

**Social Policy Framework** 



Part A: City of Ballarat So	cial Policy Framework
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The City of Ballarat is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all members of our community. As part of the 2017-2021 Council Plan it was identified that a Social Policy Framework articulating The City of Ballarat's position on key social issues would be developed to contribute to the goal of 'Liveability: improving the quality of life for our community'1.

The City of Ballarat Social Policy Framework articulates the principles, considerations, roles and responsibilities that guide the City of Ballarat's policy development in areas of social concern and wellbeing. The position statements which accompany the Social Policy Framework consolidate existing and related social policy from across the City of Ballarat to provide clarity about the City of Ballarat's policy position, key messages, roles and responsibilities regarding specific social issues, and will be added to over time.

#### SOCIAL POLICY AND THE ROLE OF LOCAL **GOVERNMENT**

According to Wolf (2000): "A policy is a course of action or inaction chosen by public authorities to address a given problem or interrelated set of problems"<sup>2</sup>. Social policy can take many forms. It can be formal or informal, and it can consist of actions, guidelines, principles, laws, and regulations<sup>3</sup>. Social policy aims to improve people's wellbeing and is especially concerned with the welfare of those who experience some form of disadvantage. Social policy extends beyond a narrow definition of social services and supports - it is about how we work, live and spend our time, and it helps determine how we come together to meet human needs, such as housing, employment, education, recreation, leisure, health, safety and the care of children4. According to the Caledon Institute of Social Policy (2003)<sup>5</sup>, local governments have significant opportunities to engage in social policy and planning initiatives. Local governments are in a position to promote awareness of the pressing social needs in the community, and of the importance of social investment. This includes fostering a sense of responsibility for social wellbeing among all sectors, including business, community groups, and other levels of government. There are several significant reasons for local government investment in social issues: Cities and towns are the place where individuals and families receive services and participate in their community:

In many cases, services are cost-shared between levels of government but delivered locally:

Municipal government is the level of government that is closest to the people it represents. This offers a first-hand knowledge of the needs of the community and its residents:

The local level is where the integration of services occurs; and,

It is at the local level where public-community partnerships are likely to be built.



Local resident attending library event

## Part A: City of Ballarat

**PRINCIPLES** 

**EQUITY** 

**INCLUSION** 

**LEADERSHIP** 

### **Accountability**

Is there a legislative mandate for Council? Are there responsibilities taken on through other agreements?

### **Capacity**

What is Council's ability to act in terms of resources. knowledge and skills

### Relationships

What are the current roles of other organisations, the relationships among and between them, and the level of community support for council to participate

### Levels of Responsibility



Council has a primary responsibility and as a stakeholder has a central role



Council is one of a few or many responsible stakeholders



Other stakeholders share most responsibility, Council plays a supporting role

### **POSITION STATEMENTS**

### **POSITION STATEMENTS** TO INCLUDE:

- City of Ballarat's current role
- Related policy documents
- Key messages
- Overview of data and trends

# Social Policy Framework

COLLABORATION **PROACTIVE** COMPASSION **Advocate** We seek to influence decisions and policy through organised effort **Educator** We communicate, support and **INFLUENCING** develop knowledge and understanding **APPROACHES** AND **Capacity FRAMEWORKS** We improve the ability of others Builder to partner on shared goals **Facilitator** We draw people together to explore opportunities and challenges Coordinator We support the alignment and coordination of programs and funding Planner/ We develop plans, policies and **OVERARCHING** Regulator regulations that affect Council actions COUNCIL **Service** We provide services directly to our **STRATEGY Delivery** citizens or customers AND POLICY **Enabler** We empower our community members to participate in community life and recognise the importance of social connection



### POSITION STATEMENTS WILL BE ADDED **OVER TIME**

Initial position statements to be developed will be focussed on: Gambling Harm, Affordable Housing, Alcohol and Other Drug Related Harm, Access to Adequate and Nutritious Food, Mental Health and Wellbeing, and Active Living.

#### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Principles are criteria that guide decisions, behaviour and actions. When used as a foundation for action, a common set of principles helps everyone understand the appropriate direction to take and how to act in a way that will lead us to the outcomes we want. Underpinning the City of Ballarat's approach to addressing social issues are five principles outlined below which include Equity, Inclusion, Proactive, Leadership, Collaboration and Compassion. Fully integrating these principles into different aspects of social policy work will take time and will require the dedicated efforts of everyone involved.

