommendation is within the available budget. The budget includes a Federal Government Grant contribution of \$2,000,000 a State Government Grant contribution of \$3,000,000 and a Council; contribution of \$2,800,000 resulting in a total project budget of \$7,800,000 (excl GST). In addition to this Contract, there is provision within the overall project budget for temporary amenities and early works, as well as authority fees and a sum for rectification works to the access road which is likely to be damaged by heavy truck movements during the construction phase.
Legislative and Risk Implications	There are no legal or risk implications arising from the recommendation contained in this report.

10.1 (cont)

Equity, Inclusion, and Human Rights Considerations	It is considered that the subject matter does not raise any human rights issues.
Community Engagement	Officers have consulted widely on this project with updates published through the project page . Officers have also hosted a project working group including which includes key stakeholder representatives. Community information will be provided regarding the construction activities.
Innovation and Continuous Improvement	The pavilion design incorporates a number of multi-use and multi-purpose spaces to enable high levels of utilisation, including use by groups other than the main tenants. The procurement process included a post tender negotiation process and a Best and Final Offer was requested.
Collaboration	No collaboration was required for this report.
Conflict of Interest	The <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> requires members of Council staff, and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council, to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates. Council Officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

ATTACHMENT

- Contract 30659 Mirrabooka Pavilion Redevelopment Tender Report
Whitehorse City Council designates this attachment and the information contained in it as Confidential Information pursuant to Section 3 (1) g(ii) of the *Local Government Act 2020*. This ground applies because the matter concerns private business information.

10.2 Contract 30639 - Civil Works and Drainage Works Panel

Department Project Delivery and Assets
Director Infrastructure

Attachment

SUMMARY

This report considers tenders received for Contract 30639 - Civil Work and Drainage Works Panel.

The Civil and Drainage Works panel provides vital services to facilitate the completion of capital works and operational projects. Provision of services will involve plant and labour, preliminaries, drainage (pipes, pits, CCTV, cleaning and lining) for roads and easements, various pavement surfaces (concrete, asphalt, bluestone, bricks, Castella Toppings, gravel), kerb and channels (concrete and bluestone), urban elements, traffic management, line marking, profiling and asphalt.

The contract has a five year term plus a two year extension option at the sole discretion of Council. The estimated contract expenditure is \$89.72M (exclusive of GST) over the initial five year term.

If the two year option is exercised the additional expenditure is estimated at \$40.96M (exclusive of GST). The expected total contract value over a seven year term is \$130.68M (exclusive of GST).

The recommendation to Council is the appointment of 27 contractors to undertake reactive and programmed works under a Schedule of Rates contract to deliver the following work categories.

Contract 30639 - Table 1

Category	Service Line
1	Plant, Labour and Materials
2a	Drainage – Pipe laying
2b	Drainage – Pit construction
2c	CCTV and cleaning
2d	Patching and relining
3	Surfaces
4	Kerbs
5	Urban elements
6	Profiling
7	Asphalt Works
8	Seals

10.2 (cont)

Category	Service Line
9	Traffic Management
10a & 10b	Line Marking for reinstatement after works or for new works
11	Utilities
12	Waste Disposal

The recommendation is to accept the tenders, for the relevant categories, received from the tenderers listed in Table 2.

Contract 30639 – Table 2

Recommended Tenderer	Category
Advanced Traffic Management Pty Ltd (ABN 19 149 263 427 / ACN 149 263 427) 45a Rimfire Drive, Hallam, Victoria, 3803	9
Barleys Traffic Management Pty Ltd (ABN 88 624 920 458 / ACN 624 920 458) 42 Kenny Street, Balwyn North, Victoria, 3104	9
Traffic Control Victoria Pty Ltd (ACN 110 355 309) trading as Traffic Control Victoria (ABN 31 030 997 459) 75 Hudson Court Keysborough, Victoria, 3173	9
Area Safe Products Pty Ltd trading as Astra Street Furniture (ABN 74 114 414 185 / ACN 114 414 185) 17 Sterling Road, Minchbury, New South Wales, 2770	5
Ozmarks Group Pty Ltd (ABN 11 633 609 819 / ACN 633 609 819) 2/14 Melrich Road, Bayswater, Victoria, 3153	9, 10
Underground Experts (UE) Pty Ltd (ABN 36 649 564 081 / ACN 649 564 081) 41-47 Roseneath Street, North Geelong, Victoria, 3215	1, 2c, 2d, 9
Blue Peak Constructions Pty Ltd (ACN 600 299 474) as trustee for Blue Peak Constructions Family Trust (ABN 88 660 064 079) 7 Booloora Road, Springvale, Victoria, 3171	ALL - 1, 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10a & 10b, 11, 12
CDN Constructors Pty Ltd (ACN 053 650 052) as Trustee for CDN Constructors Unit Trust (ABN 62 884 294 341) 738a High Street, Epping, Victoria, 3076	ALL - 1, 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10a & 10b, 11, 12

10.2 (cont)

Recommended Tenderer	Category
Etheredge Mintern Pty Ltd (trading as Etheredge Mintern Road Contractors) (ABN 36 006 521 151 / ACN 006 521 151) 3A/217-219 Colchester Road, Kilsyth, Victoria, 3137	1, 2a, 2b, 3 ,4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10a & 10b, 11, 12
Evergreen Civil Pty Ltd (ACN 128 554 307) as trustee for Evergreen Civil Unit Trust (ABN 67 667 088 791) 11/24 Brand Drive, Thomastown, Victoria, 3074	1, 2a, 2b, 3 ,4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10a & 10b, 11, 12
Fulton Hogan Industries Pty Ltd (ABN 54 000 538 689 / ACN 000 538 689) Botanicca Corporate Park, Level 1, Building 7, 572 Swan Street, Richmond, Victoria, 3121	ALL - 1, 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 3 ,4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10a & 10b, 11, 12
Germano Construction Pty Ltd (ABN 66 093 180 842 / ACN 093 180 842) 2 Gori Court, Narre Warren North, Victoria, 3804	1, 2a, 2b, 3, 4, 9
GP Bluestone Pty Ltd ACN 604 987 519 as The Trustee for the GP Bluestone Unit Trust (ABN 21 664 700 435) 10 Mantell Street, Coburg, Victoria, 3058	1, 2a, 2b, 3 ,4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10a & 10b, 11, 12
Jaydo Construction Pty Ltd (ABN 16 062 221 596 / ACN 062 221 596) 91 Boundary Road, Carrum Downs, Victoria, 3201	1, 2a, 2b, 2c, 3 ,4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10a & 10b, 11, 12
Kaizen Civil Pty Ltd (ABN 18 619 423 068 / ACN 619 423 068) 40 Trade Place, Coburg North, Victoria, 3058	ALL - 1, 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 3 ,4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10a & 10b, 11, 12
Kalow Holdings Pty Ltd (ABN 51 006 811 641 / ACN 006 811 641) 54 Ramset Drive, Chirnside Park, Victoria, 3116	1, 2a, 2b, 3, 4, 5, 9
Land Engineering Pty Ltd (ABN 82 121 727 786 / ACN 121 727 786) 1947A Frankston Flinders Road, Hastings, Victoria, 3915	ALL - 1, 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 3 ,4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10a & 10b, 11, 12
Landcare Property Maintenance Pty Ltd (ABN 35 606 414 091 / ACN 606 414 091) 24 Gasoline Way, Craigieburn, Victoria, 3064	1, 2b, 3, 4, 5, 9

10.2 (cont)

Recommended Tenderer	Category
Lazzaro Concrete Works Pty Ltd (ACN 095 078 783) as The Trustee for Lazzaro Family Trust (ABN 11 798 654 054) 24 Attenborough Street, Dandenong, Victoria, 3175	1, 2a, 2b, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9
M Tucker and Sons Pty Ltd (ABN 14 007 193 811 / ACN 007 193 811) 4 Clancys Road, Mount Evelyn, Victoria, 3796	ALL - 1, 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10a & 10b, 11, 12
Metro Asphalt Pty Ltd (ACN 007 017 790) as Trustee of the Centofanti Unit Trust trading as Cole Civil (ABN 27 593 149 786) 56 Metrolink Circuit, Campbellfield, Victoria, 3061	1, 2a, 2b, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10a & 10b, 11, 12
Parente Paving Civil Pty Ltd (ACN 650 160 731) as The Trustee for Parente Paving Civil Unit Trust (ABN 86 889 709 374) 5 Argent Place, Ringwood, Victoria, 3134	1, 2b, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10a & 10b, 11, 12
Parkinson Group (Vic) Pty Ltd (ABN 58 168 742 925 / ACN 168 742 925) 30 Alfred Street, Blackburn, Victoria, 3130	1, 2a, 2b, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10a & 10b, 11, 12
Plumbtrax Pty Ltd (ABN 11 142 872 491 / ACN 142 872 491) trading as Plumbtrax Infrastructure Services 4 Jurat Road, Lilydale, Victoria, 3140	1, 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 9
Prestige Paving Pty Ltd (ABN 84 140 970 912 / ACN 140 970 912) 11-13 Elsum Avenue, Bayswater North, Victoria, 3153	1, 2a, 2b, 2c, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10a & 10b, 11, 12
QEST Infrastructure Group Pty Ltd (ABN 52 647 783 837 / ACN 647 783 837) 29 Saunders Street, North Geelong, Victoria, 3215	1, 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12
Statewide Civil and Maintenance (ACN 123 319 148) as The Trustee of the Asphalt Trust (ABN 61 868 782 480) 3 Cole Court, Bundoora, Victoria, 3083	1, 2a, 2b, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10a & 10b, 11

10.2 (cont)

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Accepts the Tenders for the nominated categories for Contract 30639 - Civil Work and Drainage Works Panel as shown in Table 2 of this report.
2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer and/or delegate to sign Contract 30639 - Civil Work and Drainage Works Panel and exercise the extension of two further years subject to a review of the Contractors' performance and Council's business needs, at the conclusion of the initial contract term.
3. Note the estimated contract expenditure for Contract 30639 - Civil Work and Drainage Works Panel of \$89.72M (exclusive of GST) over the five year fixed term, with an additional \$40.96M (exclusive of GST) should the two year contract option be exercised, with an expected contract value of \$130.68M (exclusive of GST).

KEY MATTERS

The City of Whitehorse covers an area of approximately 64 square kilometres, which includes the suburbs of Blackburn, Box Hill, Forest Hill, Mitcham, Mont Albert, Nunawading, Surrey Hills and Vermont.

Whitehorse City Council maintains approximately:

- 1,176 kilometres of footpaths
- 1,182 kilometres of kerb and channel
- 605 kilometres of roads
- 32 kilometres of laneways
- 849km of drains (pipelines and culverts)
- over 35,000 pits

Council maintains an extensive roads management program including drainage, kerb and channel, streetscapes and road works. To enable Council to offer quality and safe assets to the community, an efficient and cost-effective all-hours service to provide programmed and reactive maintenance as well as major works to these assets is required.

To support the delivery of this program Contract 30639 - Civil Work and Drainage Works Panel, if approved, will consist of:

- 15 current panel members and 6 new panel members
- 3 specialist Traffic Management Providers
- 1 specialist Urban Elements provider (outdoor furniture)
- 1 specialist Linemarking Provider
- 1 Specialist CCTV & Lining Provider for drains

The panel make up and volume of suppliers was considered through a strategic assessment. The supplier make-up supports Council to deliver

10.2 (cont)

capital works when needed through offering a supplier panel that covers a diverse portfolio of civil contractor expertise.

DISCUSSION, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS

Through a thorough tender process, the tender evaluation panel was successful in achieving savings on the estimated contract value. Negotiations during evaluation resulted in schedule of rates savings and CPI avoidance for the most part of the tenderers being recommended.

No tenderers have applied CPI every year. Twenty tenderers have applied no CPI at all, fixing their Schedule of Rates for the five year initial term of the contract. The remaining seven have fixed their rates for between two and three years.

All Pricing was evaluated against the baseline of current 2025 pricing, with an escalation factor over the following four years, to enable an objective negotiation baseline.

The estimated Total Contract Value was carefully analysed to ensure a close relationship to the likely budget available for these works over the next seven years.

Savings and cost avoidance have been calculated as a percentage of operational expenditure and capital expenditure.

The anticipated savings over the five year term is 5% on Operational budget and 3% on Capital budget. This is a conservative and risk adjusted figure with the capital savings on this contract able to be redeployed to mitigate expected cost and scope escalations across other areas of the capital program.

As part of the tender, tenderers were requested to provide examples of value add. Tender responses include:

- Commitment to circular economy and recycling through conscious disposal of material through dedicated recycling facilities
- Use of recycled water for construction works
- 10no. complimentary days of VMS hire for each year of the agreement
- Dedicated Indigenous Engagement and Employment Program
- 24/7 Emergency Response Service
- Delivery of work notification material to stakeholders and residents
- Best practise construction innovation
- Improved rates subject to volumes of work

Consultation

Council's Procurement team have been consulted extensively to ensure that the procurement is compliant with the Procurement Policy.

External engagement was not required. Tailored and project specific engagement and notification is undertaken at the point of time that individual projects are planned and scheduled.

The Contract is a Schedule of Rates Contract.

10.2 (cont)

Based on the projected expenditure for the total contract value over the full year term (including optional extension) will be \$130.68M (exclusive of GST).

Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Report Details

Strategic Alignment	Works performed through Contract 30639 will primarily support Council in delivering Strategic Direction 2 (Built) and secondary support to deliver Strategic Direction 3 (Economy) and Strategic Direction (Natural)
Financial and Resource Implications	Funding for works performed through Contract 30639 will be in alignment with Whitehorse City Council - Financial Plan 2025-2035.
Legislative and Risk Implications	There are no legal or risk implications arising from the recommendation contained in this report.
Equity, Inclusion, and Human Rights Considerations	It is considered that the subject matter does not raise any human rights issues.
Community Engagement	No community engagement was required for this report. Project specific community engagement will be undertaken in alignment with Community Engagement Policy 2025-29.
Innovation and Continuous Improvement	The tender approach was designed to promote a robust and competitive tender price outcome and to encourage tenderers to offer 'value add' options.
Collaboration	Extensive cross-organisation collaboration was required to coordinate Contract 30639.
Conflict of Interest	The <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> requires members of Council staff, and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council, to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates. Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

ATTACHMENT

- 1 Contract 30639 Civil and Drainage Works Panel Tender Report - Confidential Attachment

Whitehorse City Council designates this attachment and the information contained in it as Confidential Information pursuant to Section 3 (1) g(ii) of the *Local Government Act 2020*. This ground applies because the matter concerns Commercial in confidence - Contractual Matters.

10.3 Community Grants Policy

Department

Communities, Engagement and Integrated Planning
Director Community Services

Attachment

SUMMARY

The Whitehorse Community Grants Policy provides a framework for the provision of community grants to the Whitehorse community through the Community Grants Program. The Whitehorse Community Grants Program is highly valued by the community. For many years, Whitehorse City Council has provided financial support to community groups to provide programs and services that make a positive contribution to the health and wellbeing of the Whitehorse community and deliver strategic outcomes for Council.

In June 2025, a review of the Community Grants Policy 2024 was undertaken with findings outlined in the Review Report (Attachment 1), these findings have shaped recommendations including changes to the grant categories and are intended to strengthen the Community Grants Program now and into the future.

Recommendations have been incorporated in the revised Community Grants and Discounts Policy 2025-2029 (Attachment 2) and are proposed for endorsement by Council.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopts the Community Grants and Discounts Policy 2025-2029.

KEY MATTERS

The current state discovery and community engagement process of the review identified gaps in the current community grants program. This included how to target new and emerging community groups, how to optimise social value of grants in the community, and how to strengthen grant writing capability (especially for people from culturally and linguistically diverse background). Further barriers were also identified when examining the eligibility and assessment requirements and criteria.

New grant categories, updated eligibility and assessment requirements and criteria, and enhancements to the objectives of the Community Grants Program have been developed based on insights obtained from the research and engagement undertaken to facilitate better applicant understanding of the grants, reduce barriers and to optimise how Council ensures funding is used to benefit the community.

The Community Grants Program is supported by corresponding Guidelines that are released in line with the grant period. The Guidelines will be revised to incorporate the new Policy and to strengthen grant writing capability in the

10.3 (cont)

community. Changes to the administering of discounted venue hire and tip vouchers will also be contained in the revised Guidelines.

DISCUSSION, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS

Community Grants Policy 2024 Review

1. Introduction

The Community Grants Policy review was undertaken as part of Council's commitment to ensuring that grant programs remain fit-for-purpose, equitable, and responsive to community needs. This review sought to understand how well the current policy and program align with the evolving needs of the Whitehorse community, while also identifying opportunities to strengthen policy intent, streamline processes, and enhance community outcomes.

2. Review process

The review involved a comprehensive, staged process designed to incorporate data, best practice, and diverse stakeholder perspectives:

a) Current state analysis

An evaluation of the existing Community Grants Policy and Program was conducted, including analysis of applicant and recipient data, benchmarking against comparable councils, thematic analysis of the Whitehorse community profile, and best practice research. Insights were also collated from officers and other key stakeholders.

b) Initial community engagement

A survey and targeted focus groups were undertaken to develop a strong community value proposition, ensuring that the policy and program reflect community priorities.

c) Councillor engagement

Councillors were briefed on findings from the current state analysis and provided endorsement to proceed with further engagement on the draft policy.

d) Further community engagement

Feedback was sought on the draft policy to refine and strengthen the proposed directions.

e) Final review report and revised Draft Policy

Insights gathered throughout the process were consolidated into a final review report and used to inform the revised draft Community Grants and Discounts Policy.

10.3 (cont)

3. Recommendations – Policy

The findings from this process have shaped the proposed revised policy, ensuring greater alignment with the Integrated Council Plan 2025–2029, enhanced accessibility for applicants, stronger governance, and more clearly defined outcomes.

The recommendations outlined below are organised around five core focus areas and reflect changes made. These focus areas highlight the key themes identified through the review and demonstrate how the revised policy responds to both strategic and operational considerations to strengthen Council's Community Grants Program. All other elements of the Community Grants Policy 2024 are carried forward into the revised draft policy. Detail is contained in (Attachment 1).

Focus Area 1: Objectives

Insights gathered from the review process indicate that while the objectives of the existing Community Grants Policy remain largely valid and appropriate, there are key omissions and some outdated goals. The current policy is aligned to the Council Plan 2021–2025 and references the Whitehorse Community Vision 2040, despite the adoption of the new Integrated Council Plan 2025–2029.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the objectives be updated to align with the Integrated Council Plan 2025–2029 and include equity as a key objective. Additionally, outcomes and benefits from grant funding should provide the option to align with either the Integrated Council Plan 2025–2029 or the Whitehorse Community Vision 2040 to maintain flexibility and responsiveness to community priorities.

Focus Area 2: Eligibility

The current eligibility criteria within the policy are perceived as cumbersome, creating barriers for applicants to prepare quality submissions, increasing the administrative burden on officers, and reducing clarity during the assessment process. A further issue identified is the requirement for all applicants to hold \$20 million in Public Liability Insurance, regardless of the grant amount requested. This has deterred some groups, particularly smaller community organisations from applying, ultimately reducing the program's reach.

Additionally, feedback from the community indicated that organisations already funded by government should be a lower priority for Council grant funding. This was particularly relevant in the context of limited community grant funds and in relation to schools, which are supported through other mechanisms.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the eligibility criteria be simplified and aligned with revised grant categories and outcomes. Public Liability Insurance requirements amended to scale appropriately to the amount of funding

10.3 (cont)

requested, retaining the \$20 million requirement for larger grants only. The Artist in Schools grant category removed from the policy, and eligibility criteria should clearly indicate that organisations receiving core government funding will not be eligible for additional Council funding.

Focus Area 3: Categories

Consultation revealed strong support for both simplifying and clarifying grant categories while ensuring they align with defined outcomes. Suggestions were also made to include other Council grant streams (such as heritage, tree removal and small business grants); however, these fall outside the scope of the Community Grants Policy, as they are designed for individuals or private businesses rather than not-for-profit or auspiced organisations.

It was further identified that many applicants apply for the same grant year after year with minimal change to their projects, indicating a dependency on Council funding rather than the intended capacity-building outcome. A similar pattern was observed with some festivals, where ongoing Council support is critical to their delivery and community expectations are high. Finally, both small and large grants were valued by the community, and feedback indicated an opportunity to provide a “mid-tier” funding stream to support sustained community impact.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that grant categories be simplified and aligned with outcomes rather than themes. Grants aimed at individuals or private businesses should be excluded. All categories should be revised to give preference to applications that demonstrate capacity-building and reduced dependency on Council funding, with the exception of festivals. A unique category for festivals should be established to provide targeted support for these community priorities. A mid-tier funding category, enabling organisations to apply for between \$3,000 and \$10,000, should also be introduced to enhance program flexibility. The frequency of funding for the Partnership Grants is also recommended to be 4 years to align with the Policy revision and corresponding Council Plan development in future.

The Community Grants and Discounts Policy 2025-2029 provides the following funding and discount streams for eligible community groups and organisations.

10.3 (cont)

Stream 1: Cash Grants

Funding amount	6 Categories	Frequency
Up to \$1,000	A. Micro funds Funds <\$1,000 to be distributed on a more frequent basis outside of the annual Tiered grant round	Multiple times per year
Tier 1 (up to \$3,000)	B. Connection Grant: Fostering participation and local inclusion C. Innovation Grant: Initial support to activate promising initiatives	Annual
Tier 2 (\$3,001 - \$7,000)	D. Collaboration Grant: supporting growth, partnerships, and scaling to achieve positive outcomes of local community	Annual
Tier 3 (up to \$10,000)	E. Festival Grant: supporting community events with wide-scale reach F. Sustained Impact Grant: supporting successful initiatives for long-term benefit	Annual

Stream 2: Partnership Grants

Funding Amount	2 Categories	Frequency
Up to \$45,000 each year with rate cap annual indexation	A. Neighbourhood and Community House Partnership Grants These grants incorporate Council's financial support to houses and promote the achievement of aligned strategic goals.	4 years
Up to \$40,000 each year (\$120,000 max over 3 years)	B. Social and Wellbeing Partnership Grants These grants respond directly to the needs of the communities with a focus on the most vulnerable and socially disadvantaged population groups.	4 years

10.3 (cont)

Stream 3: Discounts

Funding Amount	2 Categories	Frequency
Proportional discount on venue hire cost	A. Community Space Hire A proportional discount in relation to selected Council owned and operated venues. Determined within the available budget allocation and outlined in the corresponding Guidelines.	Open all year
Subject to a limited number of vouchers each year	B. Tip Vouchers Tipping passes to dispose of waste through Council's Recycling and Waste Centre. Determined through demonstrated need and in line with existing recycling and waste manage practices.	Annual

Focus Area 4: Assessment Criteria

The assessment process has highlighted several issues affecting fairness and strategic alignment. Organisations with high income or significant cash reserves have historically received funding, despite a strong preference for supporting those with genuine financial need. In addition, some organisations have repeatedly received grants for the same projects year after year, while others have been able to access funding from multiple programs. Grant funds are limited, and there is a clear community expectation that funding should be equitably distributed.

The current assessment criteria are also applied uniformly across all categories, which does not reflect the variation in grant size, purpose or outcomes. This has created administrative burden for smaller grants and limited the ability to effectively differentiate projects during assessment. Furthermore, applying a weighted score to requested funding amounts has made project planning difficult where funding awarded does not match expectations.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that assessment criteria give preference to new applicants, applicants without access to other funding streams, and those with genuine financial need. The criteria should be amended to reflect the different objectives of each grant category, with weighted scores applied within pre-determined funding caps. This will ensure greater fairness, transparency and alignment with strategic objectives.

Focus Area 5: General

Feedback indicated that the current policy is difficult to interpret due to the use of complex language and a lack of logical structure. This creates barriers for applicants and reduces the quality of grant applications received.

10.3 (cont)

The community also raised concerns regarding the lengthy time between grant application and notification of outcomes. This extended timeframe limits the ability of organisations to plan for future activities, particularly for small-scale projects or equipment purchases.

Recommendation:

The language and structure of the policy should be revised to use plain English and adopt a clear, logical format. This will make the policy more accessible and ensure applicants are better supported to submit strong, well-targeted applications.

Smaller grants of up to \$1,000 should be made available more frequently throughout the year, rather than exclusively through the annual grant program. This approach will improve accessibility and enable more agile community planning and delivery.

4. Recommendations – Continuous improvement

In addition to the policy-specific insights gathered through the formal review process, a number of broader suggestions were shared by community members, Councillors, and Council officers to enhance the operational delivery of the Community Grants Program. These suggestions do not directly relate to the policy objectives or eligibility settings but instead focus on improving how the program functions in practice, ensuring it remains accessible, transparent, and effective for all stakeholders.

The insights are contained in (Attachment 1) and highlight opportunities to strengthen processes, build community capability, enhance governance and accountability, and improve the overall experience. They also reflect a shared desire to ensure that Council's investment delivers strong community outcomes and is supported by a clear and efficient operational framework.

Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Report Details

Strategic Alignment	A key recommendation contained in the Community Policy 2024 review is to align the Community Grants Program with the Integrated Council Plan 2025-2029. This will allow the program to directly enable community groups and organisations to deliver a variety of services and initiatives that directly align with the Whitehorse Community Vision 2040 and Integrated Council Plan 2025-2029. The administration of the Community Grants program aligns with Objective 5.4 <i>A Council that is well governed, efficient and financially sustainable</i>.
Financial and Resource Implications	The Community Grants and Discounts Policy 2025-2029 will guide the allocation and distribution of Community Grants and Discounts in accordance with Annual Budget parameters.

10.3 (cont)

Legislative and Risk Implications	The Draft Policy has incorporated the 2022 Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) <i>Fraud Control Over Local Government Grants</i> Audit and associated recommendations.
Equity, Inclusion, and Human Rights Considerations	It is considered that the subject matter does not raise any human rights issues.
Community Engagement	The review of the Community Grants Policy 2024 involved extensive community engagement to both inform and stress-test the policy to ensure it aligned with community needs. The first round of community engagement was held between July and August 2025. 37 survey responses were received, and 9 community members attended a focus group to provide feedback. Consistent themes from this engagement included maximising outcomes of grant money, providing funding to where it is needed most in the community and making processes easier. In addition to this feedback, analysis was conducted on the feedback received from applicants of the Community Grants for the past 3 years. Over 500 pieces of feedback was analysed, and similar themes were identified. The insights obtained are contained in Attachment 1 and were used to shape the Draft Community Grants and Discounts Policy 2025-2029, which went out for a second round of community engagement between September and October 2025. 9 survey responses were received and 1 interview with a representative of the Whitehorse Interfaith Network was conducted. Feedback was largely in support of the Draft Policy.
Innovation and Continuous Improvement	The Draft Policy reflects change and continuous improvement. A range of further improvements will be reflected in the Grant Guidelines and implemented before the next round of the Community Grants Program commences in early 2026.
Collaboration	The findings contained in the review of the Community Grants Policy 2024 were conducted in collaboration with consultancy firm <i>CoLab Strategy</i> . Benchmarking of nine other Victorian councils was also conducted by Boroondara Council.

