



Disability Access and Inclusion Plan **2019-2022**

celebrating
contributions
of people with
a disability





Mayor's Message

Cr Samantha McIntosh

I'm pleased to present the 2019-2022 Disability Access and Inclusion Plan for the City of Ballarat.

Ballarat is home to a wide range of industries, services, historic tourist attractions and modern events and boasts a highly connected and vibrant community. As Mayor, I am proud that Ballarat is known as a progressive, inclusive place to live, filled with citizens from a diverse range of backgrounds and abilities.

As a major service provider and employer, the City of Ballarat has a clear role in increasing inclusion and access for people who live in this city. This plan allows the City of Ballarat to continue to prioritise key actions and align future investment to continue to break down barriers through inclusive and accessible programs, employment, events, services, buildings and infrastructure.

I thank the Disability Advisory Committee members for their work on this plan and their continued strategic advice to the City of Ballarat as we all strive to ensure our city is inclusive and accessible for everyone.

The City of Ballarat respectfully acknowledges the Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung people – traditional custodians of the land on which we live and work.

Disability Advisory Committee (DAC) Chair Message

Cr Belinda Coates

As a committee, we have witnessed significant change in the disability services sector and, with it, a change in community expectations in relation to ensuring all people are valued as active members of our community, regardless of their access and inclusion needs.

As the Chairperson, my role is to ensure that the committee functions properly, that there is full participation during meetings and that effective decisions are made and carried out. As the Chairperson, it is very pleasing to see the benefits that have come from making it easier for people with disability to pursue their passions and interests and to participate fully in our community.

This plan sets out new principles that will continue to guide our activities and ongoing advice to the City of Ballarat, ensuring we move beyond minimum inclusion requirements and embracing best practice in all facets of the City of Ballarat's business. We will also continue to focus on ensuring that matters related to inclusion and access are well understood by the community, acknowledging that the City of Ballarat has a leadership role in supporting integrated responses that seek to improve access and inclusion.

The committee is proud to showcase its achievements from the previous plan. We look forward to working with community members, carers, service providers and government partners in shaping disability and inclusion policy at the City of Ballarat and delivering positive outcomes on behalf of the community.

Thanks to the committee for their incredible commitment, professionalism and contribution.

Definitions

within the context of this plan:

Disability: In line with the definition in the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, it can be summarised as any impairment of a physical, intellectual, psychiatric, neurological or sensory nature. Disability can be either temporary or permanent and something that is acquired or present from birth. While traditional definitions of disability have focused on the restriction or lack of ability on the part of an individual, disability advocates recommend the need to view disability as a social construct. Using this model, it is the social attitudes and barriers that 'disable' an individual from being a full and inclusive member of the community. This shift in thinking is of fundamental importance to the effective implementation of a Disability Action Plan.

Access: In the case of a facility, it is readily usable by an individual; in the case of a program or activity, it is presented or provided in such a way that an individual can participate, with or without auxiliary aids; in the case of electronic resources, it is able to be used with or without assistive computer technology.

Inclusion: Enabling the involvement of people with disabilities in programs, activities and facilities with their non-disabled peers.

Compliance: A minimum standard that is achieved that makes a public place or site, with regard to its accessibility, passable in accordance with the Federal Disability Discrimination Act 1992.

Best Practice: Making sure that the best possible outcome is achieved for people with disability regarding access and inclusion.

Advocacy: Acting, speaking or writing to promote, protect and defend the human rights of people with disability. This can be acting with or on behalf of people with disability.

Capacity Building: The process by which individuals, communities and organisations obtain, improve and retain the skills, knowledge, tools, equipment and other resources needed to function at an optimal level.

Assistive Technology: Technology used to assist a person with a disability e.g. wheelchair, hand splints, computer-based equipment.

Adult Change Place (aka "Marveloo"): A Marveloo is a transportable Adult Changing Place. Adult Changing Places are larger than standard accessible toilets with a fully accessible toilet, an adult-sized change table, and a tracking hoist to meet the needs of people with high support needs.

Demonstrating Universal Design: Designing programs, services, tools and facilities so that they are useable, without modification, by the widest range of users possible.

Universal Design is a design concept, not a type of product.

