

OFFICIAL

Council Meeting

Agenda

23 June 2021 at 6:30pm

Virtual Meeting





The City of Ballarat acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land we live and work on, the Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung People, and recognises their continuing connection to the land and waterways. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging and extend this to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

This meeting is being broadcast live on the internet and the recording of this meeting will be published on council's website www.ballarat.vic.gov.au in the days following the meeting.

Although every effort has been made to protect the privacy of the public, members of the public participating in this meeting may be filmed. By participating once the meeting commences, members of the public give their consent to being recorded, and for the recording of them to be made publicly available and used by council.

Information about broadcasting and publishing recordings of council meetings is available in council's Live Broadcasting and Recording of Council Meetings Procedure which is available on the council's website.

PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

1. Due to COVID-19 restrictions around public gatherings the following has been put in place.
2. Public representations may be made on any items listed on the agenda in a Council Meeting apart from those listed in the confidential section.
3. Submissions must also be submitted in writing to governance@ballarat.vic.gov.au by no later than 4.30pm on the day of Council meeting; and limited to no more than 200 words that will be read out by the Chief Executive Officer or nominated delegate at the meeting prior to the matter being considered by Council.
4. If you would like to make your submission personally at the Virtual Council Meeting, please contact governance@ballarat.vic.gov.au to arrange this.

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The next Meeting of the Ballarat City Council will be held on Wednesday 28 July 2021.

1. OPENING DECLARATION

Councillors: *"We, the Councillors of the City of Ballarat, declare that we will carry out our duties in the best interests of the community, and through collective leadership will maintain the highest standards of good governance."*

Mayor: *"I respectfully acknowledge the Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung People, the traditional custodians of the land, and I would like to welcome members of the public in the gallery."*

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

5. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Note – all public representations will be heard before each item on the agenda.

QUESTION TIME

1. Question time has been altered for the City of Ballarat's 23 June 2021 Council meeting due to the COVID-19 restrictions.
2. To ensure the public can still participate in question time, they are asked to now submit their questions in writing.
3. However, no person may submit more than two questions at the 23 June 2021 meeting.
4. The questions must be in English, must be 75 words or less and not include a preamble, other additional material, or multiple parts.
5. Questions must be submitted via email to governance@ballarat.vic.gov.au by no later than 4:30pm on the day of the Council meeting.
6. Question Time will be for a period of 30 minutes.
7. A question may be disallowed if the chair determines that it:
 - Relates to a matter outside of Council's responsibility;
 - Is defamatory, indecent, abusive, offensive, irrelevant, trivial or objectionable in language or substance;
 - Deals with a subject matter already answered;
 - Is aimed at embarrassing a Councillor or a member of Council Staff;
 - Contains Confidential information; or
 - Security reasons.
8. A Councillor or the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate may require a question to be taken on notice. If a question is taken on notice, the answer to it must be incorporated in the minutes of Council and a written copy of the answer sent to the person who asked the question.
9. A Councillor or the Chief Executive Officer may advise Council that an answer should be given in a meeting closed to members of the public and explain the reason why.

7. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

7.1. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

Division: Executive Unit
Director: Evan King
Author/Position Evan King – Chief Executive Officer

PURPOSE

1. The CEO's Operational Report highlights issues and outcomes affecting the organisation's performance as it delivers services and implements the Council's strategies and policy decisions.

BACKGROUND

2. The Council of the City of Ballarat is responsible for setting the municipality's strategic direction. The CEO of the City of Ballarat is the sole employee of the Council and is responsible for establishing the organisational structure and resource allocation to achieve the objectives set by the Council. This operational report provides greater detail about organisational activities and issues involved with service delivery.

KEY MATTERS

Key achievements, projects and events delivered

3. Ballarat to host 2021 Australian Regional Tourism Convention

Ballarat will host the 2021 Australian Regional Tourism Convention (ARTC) on 11-13 October. The ARTC is a must-attend event for local councils, regional tourism organisations, tourism professionals and businesses, and government personnel wanting to contribute to Australian regional tourism's future, with the 2021 Convention theme 'A Robust Visitor Economy – navigating our new future.' Following the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions surrounding in-person events, Ballarat was unable to host the convention in 2020, with the event being held virtually. Australian Regional Tourism and the City of Ballarat are excited to host the in-person event this year, providing the opportunity to highlight the valuable tourism sector work being delivered and the growing number of regional local entrepreneurial operators. This event will highlight Ballarat as a tourist and conference destination.

4. Ballarat signs up to largest ever emissions reduction project.

The City of Ballarat is one of 46 Victorian Councils to sign on to the Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO), the largest ever Australian local government emissions reduction project. The ground-breaking project is aimed at reducing each of the Councils' current energy bills by using clean renewable energy generated in Victoria.

In Ballarat, small and large sites and streetlighting will be powered through the VECO project by clean energy coming from Victorian wind farms for the next nine and a half years.

Led by Darebin City Council, the collaboration will provide 45 per cent of all Victorian Councils' electricity requirements with 100 per cent renewables, reducing greenhouse emissions by 260,000 tonnes of CO₂-e every year. Provided by Red Energy, the 240GWh of clean power is

equivalent to powering 48,000 homes with renewables or removing the emissions from 90,000 cars every year.

5. Upgrade to Ballarat Regional Tennis Centre

The Ballarat Regional Tennis Centre will receive a \$1.02 million upgrade as part of the Victorian Government's Community Sports Infrastructure Stimulus Program.

The City of Ballarat will contribute \$130,000 and the Ballarat Regional Tennis Centre will put in \$13,000 for the upgrade, which will include six new 'Hot Shots' courts, designed for children aged 4 to 11 years to develop their skills. Court lighting at the Dowling Street facility will be upgraded to new LED lighting infrastructure and fittings to meet Australian standards for club competitions.

6. Upgrade to Victoria Park community sports pavilion

A new Victoria Park community sports pavilion with female-friendly change rooms has received a timely boost with a \$500,000 funding from the Victorian Government.

The grant from the World Game Facilities Fund will go towards a \$3.25 million City of Ballarat project to construct a new pavilion at the Victoria Park Soccer Club.

Ongoing community consultation

7. Draft Budget 2021-22

The City of Ballarat budget is a rolling four-year plan that outlines the financial and non-financial resources Council requires to achieve the Council Plan's strategic objectives. While last year's budget was designed to respond to the devastating impact of COVID-19, this year's budget reflects a renewed focus and commitment to growth, renewal, and the delivery of projects and services. Community budget briefings have been held, along with public submissions heard at a Council meeting on 9 June.

8. Draft Revenue and Rating Plan

The purpose of the City of Ballarat's Revenue and Rating Plan is to determine Ballarat's most appropriate and affordable revenue and rating approach, in conjunction with other income sources to finance the Council Plan objectives.

9. Community Infrastructure Plan

Council is a provider of community infrastructure including community centres, public halls, sports pavilions, aquatic facilities, libraries, early years facilities, senior citizens centres and playgrounds. Following the development of a Community Infrastructure Planning Policy in September 2020. The next step, which is currently underway is the development of a 10 year Community Infrastructure Plan. There will be multiple opportunities for the community and user groups of the facilities to have input into the development of the Plan, with the first stage of consultation with tenants and managers carried out in April and May.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

10. That Council:

10.1 Receive and note the CEO's Operational Report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Governance Review [7.1.1 - 1 page]

OFFICIAL

ALIGNMENT WITH COUNCIL VISION, COUNCIL PLAN, STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

1. The Chief Executive Officers report is line with Council's commitment to transparent decision making as expressed in the Council Plan.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

2. The report is part of Council's commitment to ensuring the community is informed about key projects and initiatives delivered and ongoing, and community consultation being undertaken by the City of Ballarat.

CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

3. No climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications have arisen from the preparation of this report.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

4. No additional economic sustainability implications have arisen from the preparation of this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5. No additional financial implications have arisen from the preparation of this report.

LEGAL AND RISK CONSIDERATIONS

6. It is considered there are no legal and risk considerations associated with this report.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

7. It is considered that the report does not impact on any human rights identified in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

8. The Chief Executive Officer's Operational Report formal community engagement and consultation processes, both online and in person, which the City of Ballarat is currently undertaking in relation to its plans and operations.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST THAT HAVE ARISEN IN PREPARATION OF THE REPORT

9. Council Officers affirm that no general or material interests need to be declared in relation to the matter of this report.

OFFICIAL

8. OFFICER REPORTS

8.1. BALLARAT AIRPORT OPTIONS

Division: Development and Growth
Director: Natalie Robertson
Author/Position: James Guy, Executive Manager Economic Growth

PURPOSE

1. To confirm next steps for the proposed upgrade of the runway at Ballarat Airport.
2. To request Council, investigate reform of the governance and management arrangements of the airport to enable greater commercial opportunities.

BACKGROUND

3. The Airport was constructed in 1940, at the outset of the Second World War, as a RAAF Base, specifically a training school for Wireless Air Gunners (WAG) under the Empire Air Training Scheme (EATS).
4. The RAAF continued to operate the aerodrome until 1961 when it became the property of the City of Ballarat.
5. The main north-south runway (18/36) was originally over 1800m long but was reduced in the late 1980s at the southern end by 570m to reduce the cost of maintenance.
6. There is a current Ballarat Airport Master Plan (2013-2033) which provides long-term guidance for the growth of the precinct.
7. Most of the aviation activities at the airport are commercial in nature, including pilot training, aircraft charter, aircraft maintenance, agricultural services and emergency services. The aviation activities also include non-commercial aviation clubs, museums and private recreational flying. There are approximately 90 direct FTE employment positions generated by the aviation activities at the airport.
8. At the Ordinary Council Meeting on 11 December 2019, Council resolved to make a forecast budget allocation of \$5M in the 2020/21 Council Budget as matched funding for the application to the Regional Airports Program grant fund, contingent on the application being successful.

KEY MATTERS

9. The Airport is recognised as a strategic asset for the region in both local and regionally focussed strategies. This existing policy base provides guidance on airport related matters, and generally supports investment into the Airport to enable it to generate its potentially significant economic return for both Ballarat and the wider region.
10. The adopted strategic guidance and policy for the airport, particularly the Ballarat Airport Masterplan (2013 – 2033) recommend a diversified growth option for the airport, based on assessment of the airport's constraints, global and domestic aviation

trends and the Airports competitive advantages. This option is reliant upon achieving a runway length of 1,800 – 2,000 metres to facilitate the range of general aviation business opportunities. The current 1,200-metre-long runway is a significant inhibitor to larger aircraft and enhanced business and economic opportunities.

Regional Airports Program Grant

11. At the Ordinary Council Meeting on 11 December 2019, Council resolved to make a forecast budget allocation of \$5M in the 2020/21 Council Budget as matched funding for the application to the Regional Airports Program grant fund, contingent on the application being successful.
12. In total \$10M has been allocated (\$5M Regional Airports Fund and \$5M Council contribution) for the delivery of the Ballarat Airport Runway Upgrade Project Stage 1.
13. It is estimated that full delivery of the Ballarat Airport Masterplan (Stages 1, 2, 3a and 3b) will be in excess of \$30M. The major benefits of the upgrades will be realised once these future stages are completed, and larger capacity aircraft are able to then utilise the airport.
14. For the airport to achieve the vision of the Masterplan and generate its potential economic return for the city and region, it is considered essential for the runway to be upgraded, lengthened and strengthened. Completion of this initial Stage 1 upgrade is the first important step on this long-term opportunity.
15. Without an upgrade, there is limited potential for the airport to expand its contribution to the economy of the region and it is likely to remain at its current level of business and economic activity into the future.

Airport road access

16. The extension of the current runway would interrupt the current Airport Road used as the main vehicle access into the airport precinct. A basic replacement road access is estimated to cost approximately ~\$2m, and this is not able to be funded from the RAP grant funds. The lengthened runway is at risk if no new vehicle access road is created for the airport and other Airport Road users.
17. The Ballarat West Employment Zone (BWEZ) was established in 2014 with the Master Plan recognising the future extension of the runway (18/36) and BWEZ's entry boulevard (Liberator Drive) was planned to deviate around the runway extension and ultimately re-join what is the existing Airport Road on the western side of the runway. (See attachment – Ballarat West Employment Zone – Master Plan).
18. Additional funds have not yet been secured from the State or Federal Governments for the new access road, but discussions are ongoing, particularly with the State and the timing of Liberator Drive.

Revised governance arrangements to maximise commercial potential.

19. In the context of the significant Council and Federal Government investment into the long-term future of the Ballarat Airport, it is recommended Council (as owner of the airport) pursue a more commercially focused management approach to growing the business of aviation in and around the precinct.

20. An options assessment recommends exploration of airport management arrangement including consideration of an owned company with specialist board of directors and experienced aviation related professionals, managers and operators – with a commercially focused charter; or other mechanisms to bring experienced commercial aviation expertise into the management structure.
21. It is envisaged it would be the role and function of this new entity or management structure to achieve set outcomes for the airport under the overall guidance of the Council. These outcomes would leverage the Council and Federal Government investment in Stage 1 and create the business case for further investment in future stages that would realise the vision of the airport and maximise its potential contribute to Ballarat.
22. Given there are a range of opportunities and implications of the more commercially focussed approach, it is proposed the specifics of this new governance arrangement are explored in more detail, including consultation with stakeholders and industry, and a separate report with details on the specific proposal is brought back to Council for consideration in due course.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

23. That Council:

- 23.1 Accepts the \$5m grant from the Regional Airports Program towards Stage 1 of the Ballarat Airport Runway Upgrade Project, matched by \$5m Council contribution, and proceeds with detailed design, tender and construction of the upgrade.**
- 23.2 Pursue support from State Government in recognising the Ballarat West Employment Zone Master Plan and the significance of Liberator Drive in delivering the extension of the airport runway.**
- 23.3 Endorse a more commercially focused governance and management structure for the Ballarat Airport– including consideration of a board of directors guided by a commercially focused charter; or other mechanisms to bring experienced commercial aviation and broader business expertise into the management structure to grow the aviation and allied service industries within the Airport.**
- 23.4 Direct officers to prepare a detailed governance proposal for the commercially focused management of the airport for consideration by Council in due course.**

ATTACHMENTS

1. Governance Review [8.1.1 - 2 pages]
2. BWEZ Master Plan [8.1.2 - 1 page]

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ALIGNMENT WITH COUNCIL VISION, COUNCIL PLAN, STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

1. This report aligns with achieving the vision and intent of the Ballarat Airport Master Plan 2013 – 2033 and references key economic opportunities in the Ballarat Council Plan 2017 – 2021 and Economic Program (2015-19) which both reference the airport in the context of supporting Ballarat Aviation Emergency Service Hub (BAESH).

COMMUNITY IMPACT

2. The report is providing the community a review of the airport that ensures best practice and value for money.

CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

3. No climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications have arisen from the preparation of this report.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

4. This report supports the City of Ballarat to advance our economic position as the capital of Western Victoria.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5. This report recommends proceeding with the \$5 million grant from the RAP, which relates to the \$5m committed in the 2021/22 Council budget. Investigation of establishing new governance arrangements will incur other costs which will be further clarified in due course and initially covered in recurrent budgets or considered through future Council budget processes.

LEGAL AND RISK CONSIDERATIONS

6. There are no legal risks in the subject of this report.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

7. It is considered that the report does not impact on any human rights identified in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

8. Extensive consultation was sought for the Ballarat Airport Master Plan – which underpins the staged development plan of the airport.