10.3 (cont)

Conflict of Interest	The <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> requires members of Council staff, and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council, to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates. Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.
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ATTACHMENT

- 1 Community Grants Policy 2024 Review - Final Report - October 2025
- 2 Community Grants and Discounts Policy 2025-2029

10.4 Alwyn Street, Mitcham - Traffic Conditions

Department Engineering and Investment
Director City Development

Attachment

SUMMARY

This report has been prepared to provide an update to a Notice of Motion raised at Council's meeting on 12 May 2025, which requested the following:

That Council receive a report into:

1. *Council actions to date since receiving a petition from Alwyn Street Residents in September 2020, and future actions proposed.*
2. *A recommendation in the best way of advocacy on the matters in the petition that are within the control of the State Government:*
 - *Reduction in speed limit*
 - *Truck bans*
 - *Timed turn bans*
 - *Request that the Department of Transport review the traffic signal sequencing at nearby major intersections*

Alwyn Street, Mitcham is a local road approximately 700m in length located between Mitcham Road to the east and Rooks Road to the west.

There are seven (7) traffic treatments along Alwyn Street, which are located approximately 100m apart and include three (3) 'slow points', one (1) traffic island at the Rooks Road intersection and three (3) 'road humps'.

Concerns have been raised from the community about large trucks using Alwyn Street, which have the potential to collide or damage low lying street tree branches along the street.

The street trees are varied however they are primarily Pin Oak and Prickly Paperbark, which are generally mature and significant specimens that are in good health and structure.

Council's Parks and Natural Environment Department inspects and prunes the street trees in Alwyn Street as part of Council's cyclic biennial tree pruning program.

To discourage large trucks from using Alwyn Street, signage has been installed at the Rooks Road and Mitcham Road intersections advising motorists that there are "low tree branches" and that the street is "unsuitable for large vehicles". This signage is advisory and not enforceable.

This report provides an update about traffic conditions along Alwyn Street addressing the items raised in Council's Notice of Motion.

10.4 (cont)

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the report that discusses how traffic conditions along Alwyn Street have been managed and addressed.

KEY MATTERS

The key matters relevant to this report are discussed below.

Resident Petition to Council

Council received a petition from Alwyn Street residents in September 2020 requesting a review of traffic conditions along the street. The items raised in the Petition included:

1. *Install signage on strict height limits for trucks clearly visible on both ends of Alwyn Street;*
2. *A traffic island/speed hump combination at 3 or 4 points where larger branches encroach on street;*
3. *Install no left or right turns into streets at either end between 6am-9am, 3pm-6pm except for local residents;*
4. *Lower the speed limit to 30km/h;*
5. *The re-planting of Pin Oak Trees or similar species to each location where existing trees have been damaged or removed over the years to maintain symmetrical tree canopy.*

Council officers responded to the head petitioner in December 2020 addressing all the items raised in the petition. The Walker ward Councillor, Councillor Ben Stennett was briefed about the actions carried out by officers in response to the petition and was also copied into the response to the head petitioner. Council's response to the petition is provided in (Attachment 1).

Traffic Speeds and Traffic Volumes

Alwyn Street carries an average of 1,361 vehicles per day, which is considered satisfactory for the configuration, nature and purpose of the road. The average speed along Alwyn Street is 33km/hr while the 85th percentile speed is 42km/hr. The average speed is the mean speed of vehicles travelling along a street, while the 85th percentile speed is the speed at which 85% of motorists are travelling at or below. The 85th percentile speed is typically used in the transport industry to explain how the majority of motorists are travelling along a street. Council's traffic data (average and 85th percentile speeds) confirms that the majority of motorists are travelling along Alwyn Street below the default 50km/hr speed limit.

The three (3) 'slow point' traffic treatments along Alwyn Street were installed prior to 1991 and have been effective in addressing elevated vehicle speeds and maintaining acceptable traffic conditions. The traffic island at the Alwyn Street and Rooks Road intersection was installed at the same time as the

10.4 (cont)

'slow point' traffic treatments, which assists motorists to safely negotiate the intersection.

In May 2024, Council installed three (3) 'road humps' in Alwyn Street, which have been strategically placed between the 'slow point' traffic treatments. These 'road humps' have been effective at further managing traffic conditions along Alwyn Street.

Recent traffic data collected along Alwyn Street indicates that daily traffic volumes and vehicle speeds have significantly reduced, noting there are approximately 200 fewer vehicles per day using the street since the installation of the 'road humps' in May 2024. Vehicle speeds have typically reduced by approximately 6km/hr.

Given the above, traffic conditions along Alwyn Street are considered acceptable for a local residential street that provides access to several residential properties and intersects with a high order local road to the west (Rooks Road) and a key north-south main road (Mitcham Road) to the east. The peak hour traffic volumes using Alwyn Street are also considered to be satisfactory and consistent with many other local streets in the municipality.

Attachment 2 outlines the various traffic treatments that have been implemented in Alwyn Street and in nearby surrounding streets.

Attachment 3 provides a summary of traffic surveys that have been undertaken along Alwyn Street, which also includes traffic surveys from nearby local streets between the period 2005 and 2025.

Trucks using Alwyn Street

Following the resident petition, ongoing concerns were raised from the community about large trucks using Alwyn Street, potentially damaging low lying street tree branches along the street.

To discourage trucks using Alwyn Street, advisory signage at both the Rooks Road and Mitcham Road intersections was installed in October 2019 advising motorists that there are "*low tree branches*" along the street and the street may be "*unsuitable for large vehicles*". These signs were replaced with larger sized advisory signs in April 2021. The same advisory signs were also installed, at this time, at the Rooks Road and Mitcham Road entrances to Carween Avenue, Owen Street and Lucknow Street.

A review of truck traffic using Alwyn Street based on the most recent traffic data indicates that approximately 100 trucks out of 1,361 daily vehicles use the street equating to 7.3% of daily traffic.

The definition of a truck is a larger vehicle with two or more axles (typically classes 3 to 12), whereas a sedan or SUV is classed 1 and 2. The majority of trucks using Alwyn Street are class 3 delivery vehicles and class 5 service vehicles, which are typically general waste, recycling, green organics, hard waste and street sweeping vehicles. Truck traffic also includes utility service vehicles i.e. Yarra Valley Water, United Energy and trucks accessing residential development sites and commercial properties (i.e. Rangeview

10.4 (cont)

shops). Larger trucks such as articulated vehicles i.e. Semi- trailers were not recorded in the survey data.

Given the above, the truck traffic using Alwyn Street is considered satisfactory, noting that all trucks using this street have a legitimate right of access to deliver and pick up goods and provide essential services in the area.

DISCUSSION, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS

Council officers have carried out a detailed traffic investigation including the collection of several traffic surveys in Alwyn Street (and in nearby surrounding streets) to determine existing traffic conditions and whether any further intervention is required.

The keys items which are discussed in detail below, relate to a reduction of the speed limit, truck bans, timed turn bans and a review of the traffic signal sequencing at nearby intersections.

Reduction in Speed Limit

A review of Council's traffic data confirms Council officers' position that a speed limit reduction along Alwyn Street is not warranted.

As noted in this report, the average speed along Alwyn Street is 33km/hr while the 85th percentile speed is 42km/hr.

Currently, speed limit reductions on local streets in Whitehorse are generally considered in built up areas where there is high pedestrian activity, such as the Box Hill commercial and hospital precincts. Council has recently installed a 40km/hr area wide speed limit within these busy precincts, which was supported by the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP).

Other locations where a speed limit reduction may be considered appropriate in accordance with DTP's Speed Zone Policy is local streets where there are unique characteristics, i.e. local streets with no kerbs or dedicated footpaths, which requires pedestrians and vehicles to share the road. These types of streets may support a reduced speed limit of 30km/hr or 40km/hr.

The default 50km/hr speed limit applies to all local streets in Whitehorse unless otherwise signed (i.e. School speed zones or area wide speed limits).

Any proposals for a speed limit reduction in local streets in Whitehorse must have merit based on supported traffic data, crash history and must also have the support of DTP.

Alwyn Street has several traffic treatments (i.e. 7 traffic treatments over 700m length of road) and has satisfactory vehicle speeds that are well below the default 50km/hr speed limit. As such, a 30km/hr or 40km/hr speed limit along Alwyn Street is not warranted.

Traffic survey data for nearby local streets such as Owen Street, Carween Avenue, Lucknow Street and Rostrevor Crescent also confirms that traffic

10.4 (cont)

conditions (vehicle speeds and traffic volumes) are also acceptable in these streets.

Truck Bans

As noted in this report, approximately 100 trucks use Alwyn Street daily.

Council officers have sought advice from DTP regarding a 'truck ban' for Alwyn Street. The advice received indicates that a 'truck ban' would only be considered if there was an over representation of truck related crashes. Although there have been occasional truck related incidents in Alwyn Street with low lying tree branches, these incidents would not qualify for a truck ban in the street.

Trucks are legally permitted under the Victoria Road Rules to use local roads even if 'truck bans' apply given that trucks delivering goods and services are exempt from this ban.

Truck bans are typically implemented in areas where restrictions are necessary due to low height clearances such as underpasses or overhead bridges or where heavy vehicle loads could compromise Council's assets. As such, imposing a truck ban is an appropriate measure if there is a requirement to protect the structural integrity of bridges and roads, and to reduce any liability or potential risk to Council.

DTP has also advised that together with Freight Victoria, a truck ban for Alwyn Street is not supported based on existing traffic conditions. It is also important to note it is highly unlikely the Victoria Police would enforce a truck ban if there was a legitimate reason for a truck to access a local street or service the local precinct.

Given the above, Council officers do not support a truck ban for Alwyn Street and based on truck volumes, a ban is also not warranted.

Timed turn bans

Council's most recent traffic data indicates that the morning and afternoon peak hour traffic volume for Alwyn Street (two-way traffic) is 107 vehicles per hour and 111 vehicles per hour respectively. This traffic volume accounts for 7.9% and 8.2% of the daily traffic volumes.

Typically, peak hour traffic in local streets accounts for 10-15% of the daily traffic. Higher peak hour traffic is typically expected around schools and in shopping precincts. As such, the peak hour traffic volumes for Alwyn Street are satisfactory and further consideration of peak hour turn bans at both the Rooks Road and Mitcham Road ends of the street is not warranted.

It is also important to note that peak hour 'turn ban' prohibitions significantly impact on local residents from accessing their properties as they are not exempt from the prohibition under the Road Rules. All road users, with the exception of emergency services, must adhere to any peak hour turn ban prohibitions.

It is also widely understood that without regular police enforcement, peak hour turn bans are not effective due to non-compliance.

10.4 (cont)

Request that the Department of Transport review the traffic signal sequencing at nearby major intersections

Council officers advocated to DTP in October 2021 for a review to be undertaken at nearby arterial road intersections to determine whether any improvements could be made to traffic flow along Rooks Road and Mitcham Road, which may be causing traffic to 'rat run' along local streets.

DTP advised Council officers in March 2022 that a localised signal review was undertaken along Canterbury Road, which did not reveal any significant congestion issues at key nearby signalised intersections. As such, there were no plans to alter any intersection signal time settings in the area.

Recent discussion with DTP has confirmed that changes to intersection signal timing settings at nearby major intersections in Mitcham is a low priority when compared to other locations in Metropolitan Melbourne and are not justified. Any signal timing upgrades would need to be considered for Statewide funding due to the significant costs associated with these works.

Council's Transport team has monitored and assessed traffic safety, vehicle speeds and traffic volumes along Alwyn Street over the past two (2) decades. This monitoring has led to progressively implementing traffic management devices along the street to control the movement of traffic and the safety of all road users. The current traffic conditions along Alwyn Street are considered to be conducive with the performance and standards expected for the classification, function and purpose of the street. It is the officer recommendation that no further traffic management is warranted for Alwyn Street

Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Report Details

Strategic Alignment	Strategic priorities of the Council: • Council Plan 2025-2029 • Community Vision 2040 – Theme 2: Movement and Public Spaces Road safety activities are directly linked to the following corporate strategies: • Integrated Transport Strategy • Road Safety Strategy • Cycling Strategy
Financial and Resource Implications	There are no financial or resource implications arising from the recommendation contained in this report.
Legislative and Risk Implications	There are no legal or risk implications arising from the recommendation contained in this report.

10.4 (cont)

Equity, Inclusion, and Human Rights Considerations	In developing this report to Council, the subject matter has been considered in accordance with the requirements of the <i>Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006</i>. It is considered that the subject matter does not raise any human rights issues.
Community Engagement	No community engagement was required for this report.
Innovation and Continuous Improvement	There are no Innovation and Continuous Improvement matters arising from the recommendation contained in this report.
Collaboration	The Transport team collaborated with the Department of Transport and Planning's Movement and Safety team in preparation of this report.
Conflict of Interest	Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

ATTACHMENT

- 1 Response to Resident Petition
- 2 Traffic Survey Data Summary
- 3 Traffic Treatments in Alwyn Street and Surrounding Streets

10.5 Walker Park Draft Master Plan Endorsement for Round 2 Community and Stakeholder Engagement

Department

Leisure and Recreation Services

Director Community Services

Attachment

SUMMARY

This report seeks Council endorsement of the Draft Walker Park Master Plan to proceed to community and stakeholder engagement.

The Draft Master Plan sets out a long-term framework to guide future investment and improvements at Walker Park, Nunawading. It establishes a strategic direction to enhance the park's role as a key municipal-level sports and recreation hub, reflecting the needs of multiple tenant clubs, emerging sports trends, and growing community expectations.