The principles of universal design can be applied to concrete items like products, buildings and open spaces, as well as intellectual activities such as designing learning programs. It can also be applied to policies and practices.

Universal design must also form part of ongoing conversations about sustainability, resilience, health and wellbeing.

The City of Ballarat delivered Universal Design training to the organisation's officers and will continue to consider universal access and design in delivery of the built environment, programs and events. The DAC continue to advocate for Universal Design principles to be considered in all design in Ballarat and have committed to developing an awareness campaign as part of the 2019-2022 Plan.

Advocacy

Artist at work, SCOPE

Introduction

People with a disability want to be able to live, work and socialise in the same way as everyone else. They want the same opportunities to use services, such as safe and reliable transport, easily accessible buildings and public spaces and support from families, friends and communities to fulfil their aspirations. Developing a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan that specifically considers the needs of people with a disability helps Council and the City of Ballarat to understand the obstacles that prevent people from being a full and inclusive member of the community, enabling the wider community to develop and implement actions that focus on reducing barriers to access.



Workplace training, Specialist School Farm

The City of Ballarat's Role

The City of Ballarat plays an important role in ensuring that everyone who lives in the municipality can participate in all aspects of community life and to fulfil their own aspirations. The City of Ballarat also has responsibility for both local government service delivery and as an employer.

Disability Action and Inclusion Plans are a requirement of the Victorian Disability Act 2006. The plan also assists the City of Ballarat to meet its obligations under Federal and State Government anti-discrimination legislation, promoting the rights of people with disabilities and access issues so they can participate in all facets of community life.

In addition to the Disability Act, the City of Ballarat has legal obligations under the:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities
- Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act, and
- Victorian Equal Opportunity Act

This is the City of Ballarat's fourth Disability Access and Inclusion Plan. The 2019-2022 plan builds on the significant gains from the City of Ballarat's investment in capacity building across its operations and its advocacy in shaping key strategic projects in the city.

The City of Ballarat is committed to reporting on key milestones and activities on an annual basis and will share our success and case studies. The City of Ballarat will also continue to consult stakeholders, carers, families and services to ensure their priorities are reflected in key activities for the life of this plan.

The Disability Advisory Committee (DAC)

The DAC provides expert advice to the City of Ballarat on matters relating to access and inclusion for people living in Ballarat. The role of the DAC requires tenacity and patience, the committee often advocates for several years for positive change in the built and social environment. The DAC is made up of individuals with expertise in the built environment, carers, disability services providers and people with lived experience as family members or with a disability.

The DAC has a key role in ensuring that the City of Ballarat's decision-making is informed by best practice around inclusion and access policy and design principles.

Advice and
Support

Capacity
Building



"The design of the Inclusive Play Space makes it possible for both of my children to play together and to play with their friends too. It really is inclusive play"

Parent

Key Achievements of 2015-2017 plan

Young people and their families

The award-winning Victoria Park Inclusive Play Space is a dynamic location that can evolve to meet Community needs. It attracts many people, both local and from out of town.

Sporting facilities

Accessibility upgrades have been delivered to improve access at sporting facilities, including the Alfredton Recreation Reserve and Marty Busch Reserve.

Improving access at Mars Stadium will also continue to be a major focus for the DAC, particularly working on increasing seating and amenities for people with disability and their families.



Mars Stadium





Auslan interpreter and live captioning

Events

In 2017, the City of Ballarat began hiring an Adult Change facility (Marveloo) so it could provide greater access and inclusion to local events for some members of the community with disability. In early 2018, the City of Ballarat was successful in securing \$100,000 funding from Changing Places to construct a transportable Adult Changing Place (Marveloo).

The Ballarat Marveloo will have semi-permanent positions at Mars Stadium and in the North Gardens. It will also be able to be transported to various events in Ballarat and the district.

Advice was also provided in relation to improvements to access, via the upgraded and levelled footpath at the Regent Theatre.

Auslan interpretation was provided at events including Opera Australia, Sovereign Hill and Eureka Centre.



"All of us were so in awe of the Marveloo, it is great for assisting people with disability. It is totally respectful of people with disability, their carers and family. We were all so pleased with the Marveloo."