GENDER EQUALITY ACT 2020

9. There are no gender equality implications identified for the subject of this report.

OFFICIAL

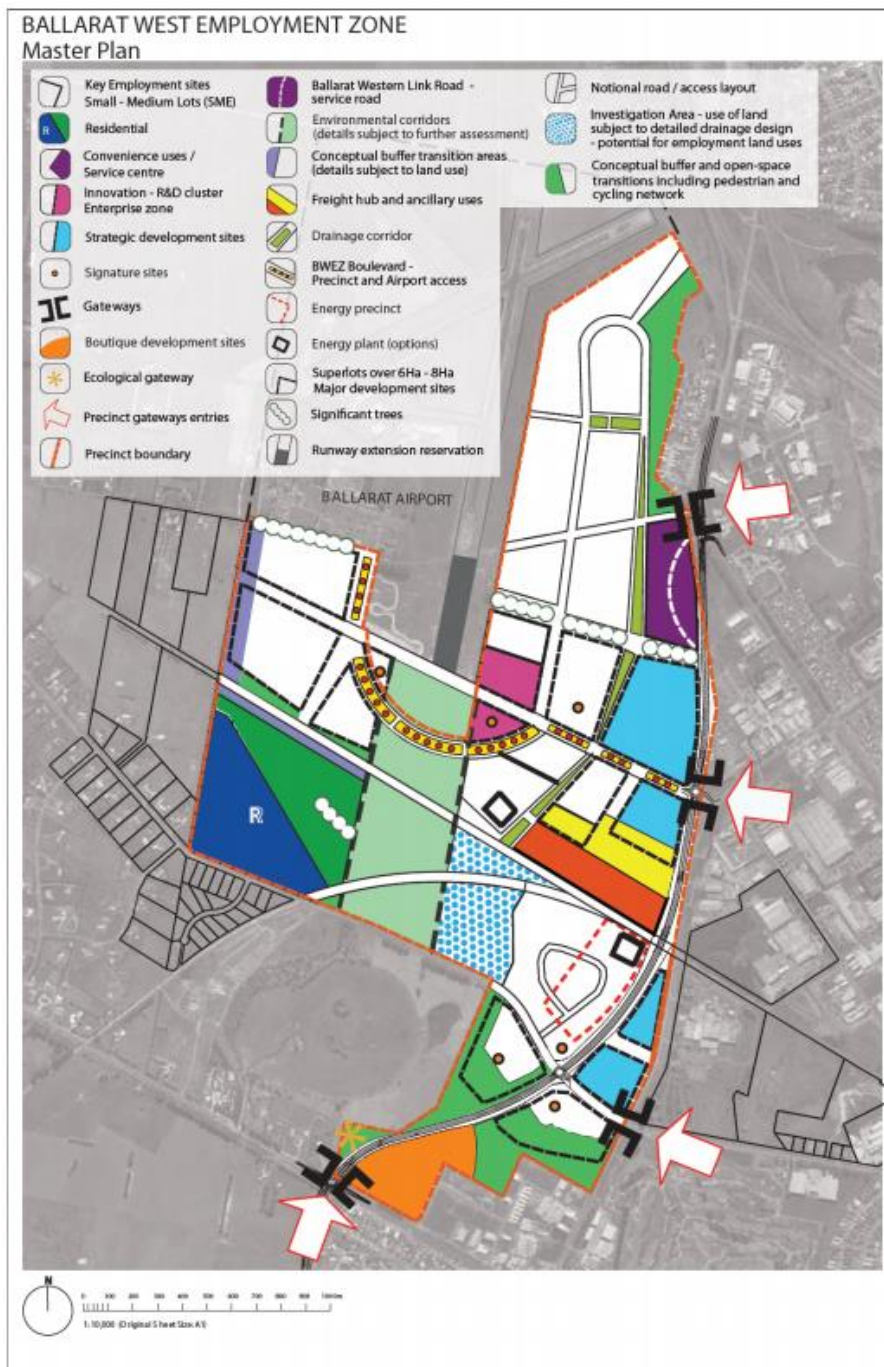
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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST THAT HAVE ARISEN IN PREPARATION OF THE REPORT

10. Council officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the matter of this report.

OFFICIAL

BALLARAT PLANNING SCHEME



8.2. ADOPTION OF 2021/22 ANNUAL BUDGET

Division: Corporate Services

Director: Stephen Bigarelli

Author/Position: Stephen Bigarelli – Acting Director Corporate Services

(EMBARGOED UNTIL 6:30PM ON WEDNESDAY 23 JUNE 2021)

8.3. REVENUE AND RATING PLAN 2021-2025

Division: Corporate Services

Director: Stephen Bigarelli

Author/Position: Rod Leith – Manager Revenue and Procurement Services

(EMBARGOED UNTIL 6:30PM ON WEDNESDAY 23 JUNE 2021)

8.4. DRAFT COMMUNITY VISION

Division: Community Wellbeing

Director: Matthew Wilson

Author/Position: Kate McCluskey – Coordinator Community Participation

(EMBARGOED UNTIL 6:30PM ON WEDNESDAY 23 JUNE 2021)

8.5. DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN

Division: Executive Unit

Director: Evan King

Author/Position: Matthew Swards – Integrated Strategic Planning Manager

(EMBARGOED UNTIL 6:30PM ON WEDNESDAY 23 JUNE 2021)

8.6. DRAFT MUNICIPAL PUBLIC HEALTH & WELLBEING PLAN

Division: Community Wellbeing

Director: Matthew Wilson

Author/Position: Caroline Amirtharajah – Health and Wellbeing Planner

(EMBARGOED UNTIL 6:30PM ON WEDNESDAY 23 JUNE 2021)

8.7. EVENTS STRATEGY

Division: Community Wellbeing
Director: Matthew Wilson
Author/Position Jeff Johnson – Executive Manager Events and the Arts

PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this report is to present the revised Ballarat Events Strategy 2018 – 2028 for adoption.

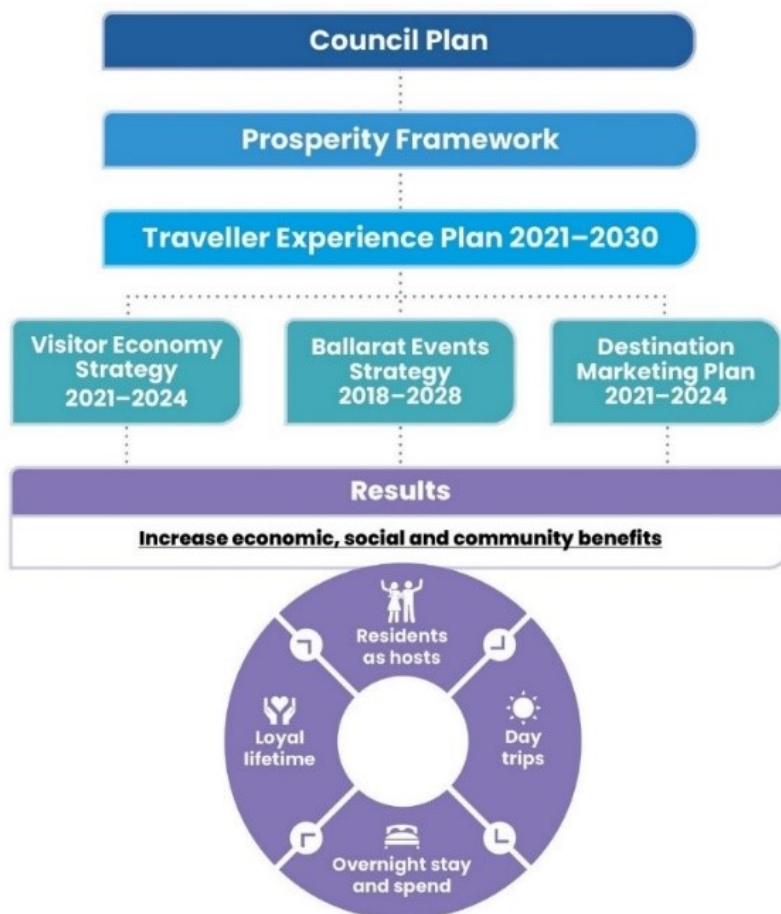
BACKGROUND

2. The Events Strategy was first created by Ballarat Regional Tourism in 2017 and launched in 2018. Responsibility to deliver on the Strategy is resourced within Council. Due to the changing environment caused by COVID-19, it is appropriate to review the document to bring a focus and direction to Council's event management going forward.
3. Strategic planning provides clarity and focus for collective action and decision making. The Ballarat Event Strategy 2018 – 2028 (the Strategy) has been written with this principle. It is a guiding document to shape and evolve the attraction, development, and delivery of events in Ballarat.
4. The Strategy aims to guide event staff, other Council staff involved with events, and event industry stakeholders on the City's event priorities and ensure they meet the needs of our local community and target audiences. It will help to ensure our city's event program is contemporary and developed for new and existing audiences in an ever-changing world.
5. The current Strategy has a KPI requiring it be reviewed during its lifespan to maintain its relevancy. As result, the Strategy presented to Council is an update of the existing document, rather than the development of a new document. However, given the extensive changes to the tourism and event sectors in Ballarat over the last two years, there has been significant amendments made to the Strategy now before Council.
6. The Events Strategy was first created by Ballarat Regional Tourism in 2017 and launched in 2018. Responsibility to deliver on the Strategy is resourced within Council. Due to the changing environment caused by COVID-19, it is appropriate to review the document to bring a focus and direction to Council's event management going forward.

KEY MATTERS

7. This Strategy provides a clear roadmap for the development of Ballarat's event program over the next eight years. It has been written to help ensure the outcomes of the events program are fully understood, optimised and in line with broader City of Ballarat strategies and priorities. With this in mind, the Strategy is designed to be a practical guide to assist the future direction of current events, initiation and acquisition of new events, and provide a rationale for ceasing investment in others should that be pursued – to that end, it is a strategic framework for event development.

8. The Strategy is one component of a suite of documents aimed at growing Ballarat's economy and enhancing the quality of life of our community. The hierarchy of these documents is expressed in the following diagram;



There are three primary objectives to be achieved from events;

1. **Economic Objectives**
2. **Identity (Brand) Objectives** (measure through the Brand Health Tracker)
3. **Civic, Liveability Objectives** (linking back to the Health and Wellbeing Plan, Ballarat's Creative Cities Strategy and 2040 Strategy)

In this revised Strategy there is a strong focus to not only exact an economic outcome from events but to also deliver on outcomes that enhance and support the community. This is an intentional input into community pride and liveability in Ballarat, and as such will support objectives via the Visiting Friends and Relatives market segment and 'word of mouth' marketing. The Ballarat community will be well served by events and will become powerful advocates and spokespeople for them.

9. In developing the Strategy and its Priority Actions, Officers have balanced; the community desire for more events, the visitor economy sector's requirement for clarity on Council's focus and direction, Council's ability to deliver based on current resources, and inclusion of actions that will have an impact and achieve the overall goal of the Strategy.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

10. That Council:

10.1 Adopt the revised Ballarat Events Strategy 2018 – 2028.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Governance Review [8.7.1 - 2 pages]
2. Ballarat Events Strategy 2018-2028 [8.7.2 - 28 pages]

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ALIGNMENT WITH COUNCIL VISION, COUNCIL PLAN, STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

1. This Event Strategy was developed through consultation, evaluation, and research in line with industry best practice and was developed in alignment with a range of Council plans and strategies, see list below. The Council plan, Traveller Experience Plan and Prosperity Framework formed the primary basis.

Document Research - City of Ballarat Documents

- City of Ballarat Council Plan 2017-2021
- Ballarat Prosperity Framework 2019
- Ballarat Strategy 2040 – Today, Tomorrow, Together
- Ballarat 2030 Traveller Experience Plan
- Ballarat Creative City Strategy 2019
- Ballarat Creative Precinct Master Plan
- City of Ballarat Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021
- Ballarat Event Strategy 2018-2028
- City of Ballarat Grants Policy and Guidelines
- Ballarat Brand Book presentation Related Documents
- Visit Ballarat Business Events Sector Plan 2018
- Visit Ballarat Brand Tracking Report 2019
- Art Gallery Ballarat Strategic Plan

Event Documents

- Post event reports and acquittals
- Economic impact assessments
- Debriefs

COMMUNITY IMPACT

2. The execution of this strategy will deliver significant and positive benefits to the Ballarat community. The primary focus the strategy outlines is for the delivery of events that truly represent Ballarat and that provide opportunity and pride for our community.

CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

3. There are no environmental sustainability implications with this report.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

4. There are no economic sustainability implications arising from this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5. Execution of the Ballarat Events Strategy 2018 – 2028 will not require additional funding beyond the budget allocation for 2021/22, and subsequent years will be considered via the annual budget process.

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LEGAL AND RISK CONSIDERATIONS

6. Legal and risk implications arise from the delivery of events rather than this strategy itself. Council's Events Unit are well training and experienced in risk management and have a thorough understanding of the legal considerations for event management.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

7. There are no direct human rights consideration with this report.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

8. This Event Strategy was developed through consultation, evaluation, and research in line with industry best practice. Interviews with City of Ballarat staff, Councillors and affiliated committees including interviews with external event stakeholders including representatives from the Tourism Events Reference Group.

GENDER EQUALITY ACT 2020

9. There are no gender equality implications identified for the subject of this report

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST THAT HAVE ARISEN IN PREPARATION OF THE REPORT

10. There are no conflicts of interest arising from this report.


OFFICIAL



Ballarat Events Strategy **2018–2028**





Murrup Laar (Ancestral Stones) **Artist:** Deanne Gilson  [taracmoorephotography](#)

Ballarat Events Strategy 2018–2028

2



Acknowledgement of Country

The City of Ballarat acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land we live and work on, the Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung People, and recognises their continuing connection to the land and waterways. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging and extend this to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

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Ballarat plays host to events that capture the interest of the local community and attract a range of visitors. The backdrop for our City's signature events – some of Australia's most significant heritage locations and beautiful natural landscapes – enables their reach to be amplified well beyond the local area and promote Ballarat to the world. Combined with a compelling local narrative, the Ballarat event program has enormous potential to be an authentic, bold, and dynamic articulation of the City's aspirations.



The purpose

This Events Strategy (Strategy) provides a roadmap for the development of Ballarat's event program over the next eight years. It will help ensure the outcomes of the events program are fully understood, optimised and in line with broader City of Ballarat strategies and priorities. With this in mind, the Strategy is designed to be a practical guide to assist the direction of current events, initiation and acquisition of new events, and provide a rationale for ceasing investment in others – to that end, it is a strategic framework for event development.



The Strategy acknowledges the strengths of the existing events program and its importance to the local community. It also articulates how events will help our community realise its aspirations, deliver more creative event executions, foster a balance in the program, and in turn help us attract a more diverse audience.

The Ballarat Events Strategy aims to guide event staff, other Council staff involved with events, and event industry stakeholders on the City's event priorities, and ensure they meet the needs of our local community and target audiences. It will help ensure our City's events program is contemporised and developed for new and existing audiences in an ever-changing world.



Ballarat Begonia Festival 2021 |   andysmithphotographic



Ballarat Heritage Festival 2021 |   chip_shots

Our Vision

For the Ballarat Event Calendar to be a prominent driver towards realising our aspiration of being an innovative, inspiring, caring, and courageous city.

Our Mission

To deliver the Ballarat Event Calendar in a way that authentically amplifies our city's points of difference and supports our prosperity.

How will we know the extent to which we have delivered on our Vision in 2028?

From 2021 onwards, we will track these two questions via the City of Ballarat's Brand Health Tracker:

i. Has your perception of Ballarat changed in recent times?

ii. Open question for anyone that answers yes to Q1: What has changed your perception of Ballarat?

Our measure of how effective we have been in realising our Vision will be the percentage of the target market sample that name an event or events (response to Q2) as having contributed to their perception of Ballarat changing.

How will we know how effective we have been at delivering on our Mission?

Over the course of the eight years this strategy spans, the City of Ballarat will transparently and consistently measure the following to gauge how effectively we are delivering on our Mission:

- Direct spend by visitors who cite an event as a main reason for having visited Ballarat.
- Percentage of local residents that strongly agree that a signature or identity event makes them proud to be from Ballarat.

More detail on our Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that will track how effective our City's event calendar is can be seen on Page 10.

To further understand what our Vision and Mission statements mean, it's important that we define a few things through the lens of events and tourism more broadly.

Our City's Values

As detailed in the City's Prosperity Framework (PF), the people of Ballarat want to move into a future where they see Ballarat as being defined by the four values outlined below. By aligning our strategy with these, we will ensure the event visitor experience is authentic and true to place.

What does the aspiration for our City look like through an events lens?

Our residents want to be seen as...	In an events context, that means...
1. Innovative	Creatively amplifying the narrative and stories of our people and places
	Supporting and empowering our creative community through active collaboration
2. Courageous	Sharing our distinctive identity and truth
	Empowering our locals to be involved in our events
3. Inspiring	Immersing our audiences in uniquely local experiences that inspire civic pride
	Facilitating contemporary activations that connect with a range of audiences
4. Caring	Welcoming visitors to our events with generosity and local hospitality
	Embracing and celebrating our diverse communities and cultures.

Strategy **Objectives**

Three primary objectives we want to drive via events, and how we define them:

1. Economic Objectives

We invest in these expecting to drive a specific economic return for our investment.

Three KPIs

- i. Direct spend by visitors that cite the event as a main reason for visiting
- ii. Net inflow of spend into Ballarat via event budget spend¹
- iii. Percentage of visitors that intend to return to Ballarat for leisure purposes.

2. Identity (Brand) Objectives

We invest in these to amplify Ballarat's brands and help Ballarat live up to its aspirations. Importantly, in doing so, we see economic impact occurring as an outcome of getting Identity right.

One KPI via our Brand Health Tracker²

Percentage of sample that:

- i. Agree with "My perception of Ballarat has changed in recent times", and
- ii. Spontaneously cite an event(s) as a reason for that shift in perception.

This result will be underpinned by shifts in the following four brand attributes (values) tracked in the Brand Health Tracker, all of which align back to the key aspirations the Ballarat community articulated in the Prosperity Framework (PF).

- Creative (Innovative in PF)
- Adventurous (Courageous in PF)
- Inspiring
- Welcoming (Caring in PF)

3. Civic, Liveability Objectives

These events are delivered for the benefit of our community. For those classed as 'Liveability' events, any economic or identity objectives that are realised should be ancillary to the benefit derived by the community itself. That said, classifying them in this way does not preclude them from evolving in to 'Identity' or 'Economic' events.