The draft plan responds to extensive background research, site assessment, and early stakeholder consultation undertaken through 2023–2024. It aligns with the Whitehorse Open Space Strategy 2025, Recreation Strategy 2015–2024, and other strategic frameworks by promoting accessibility, inclusion, environmental sustainability, and efficient use of existing land and assets.

Once endorsed for engagement, the Draft Master Plan will be released for public consultation, inviting feedback from residents, clubs, and relevant stakeholders to help shape the final version for Council consideration in 2026.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Endorses the Draft Walker Park Master Plan for the purpose of community and stakeholder engagement.
2. Notes that a final Master Plan will be presented to Council following completion of engagement activities.

KEY MATTERS

Walker Park is located at 407–425 Whitehorse Road, Nunawading, and is classified as Municipal Open Space under the Whitehorse Open Space Strategy 2025. The reserve supports significant community sport and recreation activity and accommodates the following clubs:

- Mitcham Football Netball Club
- Mitcham Junior Football Club
- Mitcham Cricket Club
- Nunawading Gymnastics and Sports Club
- Mitcham Tennis Club

10.5 (cont)

The park also includes a local level playground, a community meeting space that previously supported the former pigeon club and is currently being temporarily used for Men's Shed activities, and car parking areas serving both community sport and broader public use. Despite strong use and high community value, many existing assets are ageing, poorly configured, or constrained in their ability to meet current and future needs.

Key issues identified through technical analysis and early consultation include:

- Accessibility and circulation conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles during peak events days, during competition and event weekends.
- Aging gymnastic building that is outgrown by the high performing gymnastic club and no longer meets modern accessibility and operational standards.
- The tennis facility experiences low utilisation, and the spatial separation between the courts presents a barrier to effective operation.
- Limited provision for unstructured recreation and play amenities for families and casual users.
- Limited tree canopy and landscape definition, affecting park character and comfort.

The Draft Master Plan responds to these issues through a balanced set of recommendations that seek to optimise community use, improve safety and connectivity, and deliver greater equity in recreation opportunities across age groups and interests.

DISCUSSION, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS

The Draft Walker Park Master Plan provides an integrated and site-specific vision for the future of this key municipal park. Key components are summarised below.

1. Access and Movement

- Improve pedestrian connectivity through a new east west shared path linking Dunlavin Road to the civic precinct and The Round.
- Formalise car parking layouts to improve efficiency and reduce conflicts with pedestrians.
- Provide dedicated short-stay parking and drop-off zones for gymnastics users via Dunlavin Road.
- Rationalise internal vehicle movement near the pavilion to improve spectator safety and amenity.

2. Sporting Facilities

a) Gymnastics Facility Renewal

The Nunawading Gymnastics and Sports Club currently operates from the Indoor Sports Complex at Walker Park, constructed in the early 1970s. While the facility has served the community well for several decades, it no longer meets current accessibility standards, operational

10.5 (cont)

requirements, or modern safety expectations. Its design and spatial constraints significantly limit participation growth and the Club's ability to deliver inclusive and contemporary gymnastics programs.

As one of Victoria's oldest community run gymnastics organisations, the Club has served the Whitehorse community for over 50 years and now supports around 550 active members, primarily female participants, with a substantial waiting list due to the lack of suitable training space. The Club provides a strong local pathway for children and youth participation with programs spanning from recreational gymnastics to competitive levels and delivers sessions seven days a week.

The Nunawading Gymnastics and Sports Club is a unique provider in Melbourne's eastern region, currently offering seven gymnastics disciplines, expanding to eight from 2026. Of these, five are competitive streams, whereas most other gymnastics clubs in the region typically offer no more than three. Without a new purpose-built centre, the Club will be forced to turn away more children and not have capacity to expand into additional programming sessions.

The Draft Master Plan proposes replacing the existing building with a new, purpose-built Gymnastics and Sports Centre (approx. 2,000 m²) to ensure the sports long-term viability and to meet community demand for gymnastics participation. Following detailed investigation, the southeast corner of Walker Park, currently occupied by the Mitcham Tennis Club, is identified as the preferred location. This site:

- Accommodates the required footprint without significant tree removal and compromising carpark spaces.
- Enables direct access and drop-off from Dunlavin Road.
- Avoids congestion conflicts with weekend football and cricket activity.
- Allows the existing gymnastics program to continue operations in the current facility until the new centre is completed.

The relocation and renewal of the gymnastics centre will further enable the repurposing of the existing Indoor Sports Complex site for dual-use public courts and unstructured recreation amenities, creating a more balanced and accessible recreation offering for the wider community.

This proposal aligns with Council's strategic goals to:

- Increase participation across all ages and abilities.
- Optimise community facility utilisation.
- Invest in ageing infrastructure where renewal will deliver broad social and health benefits.

10.5 (cont)

b) Tennis Facility Review and Future Direction

Mitcham Tennis Club has experienced a steady decline in participation over the past 10 years and has the lowest membership of all tennis clubs using Whitehorse facilities. The club has historically provided modest social tennis and pathway programs to support junior development as well as a small competition team offering.

The club's coaching program is run by a commercial provider who has used the site for well over a decade as one of several venues across the eastern suburbs. This arrangement and court capacity unused by members of the Mitcham Tennis Club has resulted in the allocation of Mitcham court bookings to members of the Donvale Tennis Club in Manningham for use the venue as an overflow.

The separation between the five courts continues to create operational challenges and remains a barrier to effective club management. A site assessment confirmed that consolidating the courts into a single location is not feasible due to the presence of other well-utilised facilities on the site.

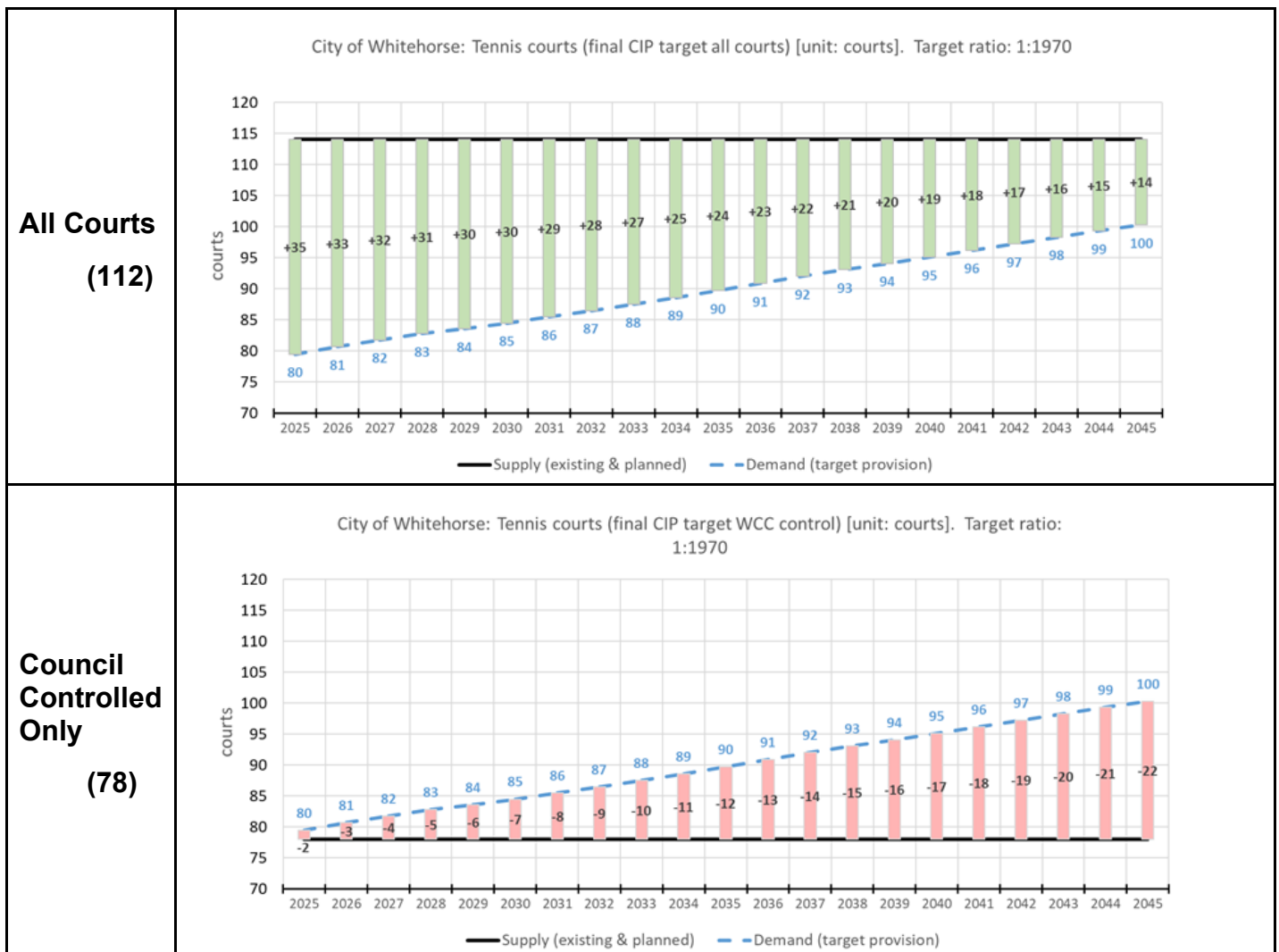
In parallel, the Community Infrastructure Plan, currently in development, which assesses tennis supply and demand across the municipality, has identified an overall surplus of tennis facilities against forecast demand, including the northeast precinct across Nunawading and Mitcham (refer to Figures 1 and 2 below). It is noted that, at the municipal scale, much of this surplus exists within non-Council facilities such as schools and private clubs.

In contrast, the northeast precinct demonstrates a genuine oversupply within Council-controlled courts and there are no options to reduce the supply of non-council courts. Accordingly, the removal of the Walker Park courts as a leased, exclusive-use facility is not expected to adversely affect the municipal-wide tennis network or the tennis provision for Nunawading and Mitcham.

Within this context, a modest reduction in Council-controlled courts, up to 14 by 2046, may be considered reasonable if offset by the continued operation and renewal of private and school courts. This approach would maintain overall network resilience while minimising duplication and under-utilisation of assets.

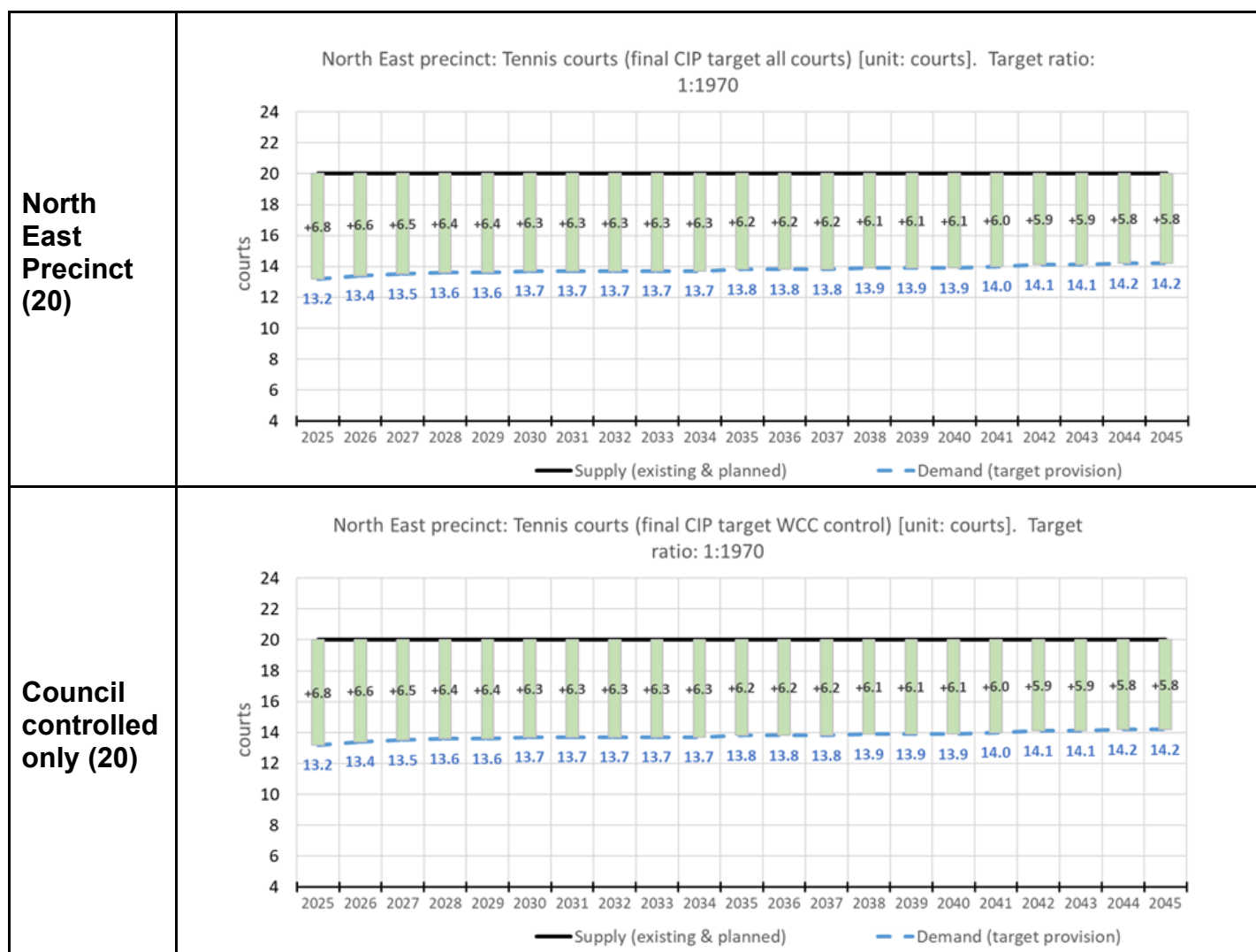
10.5 (cont)

Figure 1 – Municipal Wide Tennis Courts



10.5 (cont)

Figure 2 – North East Precinct Tennis Courts (Nunawading & Mitcham)



Given this context, it is considered more effective for Council to rationalise underutilised assets rather than maintain surplus dedicated tennis facilities. Instead, repurposing the space to provide multi-purpose courts that accommodate tennis, netball and basketball for community access would deliver a stronger community outcome and support active lifestyles for a wider range of residents, particularly as public open space becomes increasingly important with population growth.