#### **Equity**

Equity is a concept based on the human rights principles of social justice and fairness <sup>67</sup>. It is an approach that addresses the unfair and avoidable differences among social groups with an aim of achieving more equal outcomes.<sup>8</sup> 'Equity' is sometimes used interchangeably with the related term 'equality', although the two are not the same thing. Equality is considered to exist when all individuals and groups of people are given equal treatment, regardless of need or outcome, whereas an equitable approach focusses on more equal outcomes, recognising that disadvantaged groups may need more support or resources to achieve the same health outcomes as more advantaged groups.<sup>9</sup>

#### Inclusion

Diversity encompasses a range of human experience, including age, gender, sexual orientation, culture, ethnicity, language, and physical or mental ability, as well as socioeconomic, immigration and citizenship status. Inclusion promotes the full participation of all individuals in society, regardless of their traits, identities or circumstances. In an inclusive society, we understand that diversity is one of our strengths, and we can build on our strengths together. When we act in an inclusive way, we promote the full participation of all individuals in our society and acknowledge varying perspectives.

#### **Proactive**

Proactive approaches work over the long term to prevent or address social problems before they start. As a result, they often prove to be more cost-effective than reactive approaches. Proactive action acknowledges the interconnectedness of individuals, families, communities and their environments. They also

reflect the interplay between economic, social, and environmental policy. When we are proactive, we emphasise root causes and focus on creating conditions for success, and we anticipate and adapt to changing and evolving needs.

#### Leadership

Leadership with and among others is essential to adopt and sustain excellent practices and to act effectively in areas of social policy. It is important for local government to lead positive change and provide positive leadership in areas of complexity, and to foster leadership within partnering organisations and the community to tackle complex social issues.

#### Collaboration

Collective efforts are necessary and are most effective when organisations build from their strengths, jurisdiction and capacity, while maintaining a degree of flexibility. Our capacity to achieve positive social policy outcomes depends on our ability to work together with our partners collaboratively. Individuals and organisations across all sectors and all parts of the municipality have resources and expertise to contribute to resolving social challenges and achieving positive outcomes for the Ballarat community. When we act collaboratively, we are open to new and alternative ideas, perspectives, and solutions.

#### Compassion

Building compassion within a community helps to create a sense of belonging and motivates people to take responsibility for and care for each other. A community where compassion is fully alive is a thriving, resilient community whose members are moved by empathy to take compassionate action, can confront crises with innovative solutions, are confident in navigating changes in the economy and the environment, and are resilient enough to bounce back readily from natural and man-made disasters (add reference number here).

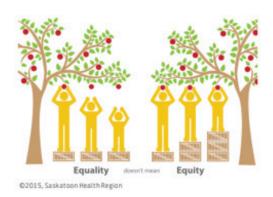


Figure 2: A visual depiction of the difference between equality and equity

#### RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROLES

The Social Policy Framework acknowledges that social wellbeing and quality of life are the result of complex systems, relationships and interactions – and are not the sole responsibility of local government. Guided by the principles of Leadership and Collaboration, the Social Policy Framework will enable the City of Ballarat to identify appropriate responsibilities and roles by considering the following:

**Accountability:** Legislative mandate, and responsibilities taken on through other agreements.

*Capacity:* The ability to act in terms of resources, knowledge and skills.

**Relationships:** The current roles of other organisations, the relationships among and between them, and the level of community support for the City of Ballarat to participate.

Three levels of responsibility
Based on the criteria identified above, the City
of Ballarat has three general levels of
responsibility within social policy areas.