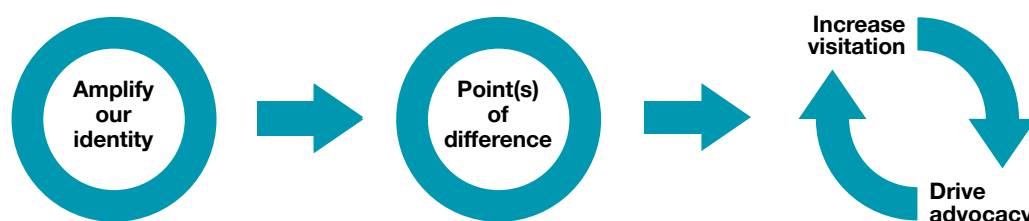
Five KPIs linking back to the Health and Wellbeing Plan, Ballarat's Creative Cities Strategy and 2040 Strategy

- Number of local attendees across all events
- Number of local participants across all events
- Number of local volunteers at events
- Percentage that 'know event well' on three-point awareness scale (measured via Community Tracker research)
- Percentage that state that a specific key event makes them proud to be from Ballarat (measured via Community Tracker research)

1. Defined as the amount of event budget spent with Ballarat Business – that spent with Businesses based outside of Ballarat
2. Quantum Market Research – Visit Ballarat Brand Tracking

Amplifying Our Unique Identity via Events

Why is concentrating on identity and brand characteristics important to us?



Ballarat's unique identity and experiences are the reason visitors come to Ballarat. Our culture, history and unique assets set us apart. They inspire pride in locals and make us a compelling destination for potential visitors.

Celebrating, amplifying, and sharing this identity through our events will highlight what makes Ballarat special. When we do this creatively and authentically, we turn our events into genuine **points of difference**.

These unique and inclusive experiences will **engage our existing audiences, attract new ones, and create an army of advocates** to promote the Ballarat experience far and wide.

The questions Council will ask themselves about Ballarat events:

From other work the Council has conducted, we know what Ballarat's points of difference (or experience pillars) are (See page 13). As such, when it comes to leveraging Ballarat's investment in events, we need to ask the following questions:

- i. How can our city invest in this event to ensure its content is delivered in a way that is;
 - » truly innovative and creative?
 - » authentic and unique to Ballarat?

- ii. Who within the community can partner to help create and elevate the attendee experience?
- iii. Does the event highlight our experience pillars, use our unique infrastructure and/or speak to one of our key attributes?

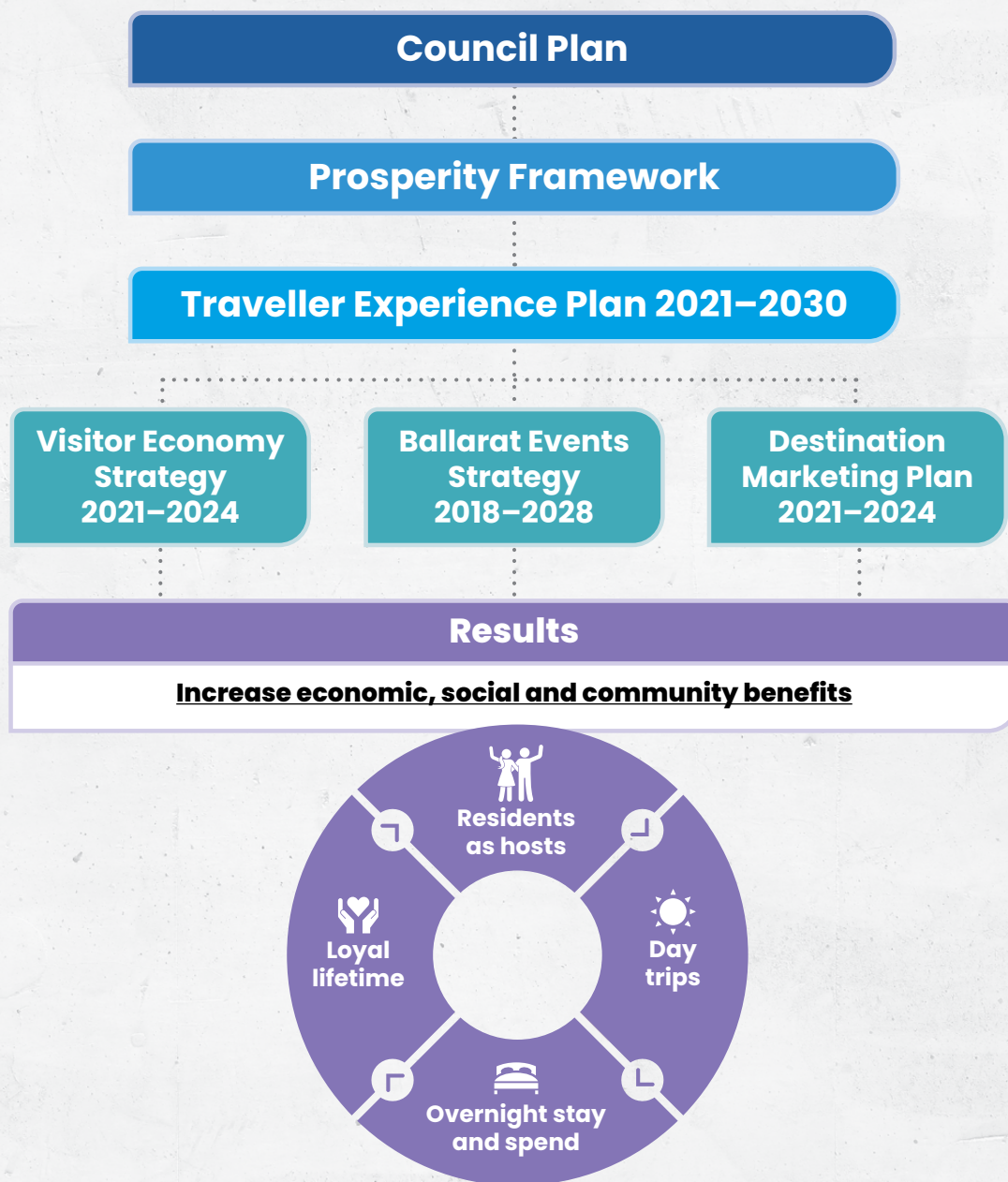
In responding to these questions through our events, Council will help deliver on Ballarat's Traveller Experience Plan, and more broadly, our aspiration to be a city that is innovative and creative, and in turn, inspiring.

By creating partnerships within the community, we can share the responsibility of growing the event offering and the quality of the attendee experience.

If Ballarat locals can help welcome visiting event attendees, we will show our City's caring nature and in turn, further elevate visitor experience.

Delivering on these brand promises and values will ensure our visiting event attendees leave Ballarat as champions of our region, creating the word of mouth that will change the perception of our City for the better.

Context of visitor economy planning



Ballarat's Core Experience Offer

Ballarat's culture is a reflection and expression of our customs, traditions, heritage, and social character. At the core of our distinctive offering is a deep and honest commitment to quality of place and the uniqueness of the people and stories that bring it to life, give it character and shape its distinction.

We need to think differently about the potential opportunities this presents and challenge the way we have done things in the past. We need to carve out our position in the destination marketplace and shift to becoming a place of creative connection. This will set us apart from other regional destinations in Victoria. This will mean moving from transactional experiences to more transformational and inspirational visitor experiences.

To achieve this shift, Ballarat needs to develop the quality and diversity of product, experiences, and events to keep visitors in the destination longer and spending more. The experiences need to be consistent with Ballarat's unique point of difference.

As set in the *Traveller Experience Plan 2021–2030*, they are expressed through the intersection of the two core pillars:

1. Cultural and creative

2. Contemporary heritage

These core pillars are at the root of Ballarat's identity and act as anchor points for the types of products, events, and experiences that we need to deliver.

1. Cultural and creative

A fusion of cultural and creative experiences crafted by exceptional artisans, makers, designers, creators, and performers.

2. Contemporary heritage

Experiences that are created against the rich tapestry of Ballarat's history and architecture.

Key Attributes

In addition to the two core pillars, the *Traveller Experience Plan 2021–2030* identified Ballarat and the broader region as have significant key attributes that are integral in driving visitation to the region. There are further opportunities to increase awareness, visitation, and yield from these key attributes.

- **Food and drink**
- **Sporting and active**
- **Accessible facilities**
- **Accommodation**
- **Greater Region**
- **Touring routes**
- **Retail**
- **Nature and sustainability**
- **Events**

Our Unique Infrastructure

Our Unique Infrastructure

Her Majesty's Theatre, the Art Gallery of Ballarat, Civic Hall, the Mechanics' Institute, the Mining Exchange, Craig's Royal Hotel, Lake Wendouree, leading sporting infrastructure such as Mars Stadium and the Ballarat Sports and Events Centre - our list of beautiful buildings, leisure infrastructure and event spaces is impressive. These spaces set us apart.

As such, when we invest in events we must, wherever possible, use these spaces and venues. Breaking the mould and using these spaces in innovative ways will help us deliver on our aspirations.



By being brave in how we use our unique infrastructure, we will deliver on our aspiration of being innovative and courageous, and all in a way that is true and authentically Ballarat.

If we put attributes, infrastructure, and narratives at the heart of delivering the Event Strategy, it will be a significant contributor towards delivering on the TEP.

The events strategy will deliver on the Traveller Experience Plan (TEP) in the following ways;

1. Help shift the perception of Ballarat and change the status quo
2. Address some of the identified experience gaps
3. Capitalise on a number of opportunities highlighted under each of the two key experience pillars
4. Develop and adopt a seasonal based thematic approach that provides opportunity for co-operative alignment to key partners such as Sovereign Hill. Development of seasonal based themes will give the clarity and assuredness requested by industry, providing confidence to invest in developing aligned product.



Ballarat Heritage Festival 2021 |   chip_shots

Current Event Calendar Impact

Economic impact delivered by the current calendar

To understand where we want to get to by 2028, it is critical to understand where we are currently positioned. To provide the current day benchmark, we have taken the results delivered by the 2019 event calendar*. In total, 42 events** were included in this benchmarking.

As seen in the 8-year strategy overview, the City of Ballarat will allocate resources to develop a robust measurement framework to provide consistency in measuring the success of the event calendar. This will require significant cooperation from external event owners and extensive attendee research.

However, as at March 2020, using the best available data and supplementing it with reasonable, conservative assumptions, we see the 42 events on the 2019 calendar delivered:

- 93,000 intrastate day-trip visitors
- 81,400 intrastate overnight visitors
- 17,000 interstate overnight visitors
- 881 international overnight visitors
- A total of 178,000 bed nights, delivering
- \$35.4m in visitor spend

The Ballarat Master Event Calendar can be seen on page 18.

* The benchmark for January and February events has been taken from the 2020 iterations as they were conducted prior to the onset of COVID-19.

** To be included in the benchmarking, events needed to be:
i. Supported by the City of Ballarat in some shape or form,
ii. Currently drive, or have potential to drive key economic, identity and/or liveability objectives, Ceremonial/ Civic events (i.e.: Ex-POW memorial service, ANZAC Day service, Vietnam Veterans service, Remembrance Day, and Carols by Candlelight) have been included as they have a significant impact upon the Events Team's time and resources.



Summer Sundays 2021 | chip_shots

Classifying our Event Investment

By classifying each event on our City's event calendar, we help identify and focus on the primary intent behind each investment the City of Ballarat makes. Further, it allows us to easily understand which type of events and investments are delivering on our three primary objectives (Economic, Identity and Civic). To that end, we have classified our current events by Investment Intent.

Investment Intent

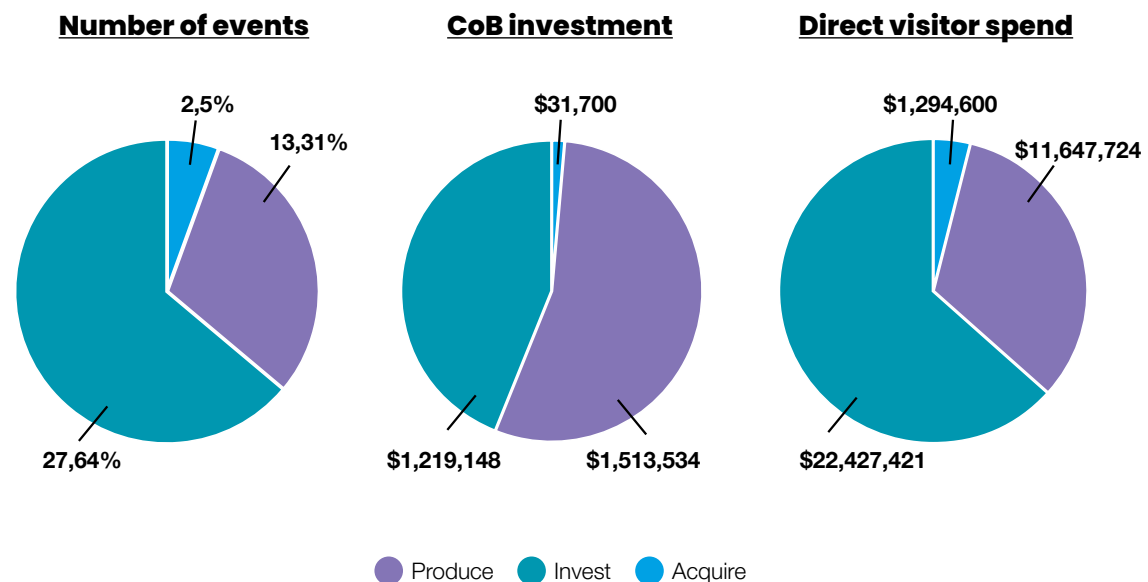
The City of Ballarat will manage its investment in events by allocating spend across three key categories:

1. Produce – Council owned, recurring (and potentially one off) events that the City of Ballarat is responsible for producing, (e.g. Ballarat Begonia Festival)

2. Invest – Recurring events that are owned and produced by external parties. The City of Ballarat invests in these events with a specific outcome(s) in mind, (e.g. RoadNats)

3. Acquire – One-off events that are externally owned and produced to deliver (primarily) economic returns. These typically use event infrastructure that gives Ballarat a point of difference (e.g. Nitro Circus in 2019)

The below graphs are a current representation of how City of Ballarat investment was split across the 2019 event calendar.



Ballarat Master Event Calendar

With the primary aim of bringing together visitor economy stakeholders to better deliver and leverage the benefits driven by events, the City of Ballarat has distilled down the region's key recurring annual events to form the Ballarat Master Events Calendar. The below bolded events have been identified and

classified as our region's **Signature Events**. These events are those that best reflect who we are, make us proud, and/or use our City's points of difference. These events deliver the most benefit to our community and have significant potential to deliver more if better leveraged.

JANUARY



AusCycling Road National Championships
Summer Sundays

FEBRUARY

Ballarat Gift
Rock Ballarat
Ballarat Beer Festival
Ballarat Swap Meet
Western United Match

MARCH

Ballarat Senior Basketball Tournament
Ballarat Begonia Festival
Red Hot Summer Tour

APRIL

Western Bulldogs Match
Western United Match

MAY

Ballarat Heritage Festival



JUNE

Ballarat Junior Basketball Tournament

JULY

Sovereign Hill Winter Wonderlights



Royal South Street Society Eisteddfod Competition (July-Oct)

The Red Series
Western Bulldogs Match

AUGUST

Ballarat International Foto Biennale (Aug-Oct)

SEPTEMBER

Ballarat and District Sporting Finals

OCTOBER

Buninyong Festival

NOVEMBER

Frolic Festival
Ballarat Cup
Springfest
Spilt Milk

DECEMBER

Christmas in Ballarat

This annual Master Calendar of Events will be further leveraged and supplemented by acquired and one-off events (eg: Nitro Circus in 2019, Summersault in 2021), sporting events and carnivals. The City of Ballarat will continue to work with industry to identify and develop new events that can build on the existing calendar of events.