Footpath improvements at Parent Place in the CBD

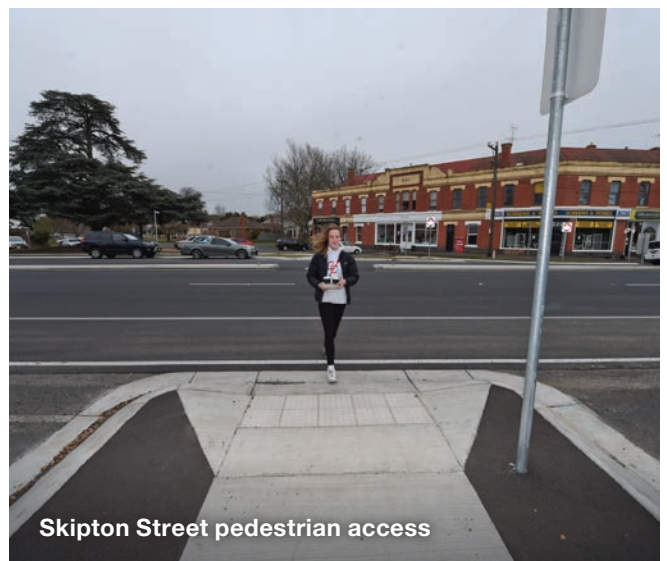
Making life easier

The DAC's commitment to advocating and lobbying has had a profound influence on systemic change in the City of Ballarat and in the community. Some change can take time, from the initial crafting of an idea to following it through to fruition, for example, the Victoria Park Inclusive Play Space – the idea of which came from the DAC and took several years to become a reality.

The DAC will continue to work towards making Ballarat as inclusive as possible for people with disability.

The City of Ballarat, working with the DAC, has partnered with various levels of government to achieve positive outcomes, influencing and prioritising access in thoroughfare and road works including:

- Gillies Street Specialist School pedestrian crossing
- Footpath improvements at Parent Place in the CBD
- Footpath continuation Ranger Barracks – Avenue of Honour
- Skipton Street pedestrian access
- Implementation of 40km zone and extended crossing times within the CBD precinct



Skipton Street pedestrian access



Footpath continuation, Avenue of Honour

consultation

40

Implementation
of 40km zone and
extended crossing
times within the
CBD precinct



Gillies Street Specialist School pedestrian crossing

Disability In Our Community

The Stats



Around **one in five** people in Australia report having a disability

Almost **one third** of people with disability have a profound or severe disability ¹



By **2031**, there could be more than **30,000** people in Ballarat living with a disability ³

Estimates predict more than

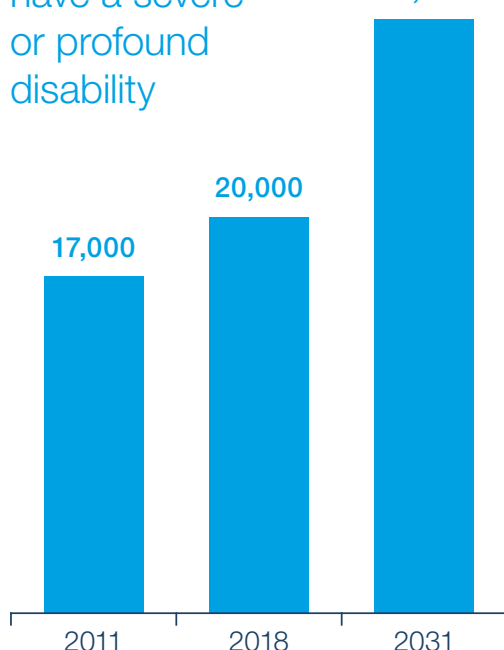
20,000

people in Ballarat have some form of disability, and around

6,600

have a severe or profound disability

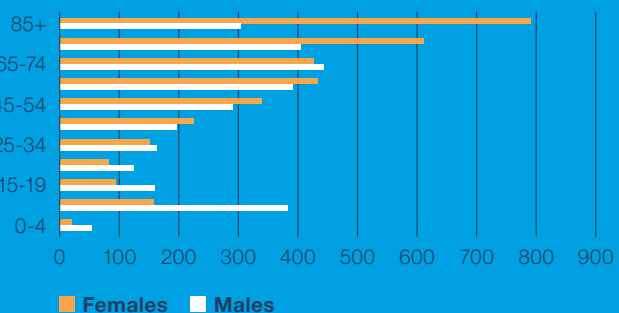
30,000



The likelihood of living with a disability increases with age. In Ballarat, almost **48%** of people needing assistance with a core activity are **aged 65 or over**.