<b>Primary:</b> The City of Ballarat has a primary responsibility and, as a stakeholder, has a central role.	<ul> <li>High accountability</li> <li>Has a legislated mandate</li> <li>Strong capacity</li> <li>Significant City of Ballarat role required to improve community wellbeing outcomes.</li> </ul>
<b>Shared:</b> The City of Ballarat is one of a few or many responsible stakeholders.	<ul> <li>Accountable for some aspects</li> <li>Some capacity</li> <li>Moderate City of Ballarat role required to improve community wellbeing outcomes.</li> </ul>
Complementary: Other stakeholders share most responsibility, the City of Ballarat plays a supporting role.	<ul> <li>No formal mandate</li> <li>Limited capacity</li> <li>Small City of Ballarat role required to improve community wellbeing outcomes.</li> </ul>

#### Roles

Within these three levels of responsibility, the City of Ballarat can play different roles. There are several typical roles that the City of Ballarat may perform in areas of social policy:

- Advocate: We seek to influence decisions and policy through an organised effort.
- *Educator:* We communicate, support and develop knowledge and understanding.
- Capacity Builder: We improve the ability of other organisations to deliver and partner on shared goals.
- **Facilitator:** We draw people and organisations together to explore, strategise and work through opportunities and challenges.

- Coordinator: We support various individuals and organisations to align and coordinate initiatives, programs, funding, etc.
- Planner/Regulator: We develop plans, policies and regulations that affect City of Ballarat actions and the actions of others.
- **Service Delivery:** We provide services directly to our citizens or customers.
- Enabler: We empower our community members to participate in community life and recognise the importance of social connection.

#### SOCIAL POLICY POSITION STATEMENTS

For a number of identified areas of social policy, a position statement outlining the City of Ballarat's current role, related policy documents, key messages and an overview of data and trends will be developed. It is intended that these position statements reflect the guiding principles and directions provided by the Social Policy Framework and that as new community issues come to the fore, or where there is confusion of the municipal role in an area of social policy, additional position statements will be added.

The initial policy position statements to be developed will be:

- Gambling Harm
- Affordable Housing
- Alcohol and Other Drug Related Harm
- Access to Adequate and Nutritious Food
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Active Living



## PART B - Background

#### OVERARCHING CITY OF BALLARAT POLICY DOCUMENTS

The Victorian Local Government Act 1989 requires local governments to provide the best outcomes for the community, while having regard to the long term cumulative effects of decisions. There are several key overarching local government plans and strategies, which must be considered within the development of social policy and which provide direction as to the priorities and desired outcomes for the municipality. A general overview of the key planning, strategy and policy documents has been provided below in relation to how they may influence social policy at the City of Ballarat.

#### Council Plan 2017-2021

The Council Plan is an important document that drives everything the City of Ballarat does over a four-year period. It sets the vision, priorities and outcomes for Council's term and lists how progress will be measured. The plan has been divided into four goals:

Liveability: Improve the quality of life for

our community

Advance our economic position **Prosperity:** 

as the capital of Western Victoria

**Sustainability:** Protect, maintain and enhance

our built and natural assets

Accountability: Provide strong and decisive

leadership, and transparent

governance

Across the Council Plan, there are several key aims which relate to areas of social policy and these include:

- A welcoming, inclusive, active and sociallyconnected city for all ages and abilities
- Healthy cultural life and creative expression through multi-arts, culture and heritage
- Well used public spaces for living, learning and social engagement
- Safe and accessible community spaces and facilities
- A community of respect and equality
- A built environment that is reflective of the community's needs and aspirations, and respects our heritage
- Sustainable waste management, transport and connectivity
- Strong regional partnerships

The Council Plan is underpinned by the Ballarat Strategy, which is a plan for our city until 2040 that outlines the community's vision of a greener, more vibrant and connected Ballarat.

Today Tomorrow Together: The Ballarat Strategy 2040

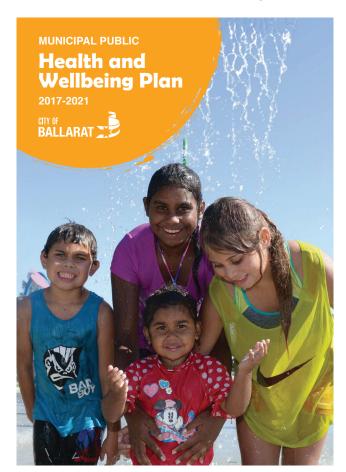


Today Tomorrow Together: The Ballarat Strategy is our long-term spatial strategy for Ballarat to 2040. It covers development, infrastructure, planning and managing growth, and outlines the long-term plan for a greener, more vibrant and connected Ballarat. It is supported by key concepts, policies and actions that will underpin land use decision-making in Ballarat over the next 25 years, many of which directly impact aspects of social policy. The comprehensive range of policy directions and actions outline the plan to get there, based around two key platforms: The '10 Minute City' - supporting complete, liveable neighbourhoods within a compact city, and 'The City in the Landscape' supporting Ballarat to be a greener and more vibrant regional city.