Ballarat Begonia Festival 2021 | andysmithphotographic

Overview for next eight years **– strategic priority areas**



2021 Reset and Benchmark

Priorities

- i. Analyse current Events Calendar and identify experience gaps
- ii. Launch Event Calendar and use to re-engage with local industry stakeholders
- iii. Classify City of Ballarat Intent and delivery against strategic objectives and involvement in each event on the calendar
- iv. Put in place a robust, replicable measurement program to benchmark the calendar's contribution to the City
- v. Actively develop collaborations and partnerships for event growth
- vi. Review all event investments that the City produces, acquires, or invests annually to ensure performance in line with strategic objectives



2022 Refine and Plan

Priorities

- i. Continue to refine City of Ballarat governance, resourcing, and measurement
- ii. Write multi-year strategies for all signature events. Resource their implementation



2023-25 Nurture and Grow

Priorities

- i. Review the Strategy and reset in line with the post-COVID landscape. Set objectives around how we invest in events using our Strategic Intent and Investment Intent classifications
- ii. Set 2028 KPI targets based on benchmarks from 2021-22 research and measurement
- iii. Execute multi-year strategies for signature events



2025-2028 Leverage and Optimise

Priorities

- i. Review all event investments and create strategy for each to fully leverage City of Ballarat investment, and maximise subsequent Return on Investment



Ballarat Begonia Festival 2021 | 📷: 📱 chip_shots

Strategic Priorities and Actions

Short Term
Analyse current event calendar and identify experience gaps
<p>Output</p> <p>Review event calendar and identify regular anchor events for stability and opportunities for one-off events that create freshness and that are unique and exclusive to Ballarat.</p> <p>Develop a more balanced program in terms of size, location, and timing of events – increase smaller and night-time city focussed offerings, to deliver sustainable activity throughout the year.</p> <p>Keep the doors open; continue delivering all scheduled City of Ballarat events within COVID restrictions of the day.</p> <p>Create leveraging opportunities with industry to increase spend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • event extensions/programming to convert day-trippers to overnight visitors • encourage industry partnerships to increase the product proposition for visitors and to provide greater leveraging opportunities for businesses to promote direct to event audiences • Seek a major biennial signature event for Ballarat that builds on the region's creative strengths for Spring 2022
Transform the quality and diversity of product, experiences, and events Opportunity to promote local producers and suppliers.
<p>Output</p> <p>Review programming content of events and activations and develop and refresh content to amplify our local narrative, creatives and venues delivering upon the Traveller Experience Plan;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refresh existing events to ensure quality, relevance and variety in line with the Strategy • Regular and rigorous review and development of event program objectives to ensure alignment with strategic priorities • Engage strategic creative thinkers to reinvent and reimagine event program both holistically and for individual events • Increase and diversify the use of local built, natural and non-tangible assets for events that are distinctively Ballarat • Actively seek event acquisitions that deliver on Strategy objectives • Increase participation of local creative suppliers in all events and activations • Increase use of local food and beverage producers and suppliers

Short Term
Distribute annual Event Calendar
Output
<p>Develop, promote and distribute an annual Ballarat event calendar.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch event calendar three months out from start of year and use it to re-engage with local industry stakeholders • Ensure industry is aware of the City's direction and strategic objectives, and have the opportunity to, and know how to get involved in specific events and the calendar development more broadly • Include events on the calendar that are both produced by Council and externally owned • Promote calendar via City of Ballarat channels and via partners
Review Investment opportunities to ensure a more effective lever for the event calendar
Output
<p>Amend Tourism Events Grant Fund to be more agile, timely and responsiveness to market needs. July 2021.</p> <p>Refine the Tourism Event Grant guidelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure funded events are generating a sound economic return • are directly benefitting the Visitor Economy • ensure funded events are aligned with our brand and strengths • are developing our civic liveability objectives and engaging local businesses <p>Develop an event acquisition budget by July 2021 to actively attract compelling events that align with our brand and strengths and support mid-week and annual calendar gaps as identified through the gap analysis process.</p>
Measurement of event impact
Output
<p>Create and invest in a robust measurement and research program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree on the precise way to measure Visitor Spend. Review Victorian Auditor General's (and by extension, Visit Victoria's) agreed framework • Create templates for event owners to complete as part of their acquittal • Require robust justification for the figures before releasing final tranche of payment • Contract with event owners to supply ticketing reports, economic impact studies, crowd counts etc on a case by case basis. In some cases, part of the City of Ballarat's investment with the event owners should be allocated to research • Carry out regular, consistently executed research with the community

Short Term
Collaboration and Partnerships
Output <p>Actively develop collaborations and partnerships for event program growth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review City of Ballarat Events Unit web presence in the execution and delivery of the Event Strategy • Promote event services to encourage external producers - promote that Ballarat is open for business to the event industry • Develop partnerships with government, community and commercial groups to initiate and support new and existing events that reflect our identity and support the local economy • Amplify our identity to event producers by highlighting our unique infrastructure, ability to support events in comparison to other regional areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Streamline and simplify grant / funding process using the Strategy's three objectives as a guide to what types of events Ballarat wants to attract and partner with » Update available resources on City of Ballarat website e.g. facilities map, asset register, local event suppliers' directory • Provide a guide on to how to navigate Council processes and regulatory requirements
Local involvement and engagement
Output <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to grow and foster use of local artists and creatives in programming • Regular engagement with local creatives, event stakeholders and suppliers regarding the event program, how to get involved and how to influence it • Initiate and encourage collaboration with local community organisations to support authentically local events and activations that instil community pride and grow capacity
Accessibility and Inclusion
Output <p>Embrace and celebrate our diverse communities and cultures and welcome visitors through our unique Ballarat experiences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to incorporate First Nations, multicultural and diverse community experiences and involvement across all events and activations where appropriate • Involve local suppliers/ resources in event delivery, include growing base of event services available in Ballarat, build local capacity • Facilitate and promote involvement of local artists to build capacity and promote local talent • Collaborate with local business to develop place appropriate events and activations that will support the sector and activate local business and commercial centres
Operational sustainability and direction
Output <p>Develop considered multi-year strategies for key events. Execute strategies in following years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and deliver sustainable, multi-year plans for all key event investments • Resource the delivery of these plans and empower key staff to deliver on them • Set 2028 KPI targets based on benchmarks from 2021-22 research and measurement

Medium Term 2023 – 2025
<u>Review strategy following three years of implementation to ensure relevance is maintained</u>
Output
Review Ballarat Event Strategy and re-set in line with post COVID landscape. Revise objectives around how we invest in events using strategic intent and investment intent clarifications.
<u>Explore opportunities to promote Ballarat's sporting, cultural, participation and spectator events to increase visitor demand and visitor expenditure</u>
Output
Continue to explore opportunities with industry for greater leveraging from business and sporting events. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cohesive business and sports events approach • Coordination of event calendar, open days, attractions to encourage multiple activities to encourage an extended stay • Develop opportunities for industry to pre-promote to the sports events visitor • Develop opportunities for industry to leverage off the sports events visitors, once they are in Ballarat • Support industry in re-building the business events sector to support mid-week activation
<u>Elevate attendee experience</u>
Output
Strive for creative and delivery excellence in all components of our activations and events. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine creative development model for key Identity / signature events to ensure innovative and consistent visitor experiences • Creatively and boldly amplify our competitive advantages within our events to expand our audience demographic and reach beyond Ballarat • Develop strong, contemporary Ballarat events branding across all events • Regular attendee research for all events to gather qualitative feedback
<u>City of Ballarat structure</u>
Output
Continue to refine City of Ballarat governance, resourcing, and measurement. Review resourcing and structure of the Events Team to achieve strategic outcomes.

Long Term 2025 – 2028	
Operational sustainability and direction	
Output	
	<p>Execute multi-year strategies for key events.</p> <p>Set 2030 KPI targets based on benchmarks from 2021-22 research and measurement.</p>
Infrastructure and investment plans for identified event precincts	
Output	
	<p>Review event infrastructure at event sites and determine future needs and opportunities for development of key event precincts.</p>
Environmental Sustainability	
Output	
	<p>Continue to refine City of Ballarat governance, resourcing, and measurement.</p> <p>Review resourcing and structure of the Events Team to achieve strategic outcomes.</p>
Review the Ballarat Event Strategy	
Output	
	<p>Review strategy and reset in line with the post-COVID landscape. Set objectives around how we invest in events using our Strategic Intent and Investment Intent classifications.</p>

Methodology

This Event Strategy was developed through consultation, evaluation, and research in line with industry best practice; the Ballarat City Council Plan and other related Council strategies with community, sector and staff priorities front of mind. The research and consultation was undertaken between April and November 2020.

Document Research

City of Ballarat Documents

- City of Ballarat Council Plan 2017-2021
- Ballarat Prosperity Framework 2019
- Ballarat Strategy 2040 – Today, Tomorrow, Together
- Ballarat 2030 Traveller Experience Plan
- Ballarat Creative City Strategy 2019
- Ballarat Creative Precinct Master Plan
- City of Ballarat Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021
- Ballarat Event Strategy 2018-2028
- City of Ballarat Grants Policy and Guidelines
- Ballarat Brand Book presentation

Related Documents

- Visit Ballarat Business Events Sector Plan 2018
- Visit Ballarat Brand Tracking Report 2019
- Art Gallery Ballarat Strategic Plan

Event Documents

- Briefs
- Event Reports and acquittals
- Economic Impact assessments
- Debriefs
- Marketing material
- Event market research



Craft Lab + Design Expo 2021 |   chip_shots

Consultation

- Interviews with City of Ballarat staff, Councillors and affiliated committees including:
 - » Members of the Events Team and other staff associated with events within Council
 - » Events Reference Group
 - » Event Strategy Project Working Group
- Interviews with external event stakeholders including representatives from:
 - » Foto Biennale
 - » Commerce Ballarat
 - » Business Events Victoria
 - » Art Gallery of Ballarat
 - » Visit Victoria
 - » Accolade Event Management
 - » Local Hospitality Industry
 - » Sovereign Hill



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May 2021

8.8. VISITOR ECONOMY STRATEGY

Division: Community Wellbeing
Director: Matthew Wilson
Author/Position: Jeff Johnson – Executive Manager Events and the Arts

PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this report is to present the Visitor Economy Strategy 2021-2024 for adoption.

BACKGROUND

2. On 26 May 2021, Council adopted the Traveller Experience Plan (TEP). Designed as a 10-year foundational document, the TEP sets the direction for the growth and development of tourism for Ballarat.
3. To compliment the TEP, officers have developed the Visitor Economy Strategy 2021 – 2024 (the Strategy) for the reactivation and recovery of Ballarat's visitor economy, outlining the immediate actions that Council and industry stakeholders can take to support recovery.
4. Ballarat's visitor economy industry has endured its most challenging time in history while demonstrating incredible resilience, adaptability, and innovation. Council is committed to support the sector and is committed to help build back Ballarat's visitor economy by 2024 and increasing Ballarat's (tourism) market share.

KEY MATTERS

5. The strategy outlines the agreed priorities for the City of Ballarat and industry to work together to rebuild and reignite the visitor economy. The central priority for Ballarat is the focus on transforming experiences and events that are compelling and express the DNA of Ballarat to drive word of mouth, third party endorsement and community advocacy, especially in relation to the important Visitor Friends and Relatives market.

Purpose of the Strategy:

To rebuild Ballarat's visitor economy and shape our industry and community for the future.

Goals

This three-year Visitor Economy Strategy focuses on the following:

- I. Grow visitation spend and increase market share of regional Victorian visitation.
- II. Transform the experiences that we offer through innovation and investment.
- III. Enhance the capability of our industry to deliver high quality experiences and share knowledge, assets, and resources to amplify the promotion of our city.
- IV. Build community pride and create a sense of ownership by the community in ensuring our city continues to grow and thrive.

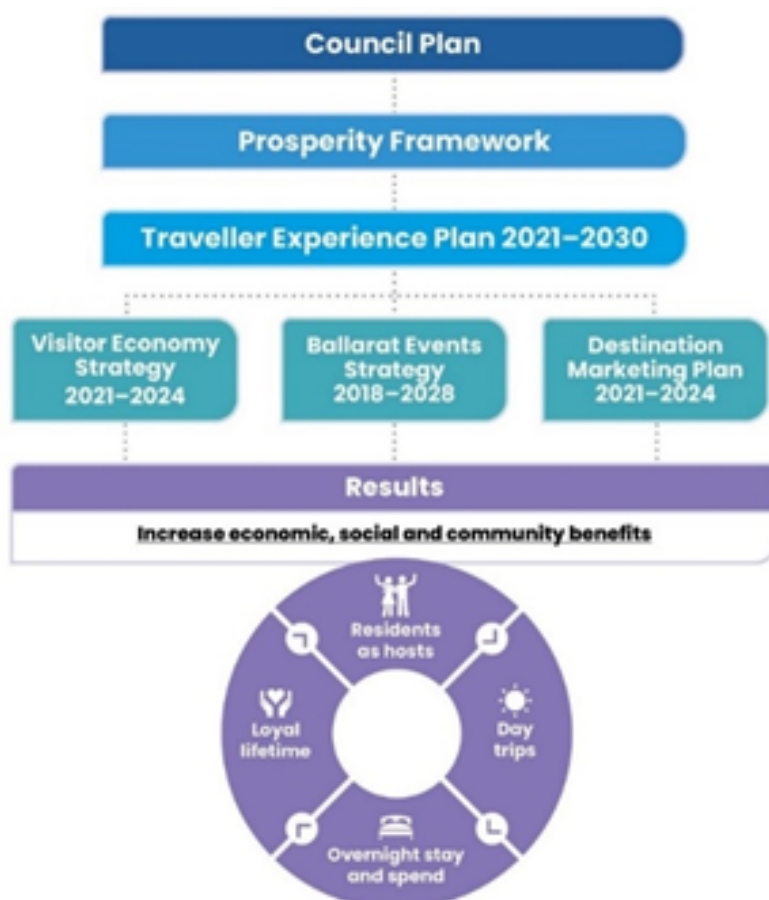
Our 5 priorities

- I. Transform the quality and diversity of product, experiences, and events.
- II. Attract public and private investment to enhance amenities, transport, and connectivity.
- III. Focus on priority audiences and leverage visitor friends and relatives.
- IV. Invest in community as hosts, partners, and experience entrepreneurs.
- V. Create impact and resilience through capacity building and partnerships.

Transform Experiences to being uniquely Ballarat

After examining each of the priorities, it was determined that central to delivering recovery and growth to the Ballarat region was the focus on transforming product, experiences and events that are unique to the Ballarat region to drive word of mouth, third party endorsement and community advocacy. The output of these efforts will contribute to achieving the overarching visitation outcomes for Ballarat and the broader region.

6. The Visitor Economy Strategy is one component of a suite of documents aimed at growing Ballarat's economy and enhancing the quality of life for our community. By design, there is considerable cross referencing within the Events Strategy and the Visitor Economy Strategy. The success of one will rely on the success of the other and significant positive outcomes will be achieved when both are executed in unison and in collaboration with industry players from both sectors.
7. The structural hierarchy of the full suite of documents is expressed in the following diagram;



8. Delivery of the Visitor Economy Strategy will not require additional staff resource beyond the recurrent budget and EFT allocation for 2021/22. Beyond that any future resources will be considered through the annual budget processes.
9. In developing the Priority Actions in the Strategy, Officers have balanced the visitor economy sector's requirement for clarity on Council's focus, direction, and support for short-term economic recovery, Council's ability to deliver based on current resources, and inclusion of actions and timeframes that will have an impact and support recovery within the sector.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

10. That Council:

10.1 Adopt the Visitor Economy Strategy 2021 - 2024

ATTACHMENTS

1. Governance Review [8.8.1 - 2 pages]
2. Visitor Economy Strategy 2021 2024 [8.8.2 - 27 pages]

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ALIGNMENT WITH COUNCIL VISION, COUNCIL PLAN, STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

1. The Visitor Economy Strategy 2021 – 2024 (the Strategy) has been developed in alignment with;
 - City of Ballarat Council Plan 2017-2021
 - Ballarat Prosperity Framework 2019
 - Ballarat Traveller Experience Plan (pending adoption by Council)
 - Ballarat Creative City Strategy 2019
 - Ballarat Creative Precinct Master Plan
 - Ballarat Event Strategy 2018-2028

COMMUNITY IMPACT

2. Execution of the Strategy will provide support for businesses in the visitor economy and will also produce a positive impact for the community through; employment; economic prosperity, driven by a successful tourism sector, and a vibrant and active community life.

CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

3. There are no climate or environmental sustainability implications with this report.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

4. The Strategy has been developed in response to the identified and immediate short-term economic recovery support required for the visitor economy. The Strategy identifies actions and priorities for both Council and the industry to implement to return Ballarat to its pre-Covid economic level of activity by 2024.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5. Execution of the Strategy will not require additional staff resource beyond the recurrent budget and EFT allocation for 2021/22. However, over the life span of this strategy, the local visitor economy will expand, ideally back to its original size, and may require additional staff resourcing to adequately service.

LEGAL AND RISK CONSIDERATIONS

6. There are no legal or risk considerations with this report.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

7. It is considered that the report does not impact on any human rights identified in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

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COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

8. Key external industry stakeholders

- Leading visitor economy business leaders
 - Ballarat Regional Tourism
 - Commerce Ballarat
 - Committee for Ballarat
 - Federation University
 - Regional Development Victoria
- Key Council (Internal business units) stakeholders
- Economic Development
 - Marketing
 - Arts and culture
 - Events
 - Visitor Economy
 - Sport and recreation

GENDER EQUALITY ACT 2020

9. There are no gender equality implications identified for the subject of this report

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST THAT HAVE ARISEN IN PREPARATION OF THE REPORT

10. Council officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the matter of this report.


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Visitor Economy Strategy **2021–2024**





Murrup Laar (Ancestral Stones) **Artist:** Deanne Gilson  [taracmoorephotography](https://www.instagram.com/taracmoorephotography)

Visitor Economy Strategy 2021–2024



Acknowledgement of Country

The City of Ballarat acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land we live and work on, the Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung People, and recognises their continuing connection to the land and waterways. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging and extend this to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

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This report was prepared by The City of Ballarat in relation to the development of *Ballarat Traveller Experience Plan 2021–2030*.