In response, the Draft Master Plan recommends:

- Ceasing club-based tennis operations at Walker Park and support the club's participation base to relocate to suitable local venues.
- Removing the existing tennis infrastructure and repurposing the site for broader community benefit.
- Constructing two new multi-use netball–tennis courts (on the existing Indoor Sports Complex site) managed by Council as public hire courts using the 'Book-a-Court' system, consistent with Tennis Victoria's contemporary facility management model.

10.5 (cont)

This approach will:

- Maintain public access to tennis.
- Support training needs for the Mitcham Football Netball Club and Nunawading Netball Club.
- Create stronger integration of women's and girls' sport at the precinct.

c) Pavilion and Oval

The main pavilion and grandstand, redeveloped in 2020, remain in good condition to continue to serve as the central hub for football and cricket operations at Walker Park. Minor works are proposed to complete the internal fit-out of change rooms and enhance female player amenities to meet current participation needs. The oval, classified as Class AA, is heavily utilised year-round for both senior and junior football and cricket and continues to host Eastern Football Netball League finals underscoring its municipal significance and strong community value.

Proposed improvements include behind goal netting at the southern end, terrace surface upgrades to minimise gravel spillage and rationalised vehicle circulation around the pavilion to improve spectator safety, accessibility, and amenity. Together, these works will ensure the precinct continues to operate as a high quality, inclusive, and safe municipal level sports venue that supports a growing and diverse participant base.

3. Recreation Facilities and Amenities

In addition to the key sporting facilities, the following recommendations have been proposed to the unstructured recreation facilities and amenities to cater for the broader community.

a) Play and Social Recreation Facilities

The Draft Master Plan proposes the development of a new local level playground and social recreation area to support intergenerational use. The facility will include modern play equipment, outdoor fitness elements, picnic tables and seating to encourage casual activity and social connection for all ages. This responds directly to community feedback highlighting the need for improved play and fitness opportunities within the park.

b) Public Toilets and Amenity Upgrades

Upgrading public toilets was the most frequently suggested improvement in the community feedback, with 42% of respondents identifying it as a priority.

There are currently three public toilet facilities within Walker Park:

- Behind the grandstand, managed by Council.
- Attached to the tennis clubhouse, managed by Council.
- Under the old scoreboard, managed by the two football clubs.

10.5 (cont)

With the removal of the tennis pavilion, the toilet function will be replaced by new public toilets attached to the proposed Gymnastics building.

The grandstand-integrated toilets are located at the rear of the structure, with limited lighting and visibility, which contributes to safety concerns. In line with CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles, the Master Plan recommends upgrading and reconfiguring this facility to enhance accessibility, lighting, and passive surveillance, providing a safe, inclusive, and well-located public toilet that better serves general park visitors.

The scoreboard structure includes a small toilet and kiosk used for serving food and drink items during matches. While a new digital scoreboard has recently been installed to modernise the sporting facilities, the toilet component is outdated and no longer meets contemporary safety or accessibility standards. Council will work closely with the sporting clubs to determine the most appropriate approach to upgrading this facility.

c) Former Pigeon Club Site

The former Pigeon Club building had been vacant for several years before being retrofitted in 2024 as a temporary Men's Shed workshop for a period of four to five years.

The site is physically separated from the main area of Walker Park due to the embankment along the northern perimeter of the oval. The building is in poor condition and would require significant investment to meet the standards expected of a long-term community facility. The Master Plan therefore proposes demolishing the ageing structure once the temporary lease with the Men's Shed group expires. This will enable the area to be reinstated as green space and better integrated with the main park through enhanced visual and physical connections between Dunlavin Road and the central park area.

The site's redevelopment will be landscape led, incorporating low level native planting, accessible path links, and gentle batters that resolve level changes and maintain clear sightlines for safety. Feature landscaping and canopy trees will enhance the park's natural character while ensuring strong passive surveillance and a welcoming entry presence. These improvements collectively support the Master Plan's goals to balance recreation activation with environmental quality and community safety.

4. Landscape and Environmental Character

The vegetation across Walker Park is largely a mix of native and indigenous trees and low ground covers / shrubs. Exotic trees consist mainly of a small number of old and potentially senescent *Pinus radiata*. While there is little consistency in the tree population, it does contribute to a canopy which provides shade and a sense of enclosure around the park as a whole.

The masterplan proposes to increase the tree canopy in the reserve to improve amenity and to create a strong park setting. Additional tree planting shall be consistent with existing plantings and selected from an approved tree

10.5 (cont)

list for the reserve. There are several spaces in the park where tree planting can be strengthened to support new paths, and in car parks to reduce the heat island effect.

5. Wayfinding and Identity

Walker Park holds a rich history and long-standing significance as a place of recreation for the residents of Nunawading and Mitcham, with the Mitcham Football Club soon to celebrate its 150th anniversary. While a few interpretive signs within the park currently share aspects of its history, there is an opportunity to further celebrate this heritage through additional interpretive signage, public art, and sculptural elements integrated with new social recreation infrastructure.

The installation of strategically located wayfinding signage will assist visitors in locating key destinations—such as the Civic Precinct, The Round, and public toilets—and improve navigation to various points of interest throughout the park.

The Master Plan recommends introducing a coordinated signage and wayfinding system, including entry statements and directional elements, to support visitor orientation and reinforce Walker Park's role as a key municipal open space within the broader civic precinct. Enhancing pathway and visual connections between the park, Civic Centre, library, and surrounding community facilities will further strengthen legibility and create a more cohesive public realm experience.

All new signage and entry features will align with Whitehorse's citywide branding and accessibility standards, using consistent materials, clear sightlines, and a unified design language to reinforce the park's identity and sense of arrival from its key frontages.

If endorsed, the Draft Master Plan will be placed on public exhibition for a period of four weeks, as detailed in the Community Engagement section.

Feedback received will be reviewed and summarised in an Engagement Outcomes Report, with the Final Walker Park Master Plan to be presented to Council in 2026 for consideration of adoption.

10.5 (cont)

Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Report Details

Strategic Alignment	Built, We aspire to develop safe, accessible, and attractive public spaces and infrastructure that meet community needs and adapt to growth. The Draft Master Plan aligns with the following Council strategies and policies: • Whitehorse Open Space Strategy 2025 • Community Vision 2040 • Integrated Council Plan 2025–2029 • Whitehorse Recreation Strategy 2015–2024 • Whitehorse Urban Forest Strategy 2021–2031 • Whitehorse Climate Response Strategy 2023–2030 • Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021–2025 It contributes to the broader objectives of enhancing liveability, supporting healthy and active lifestyles, and providing equitable recreation opportunities for the Whitehorse community.
Financial and Resource Implications	The Draft Master Plan contains high, medium, and long term priority projects that, if implemented, will impact Council's Capital and recurrent budgets. • High priority projects: Years 1–5 (FY2026/27–FY2030/31) • Medium priority projects: Years 6–10 (FY2031/32–FY2035/36) • Long-term projects: Years 11–15 (FY2036/37–FY2040/41) Implementation is expected to commence in FY2026/27, beginning with design work and early delivery of infrastructure identified as high priority, including path connections, playground renewal, and planning for the new gymnastics facility. The indicative total cost for all projects identified in the Master Plan is \$17.6 million, inclusive of design, contingency, and project management allowances. These cost estimates are preliminary and will be refined through feasibility assessments, detailed design, and procurement processes. Within this total, the High Priority works are estimated at approximately \$15.2 million, and include: • Design and documentation for the Nunawading Gymnastics and Sports Centre replacement.

10.5 (cont)

	• Construction of shared path connections and pedestrian safety improvements along Dunlavin Road and internal circulation routes. • Development of the new district-level playground, including picnic shelters, fitness equipment, and associated amenities. • Construction of dual-use public courts (netball/tennis) following the removal of the existing tennis infrastructure. • Landscape and tree planting works to enhance park character and shade provision. Medium Priority (Years 6–10), estimated at \$1.8 million, include: • Construction of the new Gymnastics and Sports Centre (subject to feasibility and external funding). • Amenity upgrades including new public toilets, park lighting, and wayfinding signage. • Landscape and environmental enhancements, including stormwater-sensitive design elements and canopy planting to strengthen the park's ecological values. Long-term works (Years 11–15), estimated at \$611k, include: • Ongoing surface renewals, lighting upgrades, and additional shade and seating installations. • Refinement of existing infrastructure to maintain accessibility and amenity as park use grows. All cost estimates are preliminary and will be reviewed through feasibility and detailed design to confirm scope, timing, and funding requirements. In order to deliver on the Master Plan objectives, it is anticipated that funding will come from a combination of sources, including: • Council's Capital Works Program, Open Space Reserve, and Development Reserve. • External grants from State and Federal Government programs. • Potential partnership contributions from tenant clubs or sporting associations for specialised facilities (e.g., gymnastics centre).
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10.5 (cont)

	<i>Table 1: Recommended application of funding split for Reserve funded Capital improvement projects. Exact funding split will be assessed and applied for each individual project based on scope and alignment to the reserve principles.</i> Relevant project categories are highlighted in green. <table><tr><th rowspan="2">Project Type</th><th colspan="3">Funding Split</th></tr><tr><th>Open Space Reserve</th><th>Development Reserve</th><th>Open Space Reserve</th></tr><tr><td>Open Space Acquisition</td><td>100%</td><td>Open Space Acquisition</td><td>100%</td></tr><tr><td>Open Space Improvements</td><td>100%</td><td>Open Space Improvements</td><td>100%</td></tr><tr><td>Open Space Planning</td><td>50%</td><td>Open Space Planning</td><td>50%</td></tr><tr><td>Major Project (Recreation)</td><td>0%</td><td>Major Project (Recreation)</td><td>0%</td></tr></table>	Project Type	Funding Split			Open Space Reserve	Development Reserve	Open Space Reserve	Open Space Acquisition	100%	Open Space Acquisition	100%	Open Space Improvements	100%	Open Space Improvements	100%	Open Space Planning	50%	Open Space Planning	50%	Major Project (Recreation)	0%	Major Project (Recreation)	0%
Project Type	Funding Split																							
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Open Space Improvements	100%	Open Space Improvements	100%																					
Open Space Planning	50%	Open Space Planning	50%																					
Major Project (Recreation)	0%	Major Project (Recreation)	0%																					
Legislative and Risk Implications	There are no legal or risk implications arising from the recommendation contained in this report.																							
Equity, Inclusion, and Human Rights Considerations	In developing this report to Council, the subject matter has been considered in accordance with the requirements of the <i>Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006</i>. It is considered that the subject matter does not raise any human rights issues.																							
Stakeholder & Community Engagement	Stakeholder and community engagement for the Walker Park Master Plan was conducted across two key phases between late 2023 and mid-2025, with a third phase planned for public exhibition following Council endorsement of the Draft Master Plan. Engagement was designed to capture the views of park users, sporting clubs, local residents, and key internal and external stakeholders to ensure the proposed directions reflect community aspirations and operational realities. Round 1 – Community and Stakeholder Engagement (November 2023 – March 2024) <u>Purpose:</u> To collect information about current use of Walker Park, identify issues and opportunities, and understand																							

10.5 (cont)

	community and club priorities to inform development of preliminary concepts. <u>Engagement Activities:</u> • Online community survey (28 November 2023 – 21 January 2024) via Council's Have Your Say Whitehorse page, receiving 491 responses. • Community pop-up sessions at The Round (6 and 7 December 2023, approximately 20 attendees) and at Walker Park (13 January 2024, approximately 70 attendees). • Club meetings with individual tenant group (5 and 19 March 2024). • Workshops with Council teams (19 and 20 March 2024) to identify internal priorities and cross-departmental opportunities. <u>Key stakeholder engagement findings</u> • Walker Park accommodates high levels of use, particularly on weekday evenings and weekends, with strong demand for the oval and Indoor Sports Complex. • In contrast, the tennis courts experience lower regular use. The Mitcham Tennis Club is generally satisfied with its facilities but is challenged by an ageing committee and declining membership. • The Nunawading Gymnastics and Sports Club has identified that the Indoor Sports Complex is ageing, requires frequent maintenance, and is no longer fit-for-purpose, limiting the club's growth. Continuity of operations during any redevelopment is essential to avoid loss of members and coaches. • The Mitcham Football and Cricket Clubs are satisfied with the oval and pavilion but have requested floodlights for the practice nets, female change rooms to support growing participation, additional on-site storage, and more sheltered spectator seating, particularly along the eastern and southern sides, to better meet the needs of their expanding programs and year-round use. <u>Key community engagement findings</u> Key findings from the community survey show that 65% of respondents visit Walker Park daily or several times a week, with most arriving by car (64%) or on foot (32%). The park is mainly used for exercise including play sport, jog, and walk (48%), followed by play (10%) and socialising (9%), with most visitors staying one to two hours, particularly on weekday evenings and weekend days. The majority of respondents feel safe (84%) in the park. The most requested improvements include upgrading public toilets
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10.5 (cont)