Some of the key initiatives within the Ballarat Strategy, which are related to social outcomes include, but are not limited to:

- · Facilitate better access to local services and facilities
- Plan for a healthy and inclusive community
- Focus long-term decision-making on the needs of children and communities
- Minimise the harm caused by electronic gaming machines
- Embrace cultural diversity
- Support affordable, community housing
- Plan for affordable and diverse housing appropriate for an ageing and changing community
- Ensure ongoing management of agricultural land for agriculture and food security
- Collaborate to adapt to a changing climate.

Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan



The Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 requires all local governments to prepare a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan within 12 months of the council election. The objectives of the Act are to achieve the highest standards of public health and wellbeing by:

- Protecting public health and preventing disease, illness, injury, disability or premature death
- Promoting conditions in which people can be healthy
- Reducing inequalities in the state of public health and wellbeing

The Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021 outlines how the City of Ballarat and other local health organisations will work to address key health priorities to achieve a higher level of health and wellbeing for the people who live, learn, work and play in Ballarat.

The plan has focussed on three health and wellbeing issues which impact the whole community and acknowledges the many other areas of the City of Ballarat which have an impact on health and wellbeing.

The three priority areas are:

- Healthy eating and active living a regional priority for the Central Highlands
- Improving mental health
- Reducing violence and injury.

In addition to identifying priority areas which should be reflected by the accompanying position statements, the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan provides approaches and focus areas that can be reflected in policy development, including place-based and people-centred approaches, sustainable and healthy environments and a life-course approach of health.

#### Municipal Strategic Statement and Local Planning Policies

The Ballarat Planning Scheme sets out policies and provisions for the use and development of land in the City of Ballarat<sup>11</sup>. The Planning Scheme provides an urban framework to guide development in locations where it will maximise benefits to the community as a whole while minimising negative impacts. It aims to provide direction, some degree of certainty and, where required, protection.

Within the Ballarat Planning Scheme there is content specific to the local area (local provisions) contained in the Municipal Strategic Statement, local policies, schedules and incorporated documents.

The Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) is a concise statement of the key strategic planning, land use and development objectives for the municipality and the strategies and actions for achieving the objectives. It provides the strategic basis for the application of the zones, overlays and particular provisions in the planning scheme and decision-making by the responsible authority. The MSS provides an opportunity for an integrated approach to planning across all areas of council and is dynamic, enabling community involvement in its ongoing review.

The MSS can be built upon as the City of Ballarat develops and refines its strategic directions in response to the changing needs of the community.

When preparing amendments to the planning scheme and before making decisions about permit applications, planning and responsible authorities must take the MSS into account. Local Planning Policies are tools used to implement the objectives and strategies of the Municipal Strategic Statement. A Local Planning Policy (LPP) is a policy statement of intent or expectation. It states what the responsible authority will do in specified circumstances or the responsible authority's expectation of what should happen. The LPP gives the responsible authority an opportunity to state its view of a planning issue and its intentions for an area. An LPP provides guidance to decision-making on a day to day basis. It can help the community to understand how the responsible authority will consider a proposal. The consistent application of policy over time should achieve a desired outcome. When preparing amendments to this scheme and before making decisions about permit applications, planning and responsible authorities must take the LPPs into account.

Both the Municipal Strategic Statement and Local Planning Policies are important in providing significant leverage for improvements in areas of social policy. A good example of this is the 'Local Policy Planning Framework - 22.07 Gaming' which ensures that planning decisions related to electronic gaming machines must take into account the harms that arise from gaming and the impact on disadvantaged and vulnerable community members when planning applications are being considered.



### INFLUENCING FRAMEWORKS AND APPROACHES

There are a number of frameworks which are useful for context and consideration when developing social policy. The following frameworks and approaches will be considered in the development of policy addressing social issues.

## Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (the Charter)<sup>12</sup> is a Victorian law that sets out the basic rights, freedoms and responsibilities of all people in Victoria. It is about the relationship between government and the people it serves. The Charter requires public authorities, such as Victorian state and local government departments and agencies, and people delivering services on behalf of government, to act consistently with the human rights in the Charter.