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Foreword

The Visitor Economy industry has endured its most challenging time in history while demonstrating incredible resilience, adaptability, and innovation.

This *Visitor Economy Strategy 2021–2024* commits to building Ballarat's visitor economy by 2024 and increasing Ballarat's market share of regional Victorian visitation.

The strategy outlines the agreed priorities for the City of Ballarat and industry to work together to re-ignite the visitor economy. The central priority is a focus on transforming experiences and events that are compelling and express the DNA of Ballarat to drive word of mouth, third party endorsement, and community advocacy.

There is a wonderful opportunity for Ballarat to grow its visiting friends and relatives market and for the community to play an integral role in hosting and welcoming visitors. Locals are the creators of the Ballarat experience enabling unique, authentic, and local experiences.

Supporting our key attractions like Sovereign Hill and the Ballarat Wildlife Park, which are reliant on international visitation, is critical to their long term viability and ensuring they are strong and viable attractors to build visitor itineraries to increase length of stay.

Infrastructure improvements are equally vital to success for shifting day trips to higher yield overnight stays. To impress potential visitors, we need to foster tourism business revival, to present our best face and to create a buzz of activity. Focus on developing the night-time economy will also be fundamental to attract new visitors to the region and re-build overnight mid-week visitation, to replace lost business, international and interstate visitors.

I sincerely thank you, the industry and community, for your generous contribution, guidance, and support in co-curating the recovery priorities for the Ballarat region.

Mayor, City of Ballarat

Cr Daniel Moloney



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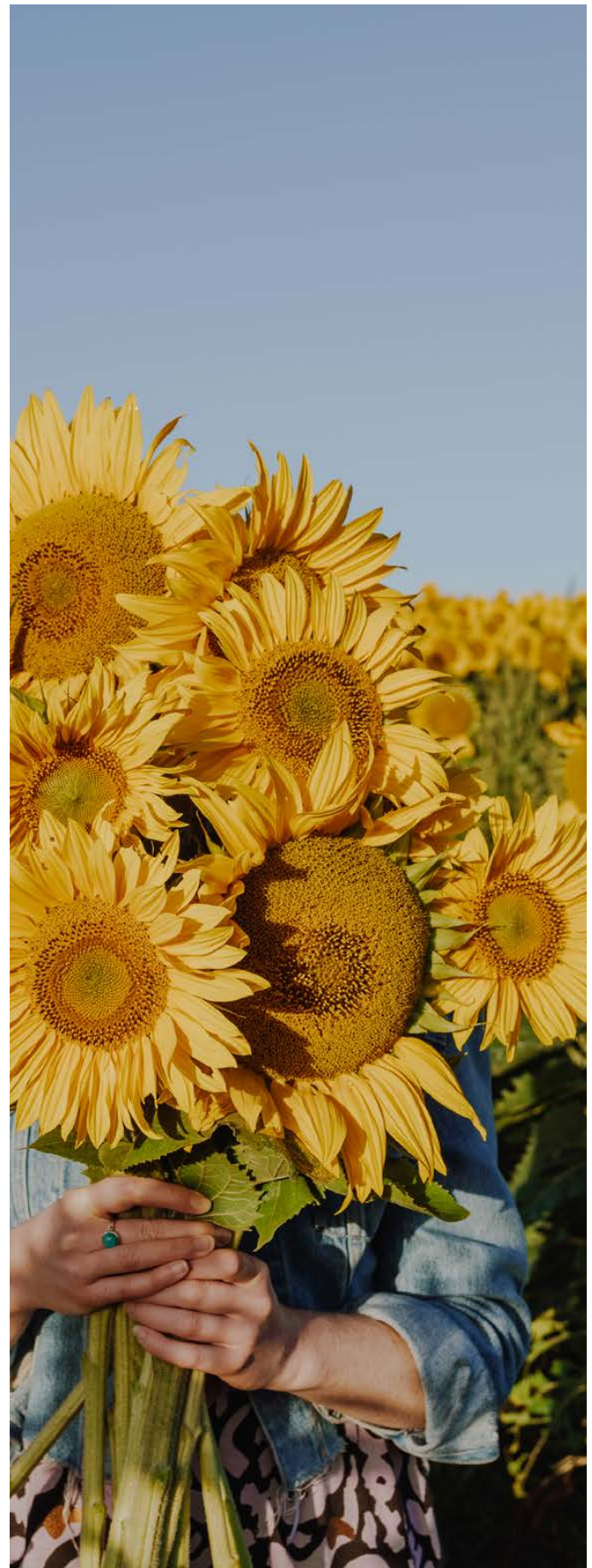
Visitor Economy Strategy 2021–2024:

A tactical response

In May 2021 the City of Ballarat, with extensive collaboration and support from the Visitor Economy sector, launched the *Traveller Experience Plan 2021–2030*. Delivering to the mantra of a Bigger–Bolder–Better Ballarat, the *Traveller Experience Plan 2021–2030* is an innovative plan to celebrate the true personality of Ballarat and thereby assist visitors to experience Ballarat like a local.

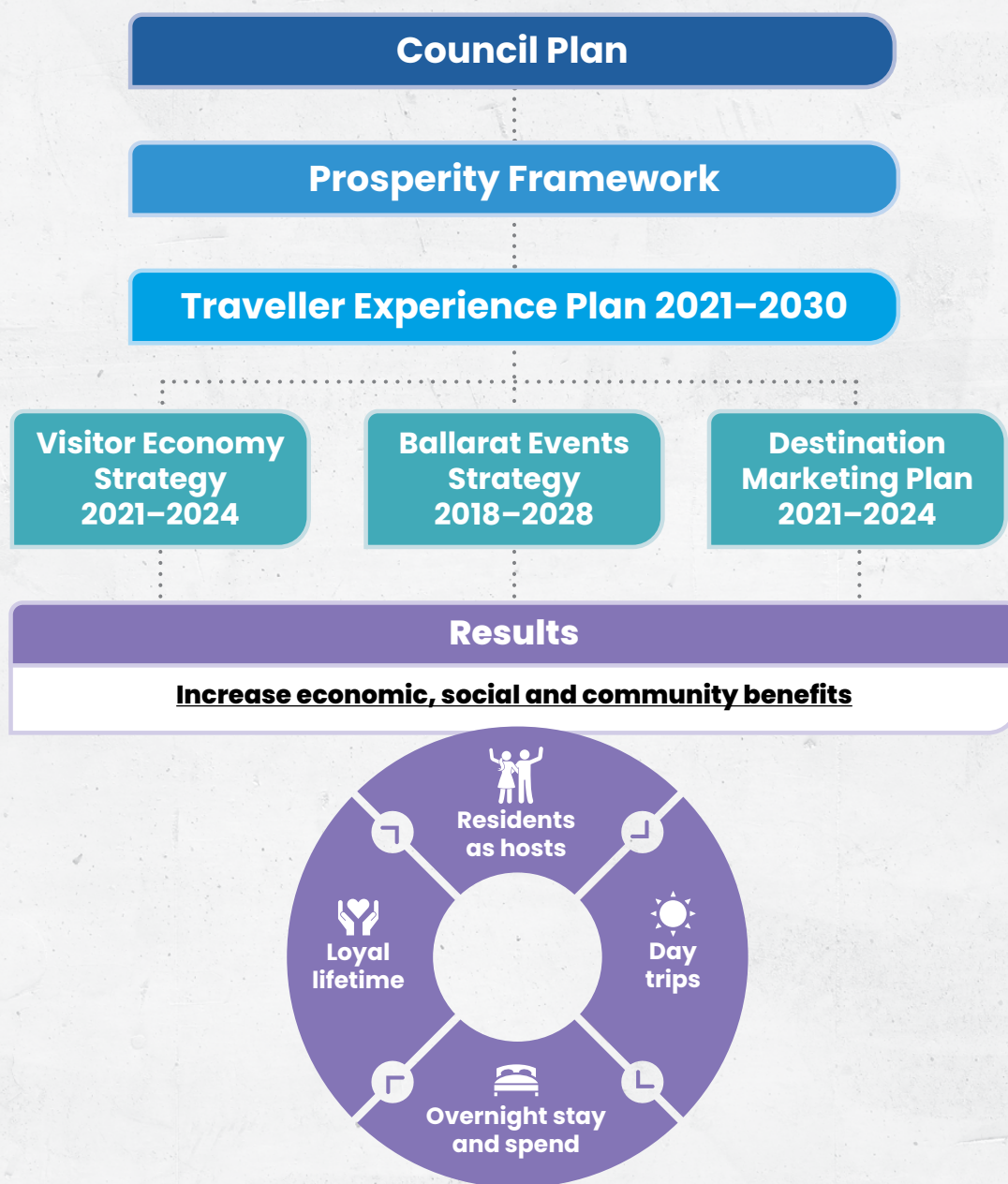
The *Traveller Experience Plan 2021–2030* marks a new approach to attracting visitors to our city - where we once created experiences for visitors, we now wish to curate experiences our locals adore that are authentic, connecting, memorable and worth sharing with visitors. We want travellers to fall in love with our beautiful city over and over again.

Designed as a 10-year foundational document, the *Traveller Experience Plan 2021–2030* sets the direction for the growth and development of tourism for Ballarat. However, what has become obvious from the COVID-19 pandemic is that a short-term tactical strategy is required to focus more directly on recovery. As a result, this *Visitor Economy Strategy 2021–2024* for the reactivation and recovery of Ballarat's Visitor Economy highlights the immediate actions the City of Ballarat and industry can facilitate to support recovery and to shape the future.



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Context of visitor economy planning



Ballarat's core experience offer

Ballarat's culture is a reflection and expression of our customs, traditions, heritage, and social character. At the core of our distinctive offering is a deep and honest commitment to quality of place and the uniqueness of the people and stories that bring it to life, give it character and shape its distinction.

We need to think differently about the potential opportunities this presents and challenge the way we have done things in the past. We need to carve out our position in the destination marketplace and shift to becoming a place of creative connection. This will set us apart from other regional destinations in Victoria. This will mean moving from transactional experiences to more transformational and inspirational visitor experiences.

To achieve this shift, Ballarat needs to develop the quality and diversity of product, experiences, and events to keep visitors in the destination longer and spending more. The experiences need to be consistent with Ballarat's unique point of difference.

As set in the *Traveller Experience Plan 2021–2030*, they are expressed through the intersection of the two core pillars:

1. Cultural and creative

2. Contemporary heritage

These core pillars are at the root of Ballarat's identity and act as anchor points for the types of products, events, and experiences that we need to deliver.

1. Cultural and creative

A fusion of cultural and creative experiences crafted by exceptional artisans, makers, designers, creators, and performers.

2. Contemporary heritage

Experiences that are created against the rich tapestry of Ballarat's history and architecture.

Key attributes

In addition to the two core pillars, the *Traveller Experience Plan 2021–2030* identified Ballarat and the broader region as have significant key attributes that are integral in driving visitation to the region. There are further opportunities to increase awareness, visitation, and yield from these key attributes.

- **Food and drink**
- **Sporting and active**
- **Accessible facilities**
- **Accommodation**
- **Greater Region**
- **Touring routes**
- **Retail**
- **Nature and sustainability**
- **Events**

Re-imagining the Experience

In the past, the attractiveness of Ballarat has been treated as a function of a critical mass of heritage buildings and attractions. The Ballarat of today has become a sophisticated hub of culture, inspiration, and innovation.

Convincing future travellers of this new identity is the challenge. The product and experience gap analysis indicates that we need to rethink the types of experiences we offer and revitalise them.

We need to shift from offering mostly passive cultural heritage experiences such as museums, galleries and architecture to a diverse mix of immersive hands-on cultural and creative experiences from large scale festivals and events to better leveraging our attributes of nature, gardens, sport and the surrounding villages.

To differentiate Ballarat and surrounds as a unique destination, Ballarat will need to create and deliver distinctly local and transformational experiences that are compelling, bold, and sustainable.

Ballarat's unique selling proposition as identified within the *Traveller Experience Plan 2021–2030* is to:

Reflect on our past, revel in our present and imagine our future.

This product differentiation will be designed to attract priority target markets, engage locals to share the stories that differentiate Ballarat from other destinations.



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Reimagining the Experience

2024

By 2024, Ballarat and surrounds will have restored its visitor economy, and advanced stronger working partnerships with both industry and the community.

Purpose of the Visitor Economy Strategy 2021–2024:

To rebuild Ballarat's visitor economy and shape our industry and community for the future.

Goals

This three-year *Visitor Economy Strategy 2021–2024* focuses on the following:

1. Grow visitation spend and increase market share of regional Victorian visitation.
2. Transform the experiences that we offer through innovation and investment.
3. Enhance the capability of our industry to deliver high quality experiences and share knowledge, assets, and resources to amplify the promotion of our city.
4. Build community pride and create a sense of ownership by the community in ensuring our city continues to grow and thrive.

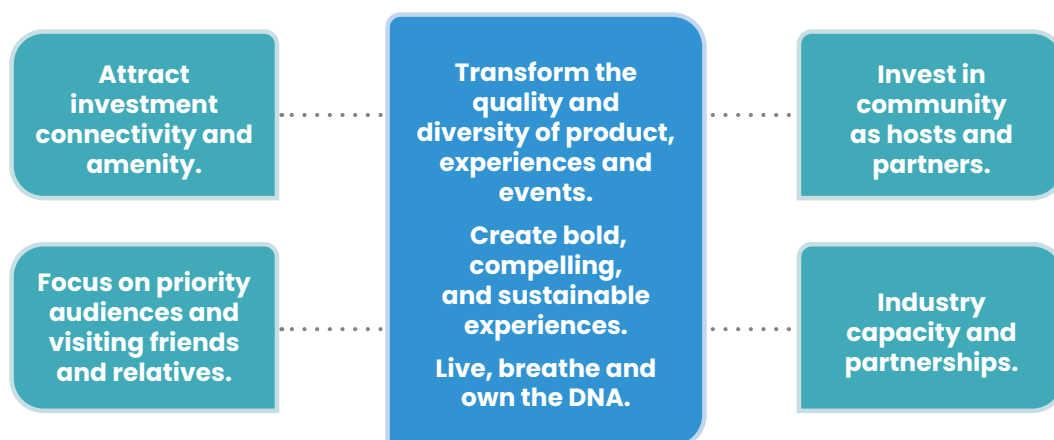
Our 5 priorities

1. Transform the quality and diversity of product, experiences, and events.
2. Attract public and private investment to enhance amenities, transport, and connectivity.
3. Focus on priority audiences and leverage visiting friends and relatives.
4. Invest in community as hosts, partners, and experience entrepreneurs.
5. Create impact and resilience through capacity building and partnerships.

Transform experiences to being uniquely “Made of Ballarat”

After examining each of the priorities, it was determined that central to delivering recovery and growth to the Ballarat region was the focus on transforming product, experiences and events that are unique to the Ballarat region to drive word of mouth, third party endorsement and community advocacy.

The output of these efforts will contribute to achieving the overarching visitation outcomes for the Ballarat region. See diagram below.



Current operating environment

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the most significant public health, social and economic challenge Australia has ever experienced. The following section describes the current known impacts that the visitor economy sector is facing.

Economic and social disruption

Less discretionary expenditure on purchases like leisure travel.

Increased competition for domestic tourism

A shift in traditional markets with closed borders creates increased competition for a greater share of domestic visitors from other regional destinations nationally.

Social licence for tourism

How residents feel about tourism post COVID-19 is important and will determine a destination's success in the long term.

Peaks and troughs

Faster rebound in domestic day trips and intrastate visitation.

Visiting friends and relatives travel

Busier weekends, slower weekdays.

Barriers to travel

Slower recovery in domestic intrastate holiday travel – home schooling, less recreation leave and recession.

Air travel

Domestic airfares to be much higher with a new much smaller Virgin Airlines and less competitive pressure on Qantas.

Business-travel recovery slow

Working from home and virtual platforms along with recession means much less business travel as well as duty-of-care obligations to employees. The working-from-anywhere trend has the potential to blur the lines between leisure and business travel.

Industry viability

Further pain for tourism companies' viability and unemployment issues, that has so far been disguised via Federal support.

Consumer sentiment

Consumer confidence will take time to rebuild. Customers need to be comfortable with all the touchpoints in their experience.

Workforce issues

High weekend demand places stresses on businesses in addition to staff shortages, will affect the quality of experience.