	(42%), play space renewal (38%), a multipurpose hard court (34%), path and lighting upgrades (25–26%), and additional seating and fitness equipment (25%). <i>Round 2 – Targeted Stakeholder Engagement (August 2024 – August 2025)</i> <u>Purpose:</u> To review preliminary concept options and test feasibility, functionality, and club integration scenarios with key stakeholders and internal teams prior to public exhibition. <u>Engagement Activities:</u> • Ward Councillor meeting to discuss emerging directions. • Two Tennis Victoria meetings to discuss future direction for the Mitcham Tennis Club. • Two meetings with the Mitcham Tennis Club to update the club on the master plan directions and test feasibility of relocation. • Two workshops and one meeting with Nunawading Gymnastics and Sports Club to test functional requirements for a proposed new facility. • Two meetings with the Mitcham Football Netball Club, Mitcham Junior Football Club and Mitcham Cricket Club to update the clubs on the master plan directions. • Two meetings with the Nunawading Netball Club to understand their challenges at the current school venue and provide update on masterplan directions.
Innovation and Continuous Improvement	There are no Innovation and Continuous Improvement matters arising from the recommendation contained in this report.
Collaboration	The project manager of the Recreation and Open Space Development team have collaborated with Council officers in the below departments: • Project Delivery and Assets • Parks and Natural Environment • Community Engagement • Communications, Advocacy and Investment • Whitehorse Home and Community Services • City Services • Engineering and Investment • Leisure and Recreation Services In addition, collaboration was undertaken with state sporting bodies, including Tennis Victoria and Gymnastics Victoria,

10.5 (cont)

	to ensure alignment with facility standards and broader sport development priorities.
Conflict of Interest	The <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> requires members of Council staff, and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council, to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates. Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

ATTACHMENT

- 1 Walker Park Draft Master Plan
- 2 Walker Park Draft Master Plan Report

10.6 Tyrol Park Landscape Concept Plan Endorsement

Department

Leisure and Recreation Services

Director Community Services

Attachment

SUMMARY

This report seeks Council endorsement of the Landscape Concept Plans for Tyrol Park. The Draft Landscape Concept plan sets a clear 15-year vision for improvements at Tyrol Park, shaped by community feedback, technical investigation, and site-specific opportunities and constraints.

The plan responds to extensive community engagement across two consultation phases conducted in 2024 and 2025. Feedback was received from a wide range of local residents and park users. The proposed improvements also align with the recently endorsed Whitehorse Open Space Strategy 2025, ensuring the park contributes to the broader open space vision and strategic priorities for the municipality.

Key updates to the draft landscape concept plan were made in response to the feedback received from the second round of engagement including:

Key themes addressed include:

- Accessibility and Connectivity - strengthen circulation through upgraded path network linking key park features and surrounding streets.
- Recreation Diversity - enhance opportunities with a mix of play improvements, outdoor fitness equipment, an outdoor half basketball/netball court, and additional seating.
- Safety and Inclusion - provide age-diverse recreation choices and new lighting to encourage a safe and welcoming user experience.
- Ecology and Sustainability - increase tree planting and integrate Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) measures to support biodiversity and sustainable park management.

The Draft Landscape Concept Plan, once endorsed by Council, will serve as a strategic guide to inform and prioritise future investment in these open spaces, provide a clear framework for future funding advocacy and support the timely, coordinated delivery of community-supported outcomes.

Endorsing the Landscape Concept Plan for Tyrol Park does not commit Whitehorse City Council to funding or delivering the recommended projects at this stage. Implementation will be considered through the annual budget process, alongside other Council priorities.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorses the Draft Tyrol Park Landscape Concept Plan.

10.6 (cont)

KEY MATTERS

Tyrol Park is situated in Vermont South within the municipal ward of Terrara. This park spans approximately 2 ha in size, and it is classified as a neighbourhood open space in the Open Space Strategy 2025.

The park is surrounded by residential areas and located close to two retirement villages. It currently offers soccer and football goals for informal ball games, one play space (installed in 1998), and raised garden beds with diverse vegetation.

The Open Space Strategy 2025 *'recommends a high priority upgrade to Tyrol Park, upgrade to include picnic facility and additional unstructured recreation facilities. Additional information recommended to prepare a Landscape Concept Plan to guide the future upgrades to this reserve, in the context of future directions as part of the recommended Landscape Masterplan for Bushy Park/Lookout Trail Park/ Dandenong Creek Linear Park network. Note that the open space contributions are to fund the unstructured recreation facilities.'*

Key challenges identified through Round 1 Community and Stakeholder Engagement, along with findings from the site investigation, include:

- Poor path connectivity, with the southern boundary path incomplete, limiting safe and continuous walking circuits.
- Ageing playground no longer meets the community expectations and safety standards.
- Limited active and passive social recreation opportunities for the elderly population and intergenerational activities.
- The community consistently expressed a desire to retain the park's current green and peaceful character while enhancing the universal accessibility and providing social recreation opportunities for broader age groups.

Round 2 community and stakeholder engagement expressed strong support for the proposed pathway enhancements, upgraded play and social recreation facilities, and open space improvements. Some feedback focused on pathway materials and the potential impact on park character, while a concern was raised about the half basketball/netball court's proximity to the local street. A design review confirmed the proposed 8-metre landscape buffer as appropriate, the draft Landscape Concept Plan provides additional fencing for safety. In summary, the master plan responds to the above key challenges by identifying projects prioritised over fifteen years and beyond. These projects will improve the experience of the local community users for both organised sport and informal activities.

DISCUSSION, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS

The final draft plan for Tyrol Park, presents a comprehensive and site-responsive vision to guide public investment, community use, and long-term management over the next 15 years. It responds to the needs of the local community by enhancing path connections and accessibility, meeting

10.6 (cont)

growing demand for diverse social recreation opportunities, and supporting the preservation of green space and biodiversity values.

Drawing on detailed technical studies and extensive community engagement, the plans set out prioritised actions across three themes of enhancements including Access and Movement, Recreation facilities and amenities and Landscape and environmental character. Further details of the recommended actions and cost estimate can be found in Attachment section – 1 Tyrol Park - Final Draft Landscape Concept Plan Report.

Key Recommendations

- **Access and Movement:** A new path along the southern boundary of Tyrol Park is proposed to complete a full circuit loop. The plan also includes investigating a safe crossing point from the nearby retirement housing, to support a safe and enjoyable walking experience for senior residents, one of the park's key user groups.
- **Recreation Facilities and Amenities:** The play space, scheduled for renewal within the next five years, is proposed to include equipment suited to older children (8–12 years). A multipurpose half court and outdoor fitness equipment are also proposed to coincide with the play space renewal to provide recreation opportunities for people of all ages and cultural background and encourage intergenerational play to complement the existing informal oval with football and soccer goals. Additional seating is proposed near the play and social recreation area and along the paths to cater for people with limited mobility.
- **Landscape Character:** The plan recommends increasing tree canopy cover from 22% to 37% over the next 15 years, aligning with the goals of the Urban Forest Strategy. It also proposes diversifying the landscape through the creation of new garden beds with understorey planting along the southern and eastern boundaries and around the central lawn.

Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Report Details

Strategic Alignment	The Landscape Concept Plan for Tyrol will assist with delivering several themes of the Community Vision 2040 and the Strategic Directions of the Integrated Council Plan 2025-2029 including: • Theme 1 - Diverse and Inclusive Community • Theme 2 – Movement and Public Spaces • Theme 5 – Sustainable Climate and Environmental Care • Theme 6 – Whitehorse is an Empowered Collaborative Community • Theme 7 – Health and Wellbeing Meanwhile, the final draft plan is affiliated with a wide range of Council policies and together they will be delivering the overarching vision and strategic directions as outlined above. The policies include:
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10.6 (cont)

	• Whitehorse Open Space Strategy 2025 • Whitehorse Play Strategy 2011 / Play and Social Recreation Action Plan (in development) • Whitehorse Urban Forest Strategy 2021-2031 • Whitehorse Integrated Water Management Strategy 2022-2042 • Whitehorse Recreation Strategy 2015-2024 • Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025 • Whitehorse Climate Response Strategy 2023-2030
Financial and Resource Implications	The Landscape Concept Plan contains high, medium and low priority projects that if implemented will impact on Council's Capital and Recurrent budgets. • High priority projects are proposed from years 1-5 (FY2025/26 - FY2029/30) • Medium priority projects are proposed from year 6-10 (FY2030/31 - FY2034/35) • Long term projects are proposed for from year 11-15 (FY2035/36 - FY2039/40). <i>Implementation is considered to commence in FY25/26, as the playspace upgrade has already been scheduled in the Capital Works Program in response to asset condition.</i> The indicative cost for all projects is estimated at \$0.74 million, inclusive of project management fees where applicable. Within this, the indicative cost for high-priority projects is estimated at \$0.57 million is attributed to improve accessibility and recreational facility and amenity upgrades. These cost estimates are preliminary and subject to further feasibility assessments and detailed design processes, which will refine and confirm the cost of each component. In order to deliver on the Landscape Concept Plan objectives and works, it is anticipated that all identified projects will require a combination of funding sources, including Council contributions from rates and open space and development reserves and other levels of government. A proposed targeted funding mix is proposed to indicate the potential funding sources and the proposed percentage. The indicated percentage is developed based on the <i>Principles for Application of Financial Reserves for Capital Improvement Projects</i> which is adopted by Council as part of the <i>Council Budget FY24/25 (Table 1)</i>. All identified projects will be subject to availability of reserve balances and require a combination of funding sources.

10.6 (cont)

	<i>Table 1: Recommended application of funding split for Reserve funded Capital improvement projects. Exact funding split will be assessed and applied for each individual project based on scope and alignment to the reserve principles. Relevant project categories are highlighted in green.</i> <table><tr><th rowspan="2">Project Type</th><th colspan="3">Funding Split</th></tr><tr><th>Open Space Reserve</th><th>Development Reserve</th><th>Rates/ External Funding</th></tr><tr><td>Open Space Acquisition</td><td>100%</td><td>0%</td><td>0%</td></tr><tr><td>Open Space Improvements</td><td>100%</td><td>0%</td><td>0%</td></tr><tr><td>Open Space Planning</td><td>50%</td><td>0%</td><td>50%</td></tr><tr><td>Major Project (Recreation)</td><td>0%</td><td>50%</td><td>50%</td></tr><tr><td>Major Project (Municipal)</td><td>0%</td><td>75%</td><td>25%</td></tr><tr><td>Recreation Infrastructure Project</td><td>25%</td><td>25%</td><td>50%</td></tr></table>	Project Type	Funding Split			Open Space Reserve	Development Reserve	Rates/ External Funding	Open Space Acquisition	100%	0%	0%	Open Space Improvements	100%	0%	0%	Open Space Planning	50%	0%	50%	Major Project (Recreation)	0%	50%	50%	Major Project (Municipal)	0%	75%	25%	Recreation Infrastructure Project	25%	25%	50%
Project Type	Funding Split																															
	Open Space Reserve	Development Reserve	Rates/ External Funding																													
Open Space Acquisition	100%	0%	0%																													
Open Space Improvements	100%	0%	0%																													
Open Space Planning	50%	0%	50%																													
Major Project (Recreation)	0%	50%	50%																													
Major Project (Municipal)	0%	75%	25%																													
Recreation Infrastructure Project	25%	25%	50%																													
Legislative and Risk Implications	There are no legal or risk implications arising from the recommendation contained in this report.																															
Equity, Inclusion, and Human Rights Considerations	In developing this report to Council, the subject matter has been considered in accordance with the requirements of the <i>Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006</i>. It is considered that the subject matter does not raise any human rights issues.																															
Community Engagement	Stakeholder and community engagement occurred during two different phases of the project: Round 1 Community and Stakeholder Engagement January – February 2024 Purpose: Collected feedback on current uses and future aspirations for Tyrol Park. Consultation Summary is included as part of the Draft Landscape Concept Plan Report. Round 2 Community and Stakeholder Engagement February - March 2025 Purpose: Collected feedback on presented Draft Landscape Concept Plan and Report for the park.																															

10.6 (cont)

	Consultation Summary is included as part of the Final Draft Landscape Concept Plan Report. The Landscape Concept Plan has been informed by input from three sites' user groups, local residents, the broader Whitehorse community, Councillors, Council staff and other stakeholders. Community awareness of the surveys was achieved by a combination of letterbox drops to local residents, signs erected in three sites, and social media post during the survey periods. Consultation included two one on one meetings (external stakeholders), 2 stakeholder workshops (external), 'Your Say' surveys (community), community drop-in sessions (residents). Council received a total of 236 survey responses through the 'Your Say' community engagement platform. Further details regarding stakeholder and community engagement activities and outcomes are provided in the Engagement summary as part of the Landscape Concept Plan Report.
Innovation and Continuous Improvement	The proposed Landscape Concept Plan includes enhancements to the amenity of Tyrol Park in line with continuous improvement objectives.
Collaboration	The project managers from the Recreation and Open Space Development team have collaborated with officers in the below departments: • Project Delivery and Assets • Parks and Natural Environment • Community Engagement • Communications, Advocacy and Investment • Transport Engineering • Leisure and Recreation Services
Conflict of Interest	The <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> requires members of Council staff, and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council, to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates. Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

ATTACHMENT

- 1 Tyrol Park - Final Draft Landscape Concept Plan Report

10.7 Urban Forest and Integrated Water Management Strategies - Progress Report

Department

Parks and Natural Environment

Director Infrastructure

Attachment

SUMMARY

The Whitehorse Urban Forest Strategy 2021-2031 (UFS) was endorsed in September 2021, with five key objectives to support, protect, enhance, and grow our urban forest.