Twenty fundamental human rights are protected in the Charter because the Victorian Parliament recognises that, as human beings, we have basic rights, including the right to be treated equally, to be safe from violence and abuse, to be part of a family and to have our privacy respected. These basic rights form the foundation of a democratic and inclusive society that values human dignity, equality and freedom. In certain circumstances, some rights may be limited. However, this must be necessary and reasonable and there must be clear reasons for the decision.

Every day, local councils across the state engage with the diverse range of people who make up their communities – including children, families, people with disability, older people, migrants and refugees. As a result, local councils play an important role in protecting and promoting human rights. As public authorities, the Charter requires local councils to consider human rights when they make, interpret and apply laws, develop policies and provide day-to-day services.

Local councils must ensure that:

- All council decisions give proper consideration to human rights
- All actions, policies and services are compatible with human rights
- Local laws are interpreted and applied consistently with human rights

 people who work on behalf of councils do so in a way that respects human rights.

#### Social Determinants of Health

Social determinants of health are conditions in the environments in which people are born, live, learn, work, play and age that affect a wide range of health and quality-of-life outcomes and risks. Conditions (e.g., social, economic and physical) in these various environments and settings (e.g., school, workplace and neighbourhood) have been referred to as 'place'. In addition to the more material attributes of 'place', the patterns of social engagement and sense of security and well-being are also affected by where people live. Resources that enhance quality of life can have a significant influence on population health outcomes. Examples of these resources include safe and affordable housing, access to education, public safety, availability of healthy foods, local emergency/health services and environments free of life-threatening toxins.

Understanding the relationship between how population groups experience 'place' and the impact of 'place' on health is fundamental to the social determinants of health - including both social and physical determinants.

By working to establish policies that positively influence social and economic conditions and those that support changes in individual behaviour, we can improve health for large numbers of people in ways that can be sustained over time. Improving the conditions in which we live, learn, work and play, and the quality of our relationships, will create a healthier population, society and workforce.

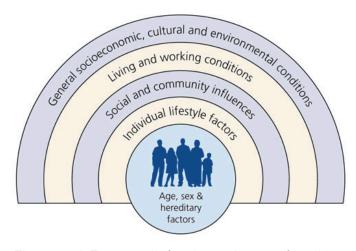


Figure 1: A Framework for determinants of health<sup>10</sup>

#### Whole-of-systems approach

A system is made up of a structure, the process it supports and its use. Elements are generally both interdependent and related, all of which need to be considered as a whole. A systems approach therefore needs to understand the links and relationships between each component. To tackle the gradient in health inequities, a whole-social-systems approach is required, particularly when addressing complex strategic and social issues<sup>13</sup>. By recognising the complex nature of the problem, and applying systems-thinking approaches, investigations can delve below the surface and identify the fundamental and interconnecting causes of the complex issue - such as the patterns of behaviour, the underlying structure and the beliefs of the people and organisations responsible for creating that complex issue<sup>14</sup>.

A whole-of-systems approach looks at the 'big picture' of issues across a range of different stakeholders. In order to improve outcomes for our community in areas of complexity, we need a range of governments, organisations and individuals to work together in a coordinated way to attack the problem from many different angles and in dynamic, flexible ways.

A whole-of-systems approach helps to do this by ensuring that all stakeholders are focussed on the work of identifying ways to address the problem.

### UNESCO's new approach to city management -Historic Urban Landscape (HUL)

In 2013, Ballarat became the first local government in the world to join UNESCO's international pilot program on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach. HUL puts citizens and their local governments at the centre of managing complex challenges in cities. It is long-term and acknowledges the fundamental role culture and place play for local communities, visitors and businesses, as well as in contributing to identity and sense of belonging. HUL requires that the city's many and interconnected values and vulnerabilities are holistically understood and equitably managed. See http://www.hulballarat.org.au/

### Ballarat the Intercultural city - Council of Europe (COE)

In 2017, Ballarat became the first Australian city to join the COE's Intercultural Cities Network, which recognises that all people contribute to,

influence and become part of a place's identity. Ballarat's vision is to be 'an inclusive intercultural community that celebrates diversity and is welcoming to people of all cultures' (City of Ballarat (2017), Intercultural Strategy). See https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/home