Public health measures capacity numbers

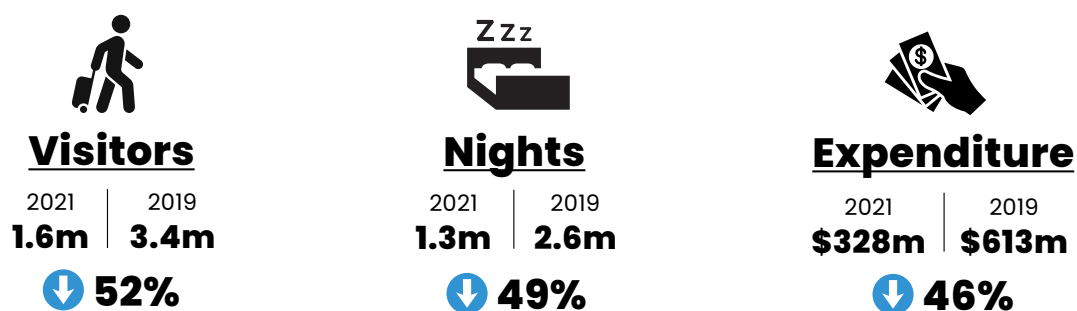
Restrictions, safety precautions, capacity numbers and social distancing measures are restricting viability for some tour operators and businesses.

Discounting

Destinations are actively offering discounts and promotions to entice customers, creating significant challenges in attracting the interstate market.

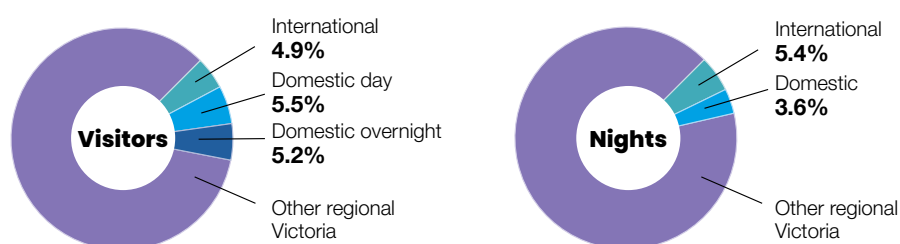
Source: 'The Travel Industry Turned Upside Down' Skift Research with McKinsey & Company Sept 2020 & Karl Flowers Impacts of the COVID recession on Ballarat Visitor Economy April 2021

Ballarat at a glance in 2021



Domestic overnight visitors			International overnight visitors			Domestic daytrip visitors		
2021	2019	CHANGE	2021	2019	CHANGE	2021	2019	CHANGE
433k visitors	992k visitors	↓ 56%	N/A	29k visitors	-	1.2m visitors	2.4m visitors	↓ 50%
1.3m nights	2m nights	↓ 40%	N/A	529k nights	-	-	-	-
\$128m expenditure	\$308m expenditure	↓ 58%	N/A	\$32m expenditure	-	\$273m expenditure	\$197m expenditure	↓ 27%

Our market share of regional Victoria visitation



Where did they stay?		What did they do?		Where are visitor coming from?	
• Friends or relatives property	44%	• Eat out	64%	• Travellers from within Victoria	78%
• Hotel/Motel	27%	• Visit a friend or relative	46%	• Melbourne	14%
• Other commercial accomodation	15%	• Go sightseeing	23%		
• Other private accomodation	14%	• Outdoor/Nature	29%		
		• Arts/Heritage	19%		

Source: TRA Data

Opportunities for Ballarat

It is true that Ballarat has the opportunity for a faster recovery than other parts of the state. Regions like Ballarat are closer to Melbourne with comparatively higher shares of spend on domestic day trips, and short break holidays. Visiting friends and relatives (VFR) domestic visitor nights face a shallower and shorter visitor economy recession.

In contrast, regions heavily dependent on holiday visitors face a deeper and longer fall in the visitor economy. International and longer break holiday domestic visitor nights are expected to be the slowest sectors to recover.

Key Opportunities

- Beyond the short-term costs from COVID-19 on the visitor economy - Ballarat region's overall economy is to benefit from decentralisation from Melbourne – with two links to local visitor economy:
 1. Once in a generation shift to decentralisation sets regional economy to grow from late 2021, therefore:
 - Working from home is a big win for Ballarat region with improving transport links to Melbourne likely to boost tourism to the region to explore together with growing visiting friends and relatives.
 - Stronger revenues for Local Government Areas with land valuations and population growth increasing strongly.
 2. To impress potential new population to the region that the visitor economy is vital
 - Destinations have incentive to foster tourism business survival and revival to present best face.
 - A café culture and “buzz” of activity and attractions in the evenings will be vital to attracting new residents from Melbourne.
- The Ballarat region benefits from faster population growth locally than in neighbouring regions of Western Melbourne.
- Australia's inbound tourism should grow quickly due to enhanced reputation for destination safety through COVID-19.
- Infrastructure improvements are vital to the success of regions in shifting day trips to higher yield overnight stays.

Economic outlook and opportunities

- 2023/24 is the expected earliest return for Ballarat to pre-COVID-19 regional visitor spend.
- Ballarat region's visitor economy will come back very differently – weaker mid-weeks with less business/international/interstate visitors and stronger intrastate day trips/leisure weekends.
- Assist businesses to deal with the risk of bankruptcy – including supporting access to Government supported bank loans.
- Look to build overnight visitation mid-week, to replace lost business, international and interstate visitors.

Source: Karl Flowers Impacts of the COVID recession on Ballarat Visitor Economy

Customer Segments

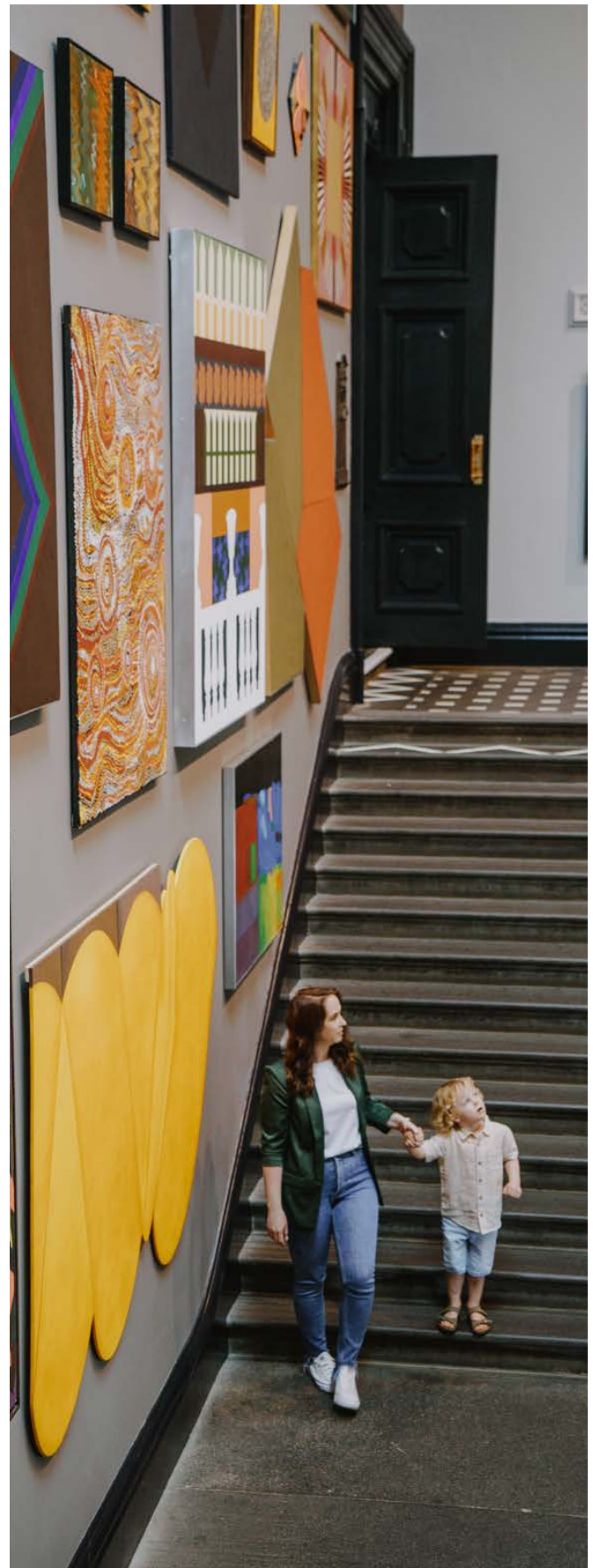
Customer research was undertaken to identify a clear and reliable profile of the current and potential visitor base for Ballarat. It outlines motivations and visitation behaviours, and gives an understanding of perceptions and attitudes toward Ballarat's existing and prospective future visitor offering.

Active Regional Explorers and Regional Fledglings

Were identified as new primary targets for Ballarat. Relative to other markets, the impact of destination marketing will have a shorter lead time to attract these engaged and flexible primary markets.

Family Heartland and Mature Tastes

Are identified as secondary targets. Mature Tastes are a relatively lower value segment (fewer trips/nights and relatively lower spend), but they naturally align with Ballarat's facilities and offering so are available for conversion. Family Heartland are a challenge for Ballarat to convert as they are among those least likely to consider if Ballarat is the right destination for them. However, this is a positioning issue which can be addressed since Ballarat offers most of what they look for.



📷: [mattdunnephoto](#)

1

Active regional explorers:

Travelling in regional Victoria is a regular part of our life.

Who are they?

Spend the most per night and spend more nights away than any other segment.

- Skew younger, often at family life stage.
- Metro Melbourne suburbs.
- Educated, curious and enthusiastic.

What defines them?

- Engaged across channels, travel extensively and widely, participate in a broad range of activities.
- Seek out enriching experiences; aspire to more than just 'relaxation'.
- Do not conform to one trip 'type', they arrange different itineraries to suit different needs.

Visitation habits:

- Take weekend and extended trips, typically touring to cover more than one activity.
- Above average spend, prioritise recreation in their budget. Can include VFR spends.
- Engage in one or more outdoor pursuits, often cycling, fishing, or getting into National Parks.

Engaged by:

- Constant lookout via. all channels for what is new or different in regional Victoria.
- More likely to engage with art, culture, history and attend structured ticketed attractions.



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2

Regional fledglings:

We can find cool things to do by leaving the city and getting out there.

Who are they?

Make more frequent day and short overnight trips than other segments. More likely to consider Ballarat in-scope for a daytrip (if metro-based). Are flexible to consider and convert to visiting Ballarat (as well as other destinations).

- Young singles and couples may travel as groups of friends.
- Metro-based and urbanised tastes.
- Following emerging trends, not their parents' example.

What defines them?

- Explore through visitor-oriented producers, events/festivals, local operators, etc.
- Food and wine focus and have the budget to support it.
- Lighter touch in the outdoors, may camp or bushwalk but it's principally a social endeavour.

Visitation habits:

- Travel often, but typically on short weekend breaks or daytrips.
- Emphasis on AirBNB-type accommodation.
- Trips commonly based around a half-day hike/bushwalk.

Engaged by:

- Social media, review sites, and official tourism/destination sites.
- Modern dining, wineries, craft beer, music events/festivals, novelty, and intrigue.



mattdunnephoto

3

Mature tastes:

Good food, good wine, taking it easy for a few nights in pleasant surroundings.

Ballarat region is above average in its reliance on over 55 domestic overnight travellers (2017/18 data).

Source: TRA online

Who are they?

- More often mature (40+) no kids, kids no longer dependent or kids left home.
- Relaxed budget though not necessarily high spend.
- Overnight travellers typically couples but sometimes with friends.

What defines them?

- Value taking it easy and relaxing over a packed itinerary.
- Self-identify as a foodie, make planned dining arrangements, and seek out produce.
- Visitation centred around townships, not nature.

Visitation habits:

- Schedule a handful of overnight trips per year, tending to be pre-planned rather than spontaneous.
- Traditional country visitor, motel stay, township shopping, etc.
- More likely to be led by a female decision-maker.


Engaged by:

- Modern (but in comfort zone) food and wine offering.
- Spending time in picturesque settings (but limited proactive engagement e.g. art gallery).
- Brochures, information centres, etc. support online research.

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Visitor Economy Strategy 2021–2024



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Family heartland:

Booking something during school holidays is a chance for everyone to catch their breath.

Who are they?

- Aged 30-49, with one or more kids under 16.
- Mix of metro and regional audiences.
- High household income and spend (a marker of life stage, not luxury).

What defines them?

- Busy working parents, balancing multiple commitments, seeking a break.
- Conceptualise travel as a 'holiday', which is arranged and looked forward to in advance.
- Expect kids' activities, expressed as conventional child-oriented fun.

Visitation habits:

- May travel with other families; certainly, prioritise kids hanging out with other kids.
- Self-contained accommodation, including managed camping and holiday parks.
- Tend toward regional centres and larger townships 'with more to do'.

Engaged by:

- Days out, attractions, traditional family fun.
- Side-trip into nature or National parks, but not the focus.
- Focussed on online reviews.

Opportunities:

Aligns with Ballarat's core traditional offering, including Sovereign Hill and other attractions.



📷: [mattdunnephoto](#)

Visitor profiles



Domestic day trippers

Almost half are visiting from regional Victoria, followed by Melbourne (44%) and other states.

Most day trippers are coming to Ballarat to visit friends and relatives (34%) and holiday (32.1%), and almost 20% travel to Ballarat for business.

Average expenditure is \$101 per visit.

Around one third are aged between 35-54 years and 15-34 years' (25.8%) and '65 over' (23.4%).

They are most likely to participate in social activities and enjoy Ballarat's outdoors and sporting activities.



Domestic overnight visitors

Are mostly from Melbourne, followed by regional Victoria and other States (NSW and SA).

Their main reason to travel is to visit friends and relatives, closely followed by holiday and, to a lesser extent, business.

The majority stay for around two nights with friends and relatives as well as commercial accommodation.

The average expenditure per night \$149 per night.

The majority are aged 35-54 years (38.0%), followed by '15-34 years' (27.3%) and '65 and over' (20.9%).

Eating out is the most popular activity, followed by catching up with friends and relatives, and enjoying Ballarat's outdoors and sporting activities.



International visitors

Most international visitors visit Ballarat as part of a holiday.

They are mainly from New Zealand and Asia, followed by United Kingdom and Europe.

They enjoy social activities, outdoor activities, sports and enjoy local attractions.

The average expenditure per night is \$66.

Strategic priorities and actions

1. Transform the quality and diversity of product, experiences, and events		
1.1 Build and innovate experiences that deliver on the key pillars		
Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility
1.1.1 Develop customer journeys for all priority audiences and identify opportunities and product gaps and build itineraries with industry.	December 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City of Ballarat• Industry
1.1.2 Develop a shovel ready business case for the creation of a CBD focused night-time economy. Business case to include events, culinary experiences, way finding, lighting and illumination, and public art installations.	June 2022	
1.1.3 Explore opportunities for indigenous tourism that offers product and interpretative signage, and storytelling threaded through our visitor experiences.	Ongoing	
1.2 Build and innovate on the key supporting attributes of Ballarat that drive visitation		
Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility
1.2.1 Continue the implementation of the <i>Ballarat’s Creative City Strategy</i> .	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City of Ballarat• Industry
1.2.2 Complete <i>Tourism Product Development Plan</i> aligned to the core experiences and key attributes (identified in the <i>Traveller Experience Plan 2021–2030</i>).	December 2021	
1.2.3 Identify and seek funding for tourism development product/ infrastructure opportunities aligned with the Core Experiences and Key Attributes (identified in the <i>Traveller Experience Plan 2021–2030</i>) that incorporate both demand and supply experiences.	Ongoing	
1.2.4 Encourage more dedicated activities on nature-based assets such as Lake Wendouree, Lake Burrumbeet, Lake Learmonth.	Ongoing	
1.2.5 Advocate for existing touring route models to become more agile and versatile with a focus to relevant domestic markets for the short to medium term. eg Great Southern Touring Route.	Ongoing	

Strategic priorities and actions

1. Transform the quality and diversity of product, experiences, and events		
1.3 Revise the Ballarat Events Strategy to build on brand equity and increase visitation and spend		
Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility
1.3.1 Deliver a revised <i>Ballarat Events Strategy 2018–2028</i> that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aligns with Ballarat's destination branding, Encourages visitation across an annual calendar, and Includes regular anchor events for stability and one-off events for freshness and that are unique and exclusive to Ballarat. 	July 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Ballarat Industry
1.3.2 Create leveraging opportunities with industry to increase spend: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Event extensions/programming to convert day-trippers to overnight visitors. Encourage industry partnerships to increase the product proposition for visitors and to provide greater leveraging opportunities for businesses to promote direct to event audiences. Support industry to develop packaging of event with accommodation, attractions, and other experiences. 	Ongoing	
1.3.3 Seek a major biennial signature event for Ballarat which builds on the region's creative strengths.	Spring 2022	
1.3.4 Keep the doors open; continue delivering all scheduled City of Ballarat events within the COVID-19 restrictions of the day.	Ongoing	
1.3.5 Support industry in re-building the business events sector to support mid-week activation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake audit of resources. Identify critical partners. Identify roles and responsibilities. Create a business events landing page/portal to support the attraction of weekday business events on <i>ballarat.com.au</i>. 	August 2021	
1.3.6 Amend <i>Tourism Events Grant Fund</i> to be more agile, timely and responsive to market needs. Refine the <i>Tourism Event Grant Fund</i> guidelines to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure funded events are generating a sound economic return, Are directly benefitting the Visitor Economy, and Ensure funded events are aligned with our brand and strengths. 	July 2021	
1.3.7 Develop an event acquisition budget to actively attract compelling events that align with our brand and strengths and support mid-week and annual calendar gaps.	July 2021	