The Whitehorse Integrated Water Management Strategy 2022-2042 (IWMS) was endorsed in September 2022, to achieve all water being valued as a resource, healthy landscapes and waterways, and reduced flood risk.

The UFS and IWMS were developed collaboratively with our community. These strategies aim to protect and enhance liveability while mitigating the increasing pressure placed on the health and extent of our urban forest and support improved management of water sustainably across the municipality.

Both strategies have action plans to support their implementation. In August 2024, officers presented a progress report on the UFS to Council. This is planned to be undertaken annually with the addition of the IWMS this year.

This progress report presents a status update including:

- UFS snapshot on canopy cover targets
- High level summary of results to date
- Highlights of completed actions
- Summary of issues encountered in implementation of actions.

An overview and summary of the progress made on the Action Plans is supported by two attachments:

- Attachment 1 – UFS Actions Status Indicator – October 2025.
- Attachment 2 – IWMS Actions Status Indicator – October 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the report on progress of the implementation of the Urban Forest and Integrated Water Management Strategies Actions.

KEY MATTERS

In August 2024, officers presented a report to Councillors providing an update on the implementation of the actions from the UFS. This is the second annual update to Council on the progress of the UFS the IWMS has been included in the annual report.

10.7 (cont)

The 2025 progress status indicators include two additional categories (since the 2024 report) of 'ongoing' and 'annual' to better reflect the different phases of some of the actions that occur annually or multiple times during the life of the strategies.

It is important to note that Council endorsed the change of Action 5.4 - *Collaborate across sectors and regions to achieve better monitoring outcomes through Living Melbourne*, which was highlighted as 'off track' in 2024. The Living Melbourne program had ceased, and officers recommended that the action was amended to: *Collaborate across sectors and regions to achieve better monitoring outcomes*. This is now recorded as an ongoing action in the 2025 UFS actions status indicator.

DISCUSSION, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS**UFS snapshot on canopy cover targets**

Key targets of the UFS include to increase tree canopy to 27% by 2031 and tree canopy cover to 30% by 2050. Tree canopy is classed as vegetation taller than 3m in height.

The UFS commits to utilising the metric canopy cover percentage to reach the target. There was no updated set of data for the reporting last year. Council commissioned the acquisition, processing and classification of new LiDAR data in 2023, and acquired equivalent LiDAR data from 2018 so it could be compared to assess canopy change over time.

Based on the 2023 LiDAR, a canopy measurement was assessed with a total area of 1657.64 hectares, representing a canopy cover of 25.8% for the full extent of the City of Whitehorse. This measurement represents a 4.2 percentage point increase in canopy cover from Council's 2018 measurement.

	TOTAL AREA (ha)	2018 CANOPY (ha)	2018 CANOPY %	2023 CANOPY (ha)	2023 CANOPY %
CITY OF WHITEHORSE	6423.70	1388.86	21.6%	1657.64	25.8%

Table 1: Canopy Height Model derived canopy areas and percentage cover for full extent of City of Whitehorse.

High level summary of UFS results to date

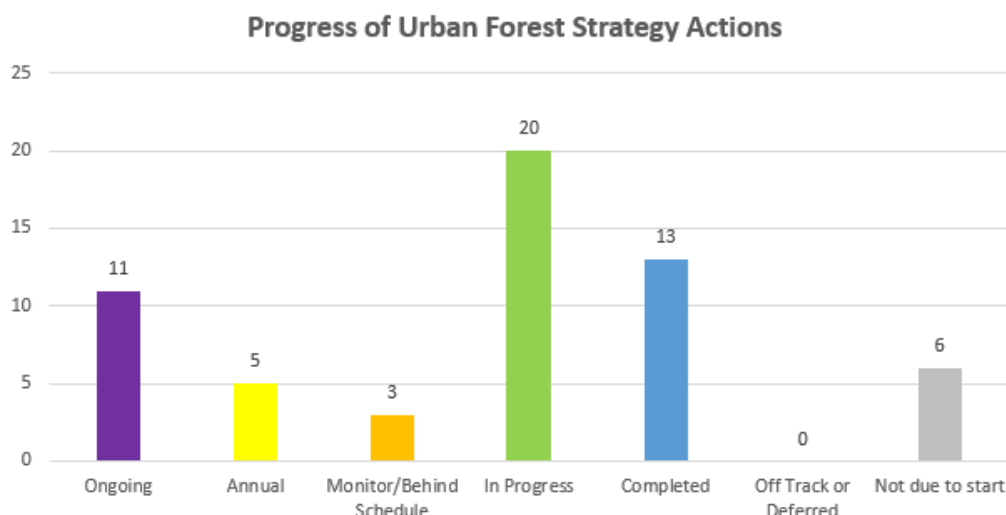
Below is a summary of the 58 actions being implemented in the UFS, including the new annual and ongoing status to highlight current progress. The UFS is entering Year 4 (full financial year budgeted actions).

The actions commence on different timeframes, or depending on funding and resources:

- Ongoing (11 actions) – these actions occur multiple times over the life of the strategy such as supporting Parkland Advisory Committees (PACs) with activities on Council managed land.

10.7 (cont)

- Annual (5 actions) – include planting progress, events and citizen science programs undertaken throughout the year.
- Completed (13 actions) – listed separately this year, a further 6 actions have been completed over the 2024/2025 financial year.
- In progress (20 actions) – there are several actions that have commenced as scheduled in the proposed estimated timeframes with six not due to start.
- Monitor/Behind schedule (3 actions).



An overall status is provided on all actions in Attachment 1 – UFS Actions Status Indicator – October 2025.

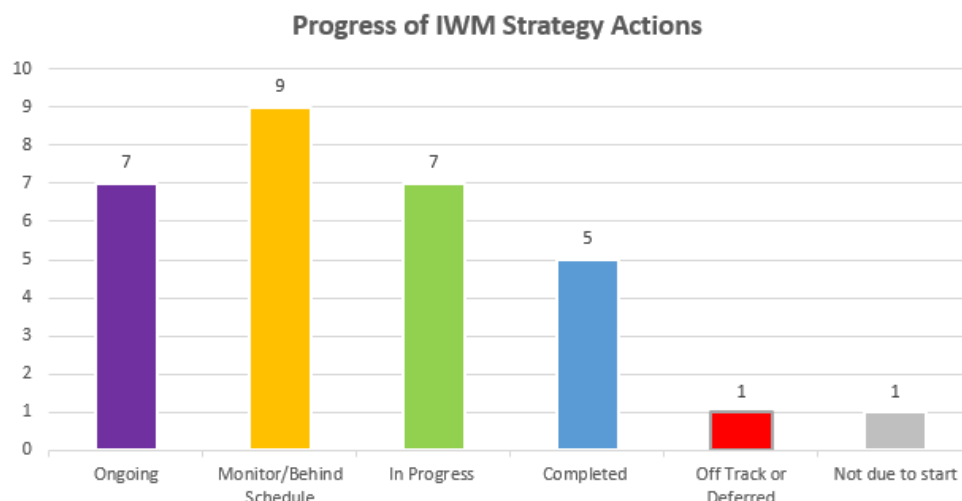
High level summary of IWMS results to date

Below is a summary of the 30 actions being implemented in the IWMS, including the ongoing status to highlight current progress. The IWMS is entering Year 3 (full financial year budgeted actions).

The actions commence on different timeframes, or depending on funding and resources:

- Ongoing (7 actions) – these actions occur multiple times over the life of the strategy such as capacity building, participation in collaborations or investigation of opportunities supporting water quality or management.
- Completed (5 actions) – 5 actions have been completed over the 2023/24 -2024/2025 financial years.
- In progress (7 actions) – there are several actions that have commenced as scheduled in the proposed estimated timeframes.
- Monitor/Behind schedule (9 actions).
- Off Track/Deferred (1 action) – This action has not yet commenced. There have been many priorities associated with major projects this year (NEL, SRL) which has taken precedence before resources can be assigned to begin this action.
- Not due to start (1 action).

10.7 (cont)



An overall status is provided on all actions in Attachment 2 – IWMS Actions Status Indicator – October 2025

Highlights of completed UFS actions

Six actions in the UFS were completed during 2024/2025.

Tree Mapping and Risk Management

Officers continued to capture standalone park trees to add to Council's tree inventory, recording most trees within our large open space park sites. Several low-risk small open spaces remain and will be collected during normal business activities as required.

As these trees are now included in Council's inventory they will be incorporated in our contract services for regular inspections to manage risk and maintain the ongoing health of these trees. Council's Tree Management Services contract contains specialist tree services.

Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) – Urban Greening and Water Efficiency

Both the UFS and IWMS actions related to implementation of the ESD policy for Council Building and Infrastructure were completed. New tools and resources have been developed to help with implementing the policy. Officers now have several internal resources including an ESD Matrix, ESD Matrix Process Flow and ESD Resource Hub to assist with these processes. Water efficiency and Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) are key objectives of the policy, and the ongoing implementation will be further supported via our internal project management framework. Resources are also available on our website for external use around this topic through the updated Good Landscape Design Guide (GLDG).

Whitehorse Open Space Strategy 2025 (WOSS) & Strategic Property Framework

Renewal of the WOSS was completed in July 2025. The WOSS was a comprehensive project involving extensive community. Council also endorsed the Strategic Property Framework that includes guiding principles

10.7 (cont)

to support property related decisions such as 'Environmental Responsibility', which includes the objective to support property practices that promote sustainability, biodiversity and climate resilience. This resource can be considered in conjunction with the WOSS endorsed criteria to consider property purchases and opportunities that improve connectivity.

Indigenous plant co-contribution program

Council has supported the expansion of the school indigenous plant program, and now funds plants through Greenlink and Bungalook Community Nurseries to support the nurseries financially while providing schools free plants for revegetation projects and increasing the number of indigenous plants being planted in the community.

Highlights of completed IWMS actions

Five actions in the IWMS have been completed over 2023/2024 & 2024/2025.

High level feasibility assessment of stormwater harvesting and large scale WSUD

Council has investigated four prospective WSUD sites, three of which have potential to proceed to detailed design for stormwater harvesting assets. Two of these potential opportunities are located within the vicinity of the Suburban Rail Loop (SRL) sites (where the SRL intersects with public open space). Officers have undertaken a high-level analysis of WSUD opportunities in conjunction with the Melbourne Water flood mapping project. The analysis included the development of selection criteria to prioritise sites which encompasses considerations on amenity, flood risk and stormwater treatment. This has provided a framework to identify high-priority areas and offers a high-level understanding of IWM opportunities. It should be noted that until detailed design is completed in relation to an identified IWM opportunity, asset type and budget will only be a high-level estimation.

Management and maintenance of IWM assets

A WSUD Asset Audit was completed in 2022/23, which included assessment of lifecycle (i.e., maintenance, rectification, and renewal) costs associated with Council's current WSUD asset base. The audit also provided recommendations around maintenance tasks and other associated works and processes.

The audit, which assessed asset conditions and functionality, provided feedback on asset design and made recommendations on future maintenance and capital improvements and provided the base for additional ongoing operational maintenance budget. Baseline treatment performance was also estimated as part of the audit work, which indicated Council is tracking better against IWMS targets than originally expected.

Community Programs

Council has reviewed and redeveloped the Waste and Sustainability Education Program for schools and early learning centres which now

10.7 (cont)

includes water as a topic. The program will be delivered with the possibility of expanding sessions should the program be positively received at the end of the initial 12-month period.

Other community engagement has been undertaken collaboratively across Council including World Environment Day activities featuring Beau Miles as a guest speaker (You Tuber), who introduced a following from a different age demographic. The Agents of Discovery App was used to explore parks and reserves that include water and biodiversity. Council officers supported and attended community events such as the Blackburn Lake Sanctuary Advisory Committee's Clean Waterways Expo.

External engagement activities to support delivery and promotion of Council's water-related projects have been completed as part of other activities. It is noted there is no dedicated resources or staffing for water-related community engagement or education work.

Summary of issues encountered

In implementing the Action Plans of both strategies officers have experienced several issues that have impacted progressing some actions.

Powerline Clearance

The UFS has 3 actions behind schedule regarding the ongoing challenge of maintaining electrical line clearance and the impact these regulations can have on the health and extent of the urban forest. There has been some good engagement with utility provider United Energy and estimates have now been provided on Aerial Bundle Cabling (ABC) options that can reduce Council's requirement to prune. Costs vary significantly with most low voltage wire conversions starting at \$15,000 per span but can be as much as \$120,000 per span of low voltage and high voltage cables. Community engagement will be undertaken as part of the Tree Management Policy to better understand community views on ABC projects. Further analysis will be undertaken following the outcomes of the Tree Management Policy engagement.

Big Build Projects

The State Government's Big Build projects - Suburban Rail Loop (SRL) and North East Link Project (NELP) - have continued to occupy significant officer time across the organisation. Officers have undertaken considerable work identifying and pursuing IWM and greening opportunities associated with the North East Link (NEL) and Suburban Rail Loop (SRL). These remain 'live' opportunities which continue to be pursued and negotiated.

Melbourne Water (MW) - flood modelling data

The MW delay in finalising flood modelling means there won't be an updated (and more structured) approach to planning flood mitigation projects (and WSUD within them) until May 2026.

10.7 (cont)

Conclusion

This report provides an update on the progress of the implementation of the actions from the UFS and IWMS. Several issues and themes have been highlighted impacting actions across both strategies. These are being monitored with some of these action outcomes dependent on external parties. Further consultation with the community and stakeholders during the revision of the Tree Management Policy will assist the process for delivery of these actions. Officers will continue to promote outcomes via the Our Urban Forest webpage to the community and report annually on the progress of the strategies to Council.

Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Report Details

Strategic Alignment	Natural, We are committed to protecting natural areas, promoting environmental sustainability, building climate resilience, and managing waste responsibly. The UFS and IWMS contribute to the collective efforts of Council in supporting the priorities and delivery of the Whitehorse 2040 Community Vision with an emphasis on Theme 5: Sustainable Climate and Environmental Care. Council's endorsed Integrated Council Plan further supports the actions within the UFS and IWMS. Integrated Council Plan 2025-2029 Strategic Direction 4: Natural Objectives and Strategies 4.1 and 4.2 4.1: Enhanced and protected natural and green spaces. 4.2: An environmentally sustainable and climate resilient City. The UFS and IWMS align with and support the delivery of plans and other strategies including but not limited to the Climate Response Strategy 2023-2030 and Whitehorse Open Space Strategy (2025) with strategic directions focussed on the environment. State Government prepared Catchment Integrated Water Management Plans for Dandenong and Yarra Catchments. Interim Urban Forest Policy – Tree Management Plan which outlines how trees are maintained and managed on public land owned and managed by Council including street trees and park trees.
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10.7 (cont)

Financial and Resource Implications	There are no financial or resource implications arising from the recommendation contained in this report. Officers will prepare budget proposals for consideration as required to continue to implement the actions of the UFS and IWMS in future years. This report highlights the importance of maintaining existing budgets to continue progress through the IWMS and UFS actions.
Legislative and Risk Implications	The UFS and IWMS identifies a range of responsibilities under various legislation and regulations related to trees, vegetation and water management that are relevant to Council which include: • The strategies support the legislative responsibilities listed under the Local Government Act (LGA) 2020 and the Climate Change Act 2017 that both require Council to consider climate change in its policies, strategies, services, and asset management. • EPA Amendment Act 2017 general environmental duty (GED) – will apply to all Victorians (including local government), requiring the reduction of harm from activities to human health and the environment. • Urban stormwater management guidance (EPA, 2021) • Urban Stormwater Best Practice Environmental Management Guidelines (BPEM) • Whitehorse Planning Scheme – Significant Landscape Overlays (SLO's). • Whitehorse Planning Scheme VC154 – Integrated Water Management • Electricity Safety Act 1998 and Electricity Safety (Electrical Line Clearance) Regulations 2020 • Whitehorse City Council Electric Line Clearance Management Plan (ELCMP)
Equity, Inclusion, and Human Rights Considerations	It is considered that the subject matter does not raise any human rights issues.
Community Engagement	No community engagement was required for this report.

10.7 (cont)

	However, it is important to note that both strategies underwent extensive community engagement during their development and community feedback influenced the content and structure of both documents and individual action items involve consultative activities as required.
Innovation and Continuous Improvement	The completed actions of UFS and IWMS continue to support improved service delivery and planning opportunities. The acquisition, processing and classification of new LiDAR data provides: • Updated data on our urban forest canopy for ongoing comparison and further analysis. • Innovative future planning opportunities across the municipality for our urban forest. Updating the tree inventory to include our large open space sites continues to improve tree risk management and auditing processes which provides accurate information on the health of our urban forest while mitigating risk through regular inspections. New tools and resources to support officers in implementing ESD policy on Council Building and Infrastructure improves internal processes enabling these tasks to be a part of normal business as usual activities. Asset management audits and subsequent maintenance of existing IWM assets improves our understanding of our assets condition, functionality, capital improvements and ongoing operational expenditure as well as supporting the targets set within the IWMS.
Collaboration	This progress report has been compiled in collaboration with several officers across many teams from across the organisation. The teams/departments involved included Leisure & Recreation Services, Project Delivery & Assets, Engineering & Investment, Environmental Sustainability, Strategic Planning, Statutory Planning and various teams within the Parks & Natural Environment areas. Externally Council officers rely on many stakeholders to support the delivery of these actions. Our activities work across catchments and municipal boundaries through partnerships with

10.7 (cont)

	Melbourne Water, local government colleagues, Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action Victoria (DEECA) and are especially highlighted through collaborations such as Gardiners Creek (Kooyongkoot) Regional Collaboration, DEECA IWM Forums and the recently formed Mullum Mullum Collaboration. Council's Parkland Advisory Committees are involved in many actions such as revegetation projects and maintenance of our urban forest. Council and community groups continue to be involved in collaboration through the Environment and Sustainability Reference Group (ESRG), KooyongKoot Alliance, Bellbird Residents Advocacy Group (BRAG) and Combined Residents of Whitehorse Action Group (CROWAG).
Conflict of Interest	Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

ATTACHMENT

- 1 UFS Actions Status Indicator - October 2025
- 2 IWMS Actions Status Indicator - October 2025

10.8 Supporting Businesses in Whitehorse: Signing the Small Business Friendly Charter

Department

Communications, Advocacy and Investment
Director Corporate Services

SUMMARY

The Small Business Friendly Charter is an initiative of the Victorian Small Business Commission (VSBC). This Charter is a commitment between councils and the VSBC to work together to create a fair and competitive trading environment for Victorian small businesses.

The Charter formalises Council's ongoing commitment to support local small businesses and aligns strongly with the goals outlined in the Whitehorse Integrated Council Plan 2025–2029, particularly under Strategy Direction Economy:

“A resilient and dynamic economy, with support for local businesses, diverse opportunities, and job and investment attraction.”

Small businesses are important to the Whitehorse economy, accounting for 98% of all businesses and contributing significantly to local employment, investment, and community vibrancy.

The Victorian Small Business Friendly Council Charter was established by the VSBC to create a fairer and more competitive trading environment for small businesses across the state.

Developed in partnership with local councils, the Charter outlines what small businesses can expect from local government and encourages councils to demonstrate leadership in supporting their local business community through a pledge to six key commitments.

The six commitments of the Charter are:

1. Minimise disruption to small business from infrastructure projects
2. Support local small business networks
3. Streamlined permit approvals processes for small businesses
4. Prompt payments to small business suppliers
5. Information and guidance for small businesses
6. Open communication between the VSBC and Whitehorse City Council

More than 66 Victorian councils have signed the Charter, recognising that small businesses are essential to local economies and community wellbeing.

Over the past 12 months, Council has worked closely with the Victorian State Government to review and refine how we support our business community. The signing of the Small Business Friendly Council Charter with

10.8 (cont)

the VSBC marks an important milestone in our journey to becoming a truly business-friendly council.

With Whitehorse City Council's recent introduction of the Business Permit Support Service, which helps businesses navigate the permit process, and Council's commitment to work towards 14-day payment terms for small business suppliers, Whitehorse now meets all Charter requirements and is in a strong position to confidently sign the Charter.

The official signing ceremony will take place on Tuesday 18 November 2025. It will be attended by Victorian Small Business Commissioner Lynda McAlary-Smith, alongside invited Council officers, executives, and Councillors, who will witness the Mayor and CEO sign the Charter.

The signing of the Charter sends a clear message to the business community that Council is here to help local businesses succeed. It reinforces that small businesses are the heart of our community, they employ local people, support families, and keep our neighbourhoods vibrant. When we make it easier for businesses to do business in Whitehorse, we are not just supporting local enterprise, we are strengthening the wellbeing and prosperity of the entire community.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Signs up to the Small Business Friendly Charter and authorises the Mayor and CEO to sign.
2. Works towards fulfilling each commitment within the first 12 months of signing the Charter and provide a progress report to Council and the Victorian Small Business Commission at the end of this 12 month period.
3. Acknowledges that officers will provide feedback as required to the Victorian Small Business Commission to enable them to review the value of the charter and if necessary, work with them to modify this as appropriate after 12 months. Any proposed material change to the Charter would be brought back to Council for future consideration.

KEY MATTERS

There are six commitments Councils are asked to make in signing the Charter. Table 1 provides information regarding each commitment, Whitehorse City Council's progress already made and future initiatives.

10.8 (cont)

Table 1: Mapping Charter Commitments to Whitehorse's Current & Proposed Practices

No.	Charter Commitment	VSBC Charter Commitments	Whitehorse City Council Alignment and Actions	Collaboration Required
1	Minimise disruption to small business from infrastructure projects	VSBC provides councils with resources for managing disruption, including dispute resolution and advocacy. Council refers to VSBC's Small Business Engagement Guidelines and provides the Guide for Small Businesses on Managing Disruption. External project managers are requested to apply the same approach.	Council will apply the VSBC's engagement principles when planning works and ensure early, clear communication with businesses about disruptions, signage, and access.	I & ED Team Transport Team Design and Construction Team Engineering Approvals Community Laws
2	Support local small business networks	VSBC and councils distribute the <i>Guide to Building Stronger Networks</i> . Both actively engage with existing networks and identify new opportunities. Include association representatives in small business discussions.	Council will continue to provide strong support to existing trader groups and explore opportunities to assist new trader groups in establishing themselves. Association representatives will be included in relevant small business discussions.	New and existing trader groups. I & ED Team (as project lead)

10.8 (cont)

3	Streamlined permit approvals processes for small businesses	Councils work towards improving permit approvals for small business. May include consolidating processes or implementing new strategies to streamline approvals.	Council has recently introduced a Business Permit Support Service with a dedicated 0.8 FTE. A continuous improvement approach will ensure the service is fully maximised as the program develops.	All relevant regulatory teams Customer Service I & ED Team (as project lead)
4	Prompt payments to small business suppliers	Councils and the VSBC initiate processes to ensure small business invoices are paid within 14 days.	Council currently applies standard payment terms of 30 days and internal payment processing. Explore introducing an expedited payment stream for small business suppliers, targeting a 14 day payment turn around time; monitor and report performance.	Procurement Team Finance Team All officers that approve business invoices. I & ED Team (Project Lead)
5	Information and guidance for small businesses	VSBC liaises with Small Business Victoria to develop resources and share updates. Councils link businesses to business.vic.gov.au , provide the Retail Leases Information Brochure, and share relevant VSBC resources. Both parties identify opportunities for new resources.	Council will continue to promote the VSBC and Small Business Victoria resources on the Business Whitehorse website and distribute relevant information through newsletters and workshops and other communication channels.	I & ED Team

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6	Open communication between the VSBC and Whitehorse City Council	VSBC advocates for small business and coordinates with agencies on issues raised by councils. Councils notify the VSBC of issues affecting local businesses, refer disputes to VSBC's resolution team, and promote VSBC services on their websites.	Council will continue to actively engage with VSBC, ensuring local business issues are communicated promptly and that dispute resolution services are promoted through Council channels.	I & ED Team
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DISCUSSION, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS**Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Report Details**

Financial and Resource Implications	The commitments outlined align closely with Whitehorse City Council's existing priorities and practices. The commitment to prompt payment of small business suppliers within 14 days represents the most challenging element to implement. While Council is fully committed to achieving this goal, it will require a staged approach to review current processes, assess system capabilities, and determine any adjustments needed to financial workflows. A dedicated project brief will be developed to guide implementation, including a detailed assessment of operational and financial risks. There may be minor financial implications if changes are required to Council's payment platform or workflow systems to support faster processing times. However, no material financial impacts are anticipated beyond this. All other Charter commitments are expected to be delivered within existing budgets and resources.
Legislative and Risk Implications	There are no legal implications should Council sign the charter and not deliver, however, there are reputational risk concerns with committing to, and then not honouring such a commitment to local small businesses
Equity, Inclusion, and Human Rights Considerations	It is considered that the subject matter does not raise any human rights issues.
Community Engagement	We have raised this initiative with the Whitehorse Business Group and MegaMile Precinct Group. The

10.8 (cont)

	groups have not voiced any concerns at Council becoming a signatory.
Innovation and Continuous Improvement	This initiative is attempting to enhance our customer service offerings to businesses in Whitehorse. The initiative will aim to: • Strengthen relationships with local business • Encourage a business-friendly culture within Council • Drive practical improvements • Align with industry best practice and State Government priorities • Celebrate local success and attract investment
Collaboration	External Collaborators: • Victorian Small Business Commissioner (VSBC) are the lead partner, providing the Charter framework, guidance and support. • Local businesses and traders associations who are key beneficiaries and feedback partners for continuous improvement. • Business Victoria provide information and support programs for local businesses. Internal Collaborators: • Table 1 highlights the internal collaborations necessary to deliver on each commitment. • Our internal collaborators also consist of the CEO and Executive Leadership Team in providing leadership endorsement as well as the Mayor and Councillors who act as advocates and public representatives of the Charter.
Conflict of Interest	The <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> requires members of Council staff, and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council, to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates. Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

10.9 Records of Informal Meetings of Councillors

Department Governance and Integrity
Director Corporate Services

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the Records of Informal Meetings of Councillors.

Pre Meeting Briefing – 27 October 2025 – 6.30pm to 6.48pm		
Matter/s Discussed:	Councillors Present	Officers Present
- 27 October Council Meeting Agenda	Cr Andrew Davenport (Mayor) Cr Prue Cutts (Deputy Mayor) Cr Hayley Weller Cr Blair Barker Cr Jarrod Gunn Cr Daniel Griffiths Cr Kirsten Langford Cr Jason Martin Cr Kieran Simpson Cr Peter Allan Cr Ben Stennett	S McMillan S Cann S White L Letic J Green A Ghastine V Ferlaino S Candeland A Wintle
Others Present: N/A		
Disclosures of Conflict of Interest: Nil		
Councillor /Officer attendance following disclosure: N/A		

11 Councillor Delegate and Conference / Seminar Reports**11.1 Reports by Delegates and Reports on Conferences / Seminars Attendance**

Department Governance and Integrity
Director Corporate Services

Verbal reports from Councillors appointed as delegates to community organisations/committees/groups and attendance at conferences and seminars related to Council Business.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the:

1. Reports from delegates, and;
2. Reports on conferences/seminars attendance.

12 Confidential Reports

13 Close Meeting