#### United Nations Global Compact - Cities Programme (UNGCCP)

The UNGCCP provides a platform for city governments and local citizens to collaborate with the private sector for more sustainable ways to address complex local challenges. It helps achieve more inclusive, effective and transparent outcomes for cities and their citizens. The City of Ballarat has been working with the UNGCCP through their global advisor program since 2015 and 'Australian City Partnerships' program since 2017. See https://citiesprogramme.org/

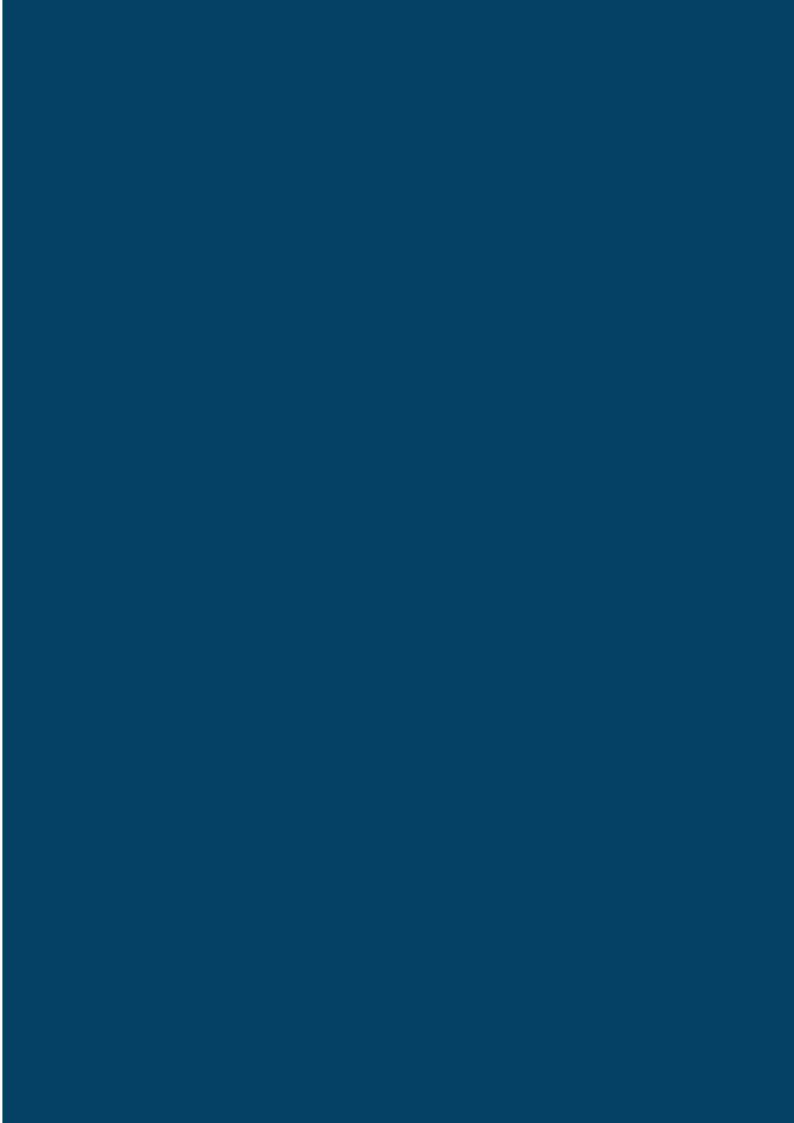
#### Additional frameworks and approaches to be considered

There are many frameworks and approaches that are used to guide action by the City of Ballarat. These should also be considered when appropriate in the development of social policy and includes but is not limited to:

- · Victorian Child Friendly Cities and Communities Charter - http://www.vl ga.org.au/Policy-Advocacy/Victori an-Child-Friendly-Cities-and-Communi ties-Hub
- World Health Organisation Age Friendly Cities http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/ Global\_age\_friendly\_cities\_Guide\_English.pdf
- Universal Design http://universaldesignaus tralia.net.au/2017/06/design-guide-for-pub lic-spaces/
- Physical literacy standards https://www.aus port.gov.au/participating/physical literacy
- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals - https://www.un.org/sustainabledevel opment/
- Draft City of Ballarat Youth Development Framework - http://www.ballarat.vic.gov .au/ac/budget-reports-and-plans/youth-devel opment-framework.aspx
- Charter for Compassion www.charterforcom passion.org

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