Strategic priorities and actions

2. Attract public and private investment to enhance amenities, transport, and connectivity		
2.1 Work with private and public sector to attract investment and prepare business cases for infrastructure projects that support the <i>Traveller Experience Plan 2021–2030</i>		
Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility
2.1.1 Work with Victorian Government to roll out a <i>Destination Management Plan</i> for the region that underpins and aligns with current state planning.	June 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City of Ballarat• Other Regional Tourism Boards and Local Government Areas• Industry
2.1.2 Identify and seek funding for three short term investment-ready catalyst projects.	June 2022	
2.1.3 Actively support current investment projects not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Art Gallery of Ballarat• Ballarat Railway Hub• Australian Goldfields UNESCO World Heritage Bid• Ballarat National Centre for Photography• Dedicated Sports Museum centrally located in Ballarat	Ongoing	
2.1.4 Support Commerce Ballarat, Ballarat Regional Tourism, and Committee for Ballarat with Victorian Government funding/support initiatives.	Ongoing	
2.1.5 Work with industry to identify potential infrastructure projects and develop business cases to seek funding.	Ongoing	
2.2 Facilitate investment by promoting and communicating a prospectus of opportunities and reducing barriers to private delivery and funding for visitor economy infrastructure		
Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility
2.2.1 Create a prospectus promoting that Ballarat is open for business for projects that enhance and grow the visitor experience.	December 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City of Ballarat
2.3 Improve connectivity and signage		
Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility
2.3.1 Scope a connectivity and wayfinding masterplan that considers gateway signage, technology, and transport.	June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City of Ballarat
2.3.2 Implement the connectivity and signage plan.	June 2024	
2.4 Continue to implement the Ballarat Creative Precinct Master Plan		
Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility
2.4.1 Formalise partnerships between stakeholders to unlock public assets and incentives to attract investors	June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City of Ballarat
2.4.2 Continue seeking funding for the implementation of the Creative Cities Masterplan.	Ongoing	

Strategic priorities and actions

2. Attract public and private investment to enhance amenities, transport, and connectivity		
2.5 Creating enhanced experiences – Actively explore three new product and event opportunities through available funding and private sector partnerships.		
Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility
2.5.1 Prepare a product development plan that supports demand and supply drivers and embraces sustainability technology objectives outlined in the Council plan.	December 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Ballarat
3. Focus on priority audiences and leveraging Visitor Friends and Relatives		
3.1 Develop a strategic marketing plan that identifies the target markets to match supply and demand		
Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility
3.1.1 Develop a three-year marketing plan that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirms brand evolution and invests in execution of brand in line with the <i>Traveller Experience Plan 2021–2030</i>. Develops and adopts a thematic approach that aligns and complements Sovereign Hill to build campaigns and product around the four seasons: Winter, Spring, Summer and Autumn. Intervenes in market to address peaks and troughs in visitation throughout the year. Regular briefs to industry on how to align their products and marketing to our priority audiences. 	December 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Ballarat
3.2 Develop a major Visit Friends and Relatives (VFR) campaign		
Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility
3.2.1 Dedicated annual VFR plan to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tactical plans that increase the awareness of local product and locals advocating. Development of a local's pass/locals passport concept to Ballarat's key attractions for VFR (Visiting Friends and Relatives) development. Pursue "We are Ballarat" campaign – brand ambassadors – align to VFR. 	November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Ballarat

Strategic priorities and actions

3. Focus on priority audiences and leveraging Visitor Friends and Relatives		
3.3 Promote Ballarat’s sporting, cultural, participation and spectator events to increase visitor demand and visitor expenditure		
Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility
3.3.1 Continue to explore opportunities with industry for greater leveraging from business and sporting events. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cohesive business and sports events approach.• Coordination of event calendar, open days, attractions to encourage multiple activities to encourage an extended stay.• Develop opportunities for industry to pre-promote to the sports events visitor.• Develop opportunities for industry to leverage off the sports events visitors, once they are in Ballarat.	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City of Ballarat• Industry
4. Invest in Community as hosts, partners, and experience entrepreneurs		
4.1 Develop a community awareness campaign to increase understanding about the benefits, opportunities of tourism and the role of residents as hosts		
Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility
4.1.1 Foster local community and industry engagement through the establishment of a Ballarat Host/Ambassadors program to promote Ballarat and identify opportunities to which we need to adapt.	June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City of Ballarat
4.1.2 Amplify itineraries for visiting friends and relatives to share with residents and promote Ballarat’s experiences and local culture.	Ongoing	
4.1.3 Undertake visitor and resident sentiment monitoring to determine levels of interaction and satisfaction and improve outcomes.	Both at the end of 2021 and the end of 2024	
4.2 Evolve visitor servicing to an elevated experience by sharing people, place and produce stories and offering “wow” experience		
Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility
4.2.1 Review and complete a Visitor Servicing Plan to remain responsive to our markets: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a Citywide Visitor Services Plan• Review current Visitor Servicing operations• Develop visitor centre experience and offering.• Identify digital means and hotspots for visitors.	October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City of Ballarat

Strategic priorities and actions

5. Create impact and resilience through capacity building and partnerships		
5.1 Leadership and Advocacy		
Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility
5.1.1 Lead State Government advocacy on the Regional Tourism Review.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City of Ballarat• Industry• Ballarat Regional Tourism
5.1.2 Advocate at every level of government on behalf of and with industry.	Ongoing	
5.1.3 Formalise the cross-sector collaborative task force of industry leaders and key partners for implementation and monitoring of the plan.	Six-monthly meetings coordinated by the City of Ballarat.	
5.1.4 Provide peer to peer business support.	Ongoing	
5.1.5 Continue to streamline regulatory processes and red tape to support industry to increase outdoor dining capacity.	Ongoing	
5.1.6 Support industry in identifying and converting innovative spaces and ways to operate.	Ongoing	
5.1.7 Continue to implement the Ballarat actions of the <i>Grampians Visitor Economy Workforce Development Strategy</i>	Ongoing	
5.1.8 Complete destination crisis plan that addresses tourism stakeholder communications during crisis to ensure clear and coordinated approach to crisis preparedness, management, and recovery.	June 2022	
5.2 Develop an industry development, training, and networking program – deliver alignment opportunities to our core primary audiences		
Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility
5.2.1 Launch a new visitor economy industry resource hub on ballarat.com.au for businesses to access data, funding streams and industry development opportunities.	December 2021	
5.2.2 Encourage industry excellence and connection through capability building and sharing knowledge.		

Strategic priorities and actions

5. Create impact and resilience through capacity building and partnerships

5.2 Develop an industry development, training, and networking program – deliver alignment opportunities to our core primary audiences

Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility
5.2.3 Industry Engagement checklist: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate industry on what the key audiences find compelling. • Encourage industry to talk about Ballarat and share content of other experiences beyond their own. • Coordination of opening hours for businesses – accessibility. • Support industry sustainability. • Development of Ballarat's industry communication channels – use social media for real time updates. • Work with education providers like Federation University Australia to promote a higher standard of education and training. • Build understanding in both priority segments and product development opportunities to lift the experience in Ballarat. 	June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Ballarat • Industry

5.3 Establish and maintain regional tourism data

Outputs	Timeframe	Responsibility
5.3.1 Develop industry-facing regional data reports for distribution for the purposes of reporting and future decision making. Distribute through industry communications and an industry hub on <i>ballarat.com.au</i> .	December 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Ballarat

Measurement targets

To achieve the agreed purpose of rebuilding Ballarat's visitor economy and shaping the industry and community for the future, five measurement targets are proposed to measure our success.

Central to this plan is the refresh and revitalisation of experiences designed to increase visitation through word of mouth, marketing, and enhanced community engagement.

Attracting more visitor nights in Ballarat

Key Performance Indicators:

- By 2023/24 increase visitor nights to 2018/19 levels
- Increase percentage of market share of visitor nights in regional Victoria.

A visitor economy that has rebounded and gained market share in regional Victoria when compared to pre-COVID levels

Key Performance Indicators:

- Ballarat region visitor spending (\$M) and total employment to meet forecasts for 2023/24.

	Pre Covid 2018/19	Forecasts for 2020/21 – peak year of COVID impacts <i>(Decisive Consulting forecasts)</i>	Targeted 2023/24 <i>(Decisive Consulting forecasts plus 5% in visitor spend compared to regional Vic forecasts)</i>
Total Visitor Expenditure	\$696m	\$547m	\$719m
Market Share in regional Victoria	4.6%	4.9%	4.9%
Jobs due to total impacts (direct and indirect) of visitor spending	4,872 jobs	3,849 jobs	5,035 jobs

Increased awareness of the value of the visitor economy and benefits to the community.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Increase the reach and frequency of tourism messaging to the community.
- Surveys in late 2021 and 2024 on the attitudes of the Ballarat community to the visitor economy.

Our ability to transform the experiences we offer through investment and product development.

Key Performance Indicators:

- New and reinvigorated products, experiences and events by providing more support and/or funding, as well as attracting, those events that align with our brand.

Increase the quality of the visitor experience by surveying businesses in late 2021 and 2024:

Key Performance Indicators:

- Monitoring social media comments
- Responding to feedback
- Delivering service and experience improvements



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May 2021

8.9. BALLARAT MECHANICS' INSTITUTE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP REQUEST

Division: Community Wellbeing
Director: Matthew Wilson
Author/Position: Jenny Fink - Executive Manager Learning and Community Hubs

PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this report is to consider the request from the Ballarat Mechanics' Institute to enter into a strategic partnership agreement with the City of Ballarat.

BACKGROUND

2. The Strategic Partnership Program operates as a non-competitive process to fund organisations or businesses to deliver Council identified initiatives. Strategic Partnerships are considered for requests exceeding \$20,000. They can be applied for at any time and can operate over multiple years.
3. An expression of interest application has been received by the BMI as part of this process to enter into a strategic partnership with the City of Ballarat.
4. The BMI was established in 1859, an era before Government funded public libraries and adult education programs. Historically the BMI provided access to a membership lending library, lectures, scientific demonstrations and space for local social and cultural events.
5. Today the BMI has transitioned from an organisation governed and run almost solely by volunteers to a significant not-for profit business, with structured management systems. This transition process was helped significantly through a strategic partnership grant from the City of Ballarat in 2017.

KEY MATTERS

6. The BMI seeks a further strategic partnership grant to expand its current range of programs and services.
7. This strategic partnership request has been submitted under Council's existing Grants Policy which outlines the terms of the current Strategic Partnerships Program, and as such should be considered under the existing policy.
8. It is noted for Council that proposed changes to the Grants Policy which includes the terms and conditions of the Strategic Partnership Program is also listed for Council consideration at the 23 June Ordinary Meeting of Council. The proposed changes for the Strategic Partnership Program pertain to creating two cycles per annum in which submissions will be considered, and also placing a timeframe limit of up to four years for any new Strategic Partnership agreements. Whilst this partnership request is being presented prior to any potential changes to the Grants Policy, the terms requested are consistent with the proposed changes should Council adopt them.

9. The BMI's primary areas of focus are related to five objectives:

Objective 1. Build capacity in the BMI management structure – Post COVID-19, partnerships and integrated programs will be an important component for economic recovery. For BMI to be able to assist with this challenge, the BMI will need to continue with the process to refine its management, administration and operations so that there is a greater emphasis on improved communications and increasing programs of live entertainment and community benefit activities such as community forums and presentations.

Support via the partnership program will enable the continued move away from relying solely on volunteer management to a skills-based organisation that employs staff who actively seek growth and partnership opportunities.

It is essential for the BMI to maintain the position of an Executive Manager, and to provide paid part time support to enable the delivery of the business plan. It is also important for the BMI to continue with the development of in-house services and systems to assist in maximising returns for all activities and events. Training and mentoring programs will ensure that the BMI is able to continue with programs that invest in volunteers and staff to provide support for activities at the BMI and the Ballarat Arts precinct.

Objective 2. Collection management and networking with organisations in the Arts precinct - Support via the partnership agreement will enable the BMI to engage a Curator (part time) to assist with the creative expansion and use of the BMI print, photographic images and archival assets including the visual images collection. The BMI will be able to produce a range of program of Events and to engage visitors and the people of Ballarat. They will seek to expand their collections from private and corporate sources, of locally relevant film and video archival material that may otherwise be lost to Ballarat. They will integrate the restored basement vaults into Ballarat's array of heritage buildings, attractions and venues.

Objective 3. Post COVID-19 programs - Work with the City of Ballarat and relevant agencies, tourism-based organisations, and individual stakeholders to explore and develop short and long term opportunities that will assist with the City of Ballarat economic recovery programs post COVID-19. The BMI building provides a high-profile location for functions, tours, events and festivals. The BMI has a history of participation in programs that deliver diversity, inclusion and multi culturalism. KPI's for the partnership include an increase in visitor numbers at the BMI from 12,600 in 2020 to more than 23,000 in year 2023.

Objective 4. Fundraising – Greater emphasis will be spent on generating funds for programs and events. Following a successful launch of the BMI Foundation, the BMI Board is working to refresh and relaunch fundraising activities. Support via this grant will enable the provision of administration support and assist with integration with other activities for community utilisation, preservation and maintenance of the building.

Objective 5. Investigate and deliver new programs - Support via this partnership will allow the BMI to review, investigate and develop activities to meet the future demands of the Ballarat community. Surveys will be conducted with building users and community stakeholders to seek feedback on existing and new programs. There is scope and a need for a trusted, community-based, not-for-profit organisation with the founding purpose of disseminating knowledge, information and education using the latest IT tools and technology.

10. Value of the Strategic Partnership Request

The BMI seeks a strategic partnership grant of \$135,000 over three years

2021/2022	\$45,000
2022/2023	\$45,000
2023/2024	\$45,000

The BMI will contribute a matching amount to this grant.

11. Benefits of the Partnership to Council and the Community

The BMI has outlined that this proposal is consistent with many of the City of Ballarat Plans and objectives. In particular the Ballarat Creative City Strategy, City of Ballarat Prosperity Framework, City of Ballarat Response and Recovery Pandemic Plan 2020, City of Ballarat Creative City Precinct Master Plan, City of Ballarat Events Strategy 2018-28 and the Ballarat Heritage Plan 2017-30.

The proposed partnership will also have the following benefits to the residents of the municipality:

- a. Increased number community events for multi-cultural, diversity and inclusion activities
- b. Employment opportunities for workers in the creative and live music industry
- c. Collaboration of groups and organisation in the Arts precinct
- d. Volunteer and work experience opportunities
- e. Support for the City of Ballarat Strategies, Master Plans, and planning frameworks
- f. Heritage-ambient venue for events, conferences, and performances in the heart of the Arts and Heritage Precinct.
- g. Economic benefits from attracting the public to events at the BMI (food and accommodation).
- h. Continued leveraging of the standing of the BMI to attract substantial capital grants from Government and philanthropic sources

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**12. That Council****12.1 Accept the request from the Ballarat Mechanics Institute and enter into a strategic partnership to the value of \$135,000 over three years, paid in the following instalments:**

2021/2022	\$45,000
2022/2023	\$45,000
2023/2024	\$45,000

ATTACHMENTS

1. Governance Review [8.9.1 - 2 pages]

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ALIGNMENT WITH COUNCIL VISION, COUNCIL PLAN, STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

1. This proposal is consistent with many of the City of Ballarat Plans and objectives. In particular the Ballarat Creative City Strategy, City of Ballarat Prosperity Framework, City of Ballarat Response and Recovery Pandemic Plan 2020, City of Ballarat Creative City Precinct Master Plan, City of Ballarat Events Strategy 2018-28 and the Ballarat Heritage Plan 2017-30.
2. This project is aligned with the Grant Program's purpose to capitalise on Ballarat's competitive advantages in the cultural, heritage and tourism market by raising the known assets and services of the BMI to a significantly higher and more diversified level.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

3. The proposed partnership will also have the following benefits to the residents of the municipality:
 - a. Increased number community events for multi-cultural, diversity and inclusion activities
 - b. Employment opportunities for workers in the creative and live music industry
 - c. Collaboration of groups and organisation in the Arts precinct
 - d. Volunteer and work experience opportunities
 - e. Support for the City of Ballarat Strategies, Master Plans, and planning frameworks
 - f. Heritage-ambient venue for events, conferences, and performances in the heart of the Arts and Heritage Precinct.
 - g. Economic benefits from attracting the public to events at the BMI (food and accommodation)
 - h. Continued leveraging of the standing of the BMI to attract substantial capital grants from Government and philanthropic sources

CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

4. Other than the ongoing, preservation and maintenance of the BMI building, no specific climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications have been identified.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

5. There are significant economic benefits in assuring the proper preservation and accessibility of the building, in preserving and making accessible the collections of the building and in giving Ballarat a unique, heritage-ambient venue for events, conferences and performances right in the heart of the Arts and Heritage Precinct.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6. The BMI seeks a strategic partnership grant of \$135,000 over three years

2021/2022	\$45,000
2022/2023	\$45,000
2023/2024	\$45,000

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The BMI will contribute a matching amount to this grant.