Women have a longer average life span, resulting in more older women in the community. However, due to the types of health conditions women experience, the proportion of women needing assistance with core activities over the age of 75 (30 per cent of women aged over 75) is also higher than men (22 per cent) ²

People needing assistance with a core activity by gender and age – Ballarat



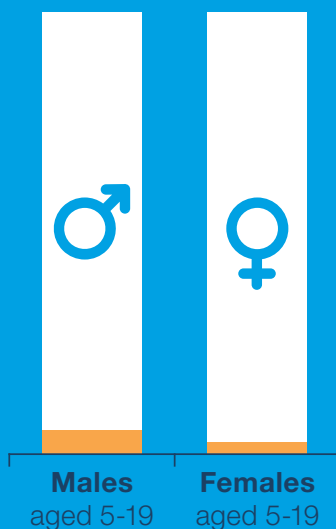
As the **population** of Ballarat **increases** and the **proportion of older people** in the population increases, the level of disability in the community is likely to **increase significantly**



A local survey showed

one out of every two

people with a disability have been limited by a **lack of transport** ⁴



In **younger age groups**, men have **higher rates** of disability (5.5 per cent of males aged 5 to 19 compared to 2.7 per cent for females). This is often diagnosed as children enter school, and partly due to children being diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders ²

People with disabilities experience **higher rates of unemployment**. In Ballarat,

15.7%

of people with a disability were unemployed

compared to 7%

of people without a disability ²

A national survey has shown people with a disability **aged 15 to 24** years were

10x

times more likely to report the experience of

discrimination

than those aged 65 years and over ¹

1. Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2015 cat.no.4430.0

2. ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

3. Victoria in Future 2016

4. VicHealth Indicators Survey 2011



The Principles

The City of Ballarat will consult with the community, the DAC, other stakeholders and councillors to agree activities and focus.

These activities will be aligned to the following principles, which seek to provide an overarching aspiration and requirement when considering disability and inclusion matters:

Exclusion is not acceptable.

Early planning and consideration of inclusion and accessibility issues in community events, programs and infrastructure will ensure that the needs of people with a disability are not an afterthought, maximising participation, inclusion and access.

Inclusive design solutions can co-exist with heritage values.

The Ballarat built environment is rich in heritage buildings and infrastructure. The DAC believes inclusive solutions that improve inclusion and access can co-exist with our historical landscape and that early consultation with the committee on design options will make Ballarat more inclusive for everyone.

"It's an awesome show to be involved in, we are part of a network and help people with disability connect with the community."

The award winning Radioactive crew (Voice FM)



Recognition



Workplace training,
Specialist School Farm Café

Lobbying

Technology can be an enabler of access and inclusion.

Assistive technologies not only have the potential to increase personal independence for people, but also to increase inclusion in workplaces and public space. There will be emerging opportunities to ensure infrastructure and its information and communications systems utilise assistive technologies to increase access and inclusion across the city.

Best practice and evidence, beyond compliance.

Following best practice ensures access and inclusion are well designed for everyone.

Compliance is a minimum standard while best practice and having an evidence-based approach ensures a more inclusive community from the start without having to retrofit later. The City of Ballarat chooses to follow best practice.

Context matters – the bigger picture and changing policy environment are understood.

It is important that the City of Ballarat is well supported to understand the broader issues related to disability policy and projects both nationally, state-wide and regionally when making decisions in relation to access and inclusion matters across all City of Ballarat portfolios.



Workplace training,
Specialist School Farm Café



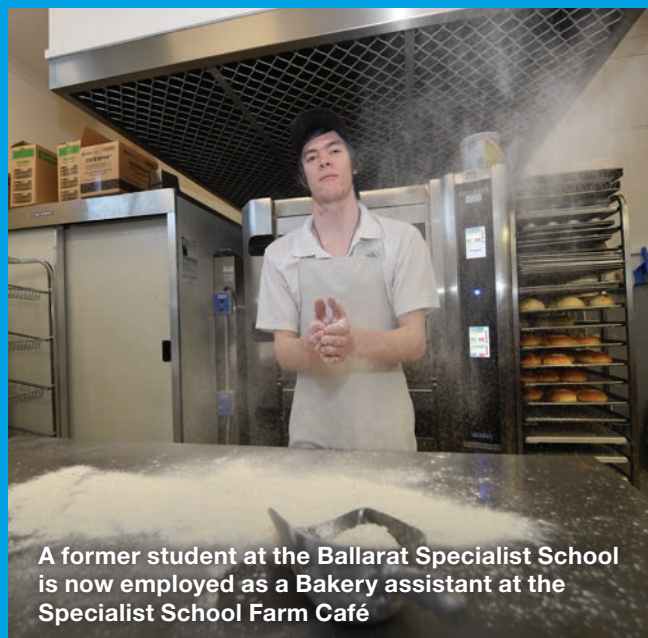
"I love my job
at BRI" (BRI -
Ballarat Regional
Industries)

Key Priorities

2019-2022

As the city changes and grows, the City of Ballarat and the DAC will continue to advocate for and strive to be leaders of best practice in access and inclusion. They will work with people with a disability, their families and service providers to agree priority activities and areas of focus on an annual basis.

Feedback



Priorities 2019-2022

Planning	Community Participation	Communication and Information	Human Rights and Advocacy	Workforce
<p>Include access and inclusion principles within Council's key strategic plans and policy documents. Ensure that accessibility features and requirements are included in the planning of events, new projects, precincts, building and infrastructure works.</p> <p>Progressively improve the accessibility to existing City of Ballarat buildings and infrastructure.</p> <p>It is the intent of City of Ballarat to balance access and heritage, that preserving heritage does not mean that access and inclusion is overlooked.</p>	<p>Develop and advance strategies that systematically remove barriers to participation by providing equitable opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in all aspects of community life.</p>	<p>Improve access to information that supports informed decision-making, and increases awareness of services, opportunities and entitlements.</p>	<p>Advance inclusion of people with a disability in community life by raising awareness of the issues faced by people with disabilities and commit to promoting and protecting their human rights.</p>	<p>Increase employment opportunities for people with a disability through the development of inclusive training programs, strengthened recruitment relationships and pathways to workforce participation.</p>

Areas of Focus

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built environment • Transport • Services • Governance • Council Plans and Strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility • Events • Getting involved • Consultation • Engagement • Inclusion • Arts and Culture • Recreation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services • National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) • Accessible formats • Promotion • Social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership • Decision-making • Partnerships • Crime and family violence • Housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment • Engagement • Training • Education and awareness • Economic development
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Artists at work, SCOPE

Planning and Reporting

Planning of specific actions for the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan will involve a whole of Council approach, in partnership with Council's Disability Advisory Committee (DAC). This process will be informed by the community's issues of importance through consultation and identifying and developing opportunities within the Council Plan and budget process on an annual basis.

The monitoring and evaluating of achievements and progress over the life of the Plan will also require a whole of Council approach. The Engaged Communities portfolio will lead the process with each business unit being responsible for evaluating specific identified initiatives, as well as broader business unit improvements and achievements in access and inclusion.

An annual evaluation report will then be provided to the DAC and Council detailing progress against identified areas of action.

Expert Advice -
Universal Design



Inclusive Play Space



Contact

If you wish to report an access or inclusion concern, or for more information, contact the City of Ballarat Customer Service at The Phoenix, 25 Armstrong Street South, Ballarat. Phone 5320 5500, email info@ballarat.vic.gov.au, or visit **ballarat.vic.gov.au**

If you are Deaf, hard of hearing or have a speech impairment, contact the City of Ballarat through the National Relay Service on 133 677. For more information visit **relayservice.gov.au**

Acknowledgements

Thank you:

- Victorian Government for supporting the Rural and Deaf Access programs at the City of Ballarat
- Maroondah City Council for Marveloo design