LEGAL AND RISK CONSIDERATIONS

7. The risk to Council is moderate to low, Council has entered into a successful strategic partnership with the BMI previously and has no direct responsibility to deliver the initiatives outlined in the partnership request. Terms of the agreement require periodic reporting and a final acquittal outlining that outcomes suggested are either in process or have been achieved.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

8. It is considered that the report does not impact on any human rights identified in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

9. The proposal outlines that the BMI will work with the City of Ballarat and relevant agencies, tourism based organisations, and individual stakeholders to explore and develop short and long term opportunities that will assist with the City of Ballarat economic recovery programs post Covid-19.

GENDER EQUALITY ACT 2020

10. There are no gender equality implications identified for the subject of this report.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST THAT HAVE ARISEN IN PREPARATION OF THE REPORT

11. Council officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the matter of this report.

OFFICIAL

8.10. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP - SOVEREIGN HILL

Division: Community Wellbeing
Director: Matthew Wilson
Author/Position: Pete Appleton - Executive Manager Engaged Communities

PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this report is to consider the request from Sovereign Hill to enter into a strategic partnership agreement with the City of Ballarat.

BACKGROUND

2. The Strategic Partnership Program operates as a non-competitive process to fund organisations or businesses to deliver Council identified initiatives. Strategic Partnerships are considered for requests exceeding \$20,000. They can be applied for at any time and can operate over multiple years.
3. In June 2017 Sovereign Hill was granted a Strategic Partnership valued at \$80,000 per annum for 3 three years. The \$240,000 partnership grant was formally acquitted at the end of 2019/20. As part of the acquittal review process Sovereign Hill was successfully able to demonstrate the delivery of significant outputs based on the original outputs agreed to within the formal funding agreement.
4. An expression of interest application has been received from Sovereign Hill for a new partnership covering the years 2020/21 and 2021/22. The expression of interest is seeking the new two-year partnership agreement based on the same commitments and agreed outputs as the original agreement.
5. Sovereign Hill is identified as the principal visitor attraction in Ballarat, important for Ballarat's brand identity, cultural identity, and tourism experience. It is a key employer and contributes significantly to the economic output and social fabric of Ballarat and region. The ongoing relationship with Council is highly valued.

KEY MATTERS

6. The expression of interest from Sovereign Hill in a new two year strategic partnership with Council has been submitted under the current Grants Policy which outlines terms and conditions for the current Strategic Partnership Program. Therefore, this expression of interest should be considered against the current terms of the policy.
7. It is noted for Council that proposed changes to the Grants Policy which includes the terms and conditions of the Strategic Partnership Program is also listed for Council consideration at the 23 June Ordinary Meeting of Council. The proposed changes for the Strategic Partnership Program pertain to creating two cycles per annum in which submissions will be considered, and also placing a timeframe limit of up to four years for any new Strategic Partnership agreements. Whilst this partnership request is being presented prior to any potential changes to the Grants Policy, the terms requested are consistent with the proposed changes should Council adopt them.

8. As part of the proposed partnership agreement, Sovereign Hill is committed to partnering with the City of Ballarat by providing the following:

- Co-operative marketing including co-branding.
- Delivery of the annual Winter Wonderlights Festival.
- Cooperative activities in international investment and visitation attraction – trade mission, business events and hosting of delegations (subject to national border restrictions being lifted).
- Coordination / joint heritage activities.
- Support the implementation of Council's Visitor Economy Strategy and Traveller Experience Plan.
- Ongoing collections management for the Mayoral Chains, the Hansom Cab and historic maps at the Gold Museum.
- One annual community-based exhibition celebrating one community from within Ballarat, for example an exhibition such as *Celebrating Sebastopol*.
- Access to the Red Coats for at least 5 Council Civic Function each year.
- Corporate Membership 25 tickets and 6 passes to Blood on the Southern Cross and Hospitality package (table of 10).
- Attendance at the Presidents dinner (table of 10).
- Support for the Gnarrwiring Festival.
- Mayor to be the Civic Patron of Sovereign Hill.
- Access to non-confidential data upon request.
- Letters of support for complementary activities.
- Access to Sovereign Hill for VIP visitors.

9. Sovereign Hill seeks a strategic partnership grant of \$160,000 over two years.

2020/2021	\$80,000
2021/2022	\$80,000

10. Sovereign Hill's proposal is consistent with many of Council's Plans and Objectives. The proposed agreement directly aligns with Ballarat's Visitor Economy, the Traveller Experience Plan, the Creative Cities Strategy, the Events Strategy 2018-28 and the Ballarat Heritage Plan 2017-30.

The proposed partnership will also have the following benefits to Ballarat, its residents and the broader region.

Sovereign Hill is:

- a). The principal visitor attraction in Ballarat.
- b). One of the largest attractions in regional Victoria.
- c). A key local employer with over 200 staff and a high level of volunteers via the Friends of Sovereign Hill and the Gold Museum Society.
- d). A flagship for the tourism industry of Ballarat and region significantly contributing to the region's economic outputs.
- e). Important for Ballarat's brand identity, cultural identity and tourism experience.

11. It is noted to Council that the financial years pertaining to this request are 2020/21 and 2021/22. The financial year of 2020/21 is included in this request due to the fact that Sovereign Hill has continued to uphold the activities and intent of the existing partnership following its expiry in good faith that Council may give consideration to a renewal of the partnership agreement.

12. Officers assess that entering into this partnership agreement for the years 2020/21 and 2021/22 is recommended.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

13. That Council

- 13.1 Accept the request from Sovereign Hill and enter into a strategic partnership to the value of \$160,000 over two years, paid in the following in instalments.**

2021/2022	\$80,000
2022/2023	\$80,000

ATTACHMENTS

1. Governance Review [8.10.1 - 2 pages]

OFFICIAL

ALIGNMENT WITH COUNCIL VISION, COUNCIL PLAN, STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

1. This proposed partnership has direct links to the Council Plan, Community Vision, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, the Creative Cities Plan, the Visitor Economy Strategy, the Traveller Experience Plan, the Prosperity Framework, the Events Strategy and the Ballarat Heritage Plan.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

2. Whilst Sovereign Hill has a national and international brand, it remains important to the local Ballarat community offering significant employment and volunteering opportunities as well as great place for locals to also go and visit.

CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

3. There are no direct climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications from this report.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

4. An economic impact report produced by Ernst & Young in 2012/13 concluded Sovereign Hill provided an injection of \$228.5M into the Ballarat economy.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5. This \$160,000 partnership application is proposed over two financial years, \$80,000 in 2021/2022 and \$80,000 in 2022/23.

LEGAL AND RISK CONSIDERATIONS

6. If Council were to not provide grant funding to Sovereign Hill, there is the potential for the organisation to seek grants for lesser amounts and request fees for service when Council makes use of the facilities and staff of Sovereign Hill. The mitigating measure for this risk is to ensure a robust agreement is in place that captures all costs and opportunities.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

7. It is considered that the report does not impact on any human rights identified in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

8. No formal community consultation or engagement has taken place in relation to this issue.

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GENDER EQUALITY ACT 2020

9. There are no gender equality implications identified for the subject of this report.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST THAT HAVE ARISEN IN PREPARATION OF THE REPORT

10. Council officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the matter of this report.

OFFICIAL

8.11. GRANTS POLICY 2021

Division: Community Wellbeing
Director: Matthew Wilson
Author/Position: Pete Appleton - Executive Manager Engaged Communities

PURPOSE

1. To update the Grants Policy.
2. To strengthen both the Strategic Partnerships Program and the Tourism Events Grants Program.

BACKGROUND

3. As part of a process of continuous improvement, this report articulates proposed changes to Council's Grants Policy. The policy makes specific program changes to the Strategic Partnerships Program and the Tourism Event Grants Program. Whilst both programs have operated with some success since being introduced in 2017, there are components within both programs that are being strengthened to increase efficiency, transparency and accountability.

KEY MATTERS

4. The updated policy proposes the following changes be made to the Strategic Partnerships Program and the Tourism Events Grants Program.

Strategic Partnerships:

- Applications be received during two designated windows in August and February each year subject to available program funds.
- That Council allocate strategic partnership funding at Council meetings in October and April subject to available program funds.
- That Strategic Partnerships can operate over a maximum four (4) year term.
- Removal of the need for applicants to submit an Investment Logic Map as part of the application process.

Tourism Event Grants Program:

- That the Tourism Event Grants Program directly align with Council's Visitor Economy Strategy and the Ballarat Events Strategy (noting that both draft strategies are currently being considered by Council).
- Create a new Tourism Event Grants Delegated Authority Committee featuring representation from City of Ballarat Councillors plus Council Officers to assess all program applications, with a new Terms of Reference and Instrument of Delegation to be considered by Council at the next Ordinary Meeting of Council in July.
- That the program accepts applications from July each financial year until the program budget for that financial year has been fully exhausted.
- Introduction of a small grants option for applications under \$5,000 using a shorter application form requiring less information from applicants.

- Assessments via the Delegated Authority Committee would take place each month shortening the turnaround timeline for applications to between one (1) to five (5) weeks.

Community Impact Grants Program:

- Rename Council's existing Grants Allocations Committee Delegated Committee to the Community Impact Allocations Delegated Committee. The only change with this committee is that it would now only assess applications to the Community Impact Grants Program.

5. Other proposed policy amendments include:

- Section 3.3 has been updated in response to the *Gender Equality Act 2020*. The section states that it is expected that all applications for funding will demonstrate that they have considered how people of different genders may be impacted by their proposed program, activity or event. This includes demonstrating that they have made attempts, where relevant, to provide an equitable opportunity.
- Section 3.5 has been amended in relation to ongoing funding. This change directly removes the commitment for Council to provide seed funding via the Strategic Partnerships Program. The revised section confirms that none of the grant programs are designed for continuous ongoing funding by virtue of having set acquittal dates as part of all funding agreements. It also encourages all grant recipients to ensure the appropriate conclusion or ongoing sustainability of projects at the end of the Council funding commitment.
- Section 3.7 Schedule of Payments has been revised so that Strategic Partnerships payments are paid on an annual basis subject to the submission of a satisfactory annual milestone report.
- Section 3.7 Schedule of Payments now states that for projects receiving \$10,000 or less in Council funding, recipients will receive a single full payment on signing a funding agreement prior to the project commencing. It is proposed that this figure increase from \$5,000 based on feedback from small community groups who have experienced difficulties delivering projects due to a lack of cash-flow to fund goods and services without the full amount of funding upfront. Any grant over \$10,000 will still be subject to a split payment process.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

6. That Council:

6.1 Adopt the Grants Policy noting changes to both the Strategic Partnerships Program and the Tourism Event Grants Program.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Governance Review [8.11.1 - 2 pages]
2. Final Grants Policy 2021 [8.11.2 - 7 pages]

OFFICIAL

ALIGNMENT WITH COUNCIL VISION, COUNCIL PLAN, STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

1. The revised Grants Policy directly aligns with the Council Plan, Strategic and Policies by ensuring that grant recipients are able to deliver quality programs, events, products and services which are of great benefit to Ballarat and which bring a wide range of social, environmental and economic returns to the city.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

2. A key element of the assessment criteria listed in the policy relates to the anticipated level of community benefit within each application.

CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

3. Whilst there is not a specific individual environmental / sustainability grant program, environmental / sustainability-based applications are eligible across all the proposed grant programs in the revised policy.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

4. The intent of Council's grant programs is to stimulate further investment in the Ballarat economy through matched funds, investment from local participants and visitors to the city, via in-kind community contributions.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5. An annual budget allocation is required to implement the Grants Policy and its programs. All applications will be assessed on an individual basis and will be subject to the availability of program budgets.

LEGAL AND RISK CONSIDERATIONS

6. The 2020 Grants Policy featured significant policy revisions based on the completion of an internal audit process. An annual community grants review report is scheduled to be considered by Council at the conclusion of the 2020-21 financial year.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

7. It is considered that this report does not impact on any human rights identified in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

8. Council officers receive regular feedback on the current Grants Policy and its program from several sources including applicants, community organisations, industry groups and Councillors and this information has been used to develop the changes recommended in this revised policy.

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GENDER EQUALITY ACT 2020

9. In response to the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, it is expected that all applications for funding will demonstrate that they have considered how people of different genders may be impacted by their proposed program, activity or event. This includes demonstrating that they have made attempts, where relevant, to provide an equitable opportunity.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST THAT HAVE ARISEN IN PREPARATION OF THE REPORT

10. Council Officers affirm that no general or material interests need to be declared in relation to the matter of this report.

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GRANTS POLICY

1.0 Purpose

The intent of the Grants Policy is to ensure that recipients are able to deliver quality programs, events, products and services which are of great benefit to Ballarat and which bring a wide range of social, environmental and economic returns to the City.

2.0 Scope

The Grants Policy applies to three (3) funding programs and provides for a consistent approach to administering grants. Each funding program provides for administrative arrangements relating to that program detailed in the policy and guideline documents (refer Clause 7 - "References and Related Policies" below).

In addition to the programs listed within this policy, Council may also provide for contributions within its annual budget to groups, organisations and businesses that align with the Council Plan, Council strategies and the purposes/principles in this policy via specific individual service agreements.

3.0 Policy Statement

3.1 Grant Programs

3.1.1 Strategic Partnership Program

Strategic Partnerships exist to fund organisations or businesses to deliver Council-identified priorities. Strategic Partnerships are considered for requests exceeding \$20,000. They can be applied for during two designated windows in August and February each year subject to an available program budget. Agreements can operate over a maximum four (4) year term.

The level of Strategic Partnership funding and the period of support will be determined via criteria that includes:

- Level of community benefit.
- Level of economic benefit.
- Extent of alignment with the Council Plan.
- Amount of funding previously provided.
- Potential to be self-sustainable.

Decisions about Strategic Partnership funding are made via a resolution of Council, noting that any commercial in confidence information provided by applicants will be considered under Section 66 of the *Local Government Act* as a confidential attachment.

Strategic Partnerships must align with community needs and Council's strategic objectives, as articulated in the Council Plan and based on the following principles:

- Partnerships are with sole providers or identified strategic partners that Council is able to work with collaboratively to deliver community outcomes.
- City of Ballarat has no direct responsibility to deliver these initiatives.



- Strategic partners are identified to make the most of opportunities to meet the needs of the community and deliver on outcomes identified in the Council Plan.
- Strategic partnerships have consistent reporting and contractual agreements. Recipients are required to enter into a Funding Agreement with Council that outlines reporting requirements and a mutually agreed evaluation framework that focuses on performance and outcome measures.
- Recommendations will be made to Council on the term of the Funding Agreement for Strategic Partnerships taking into consideration the time required to have an impact on outcomes and the term of the strategic documents to which they align.

Assessment:

There are four (4) phases of the assessment process for the Strategic Partnership Program.

Phase 1- Applications are reviewed by relevant Council officers checking that it is complete and that it contains all the necessary supporting documentation. All incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant for further development by a specified deadline.

Phase 2 – All applications are assessed by an internal Grants Working Group in accordance with Council's strategic objectives as articulated in the Council Plan, and in line with the principles highlighted above. Applications which fail to meet Council's strategic objectives as articulated in the Council Plan or the principles highlighted above will be returned to the applicant for further development by a specified deadline.

Phase 3 – All applications received during each window and recommendations for funding are reviewed by Council's Executive Leadership Team.

Phase 4 - Projects recommended for funding are considered at a Council meeting with applicants being officially advised of an outcome within two weeks.

It is expected that the assessment process will be completed within two months of the designated window for applications closing.

The Director Community Wellbeing is responsible for the co-ordination of the overall program, however individual Strategic Partnerships are facilitated across all Council areas meaning all members of Council's Executive Leadership Team may be nominated as the lead for a particular partnership.

3.1.2 Tourism Event Grants Program

The Tourism Event Grants Program is directly linked to the implementation of Council's Visitor Economy Strategy. Program funding is for projects, festivals, events (including sporting events) or activities which advance and encourage increased visitation, participation and yield and / or contribute to the presentation or marketing of Ballarat as a tourism destination of choice. Applications from not-for-profit and for-profit organisations and businesses will be considered for up to \$20,000, including a small grants option for applications under \$5,000. Applications will be considered throughout the financial year until the annual budget has been allocated. Tourism Event Grants are not available over multiple years and groups are required to fully acquit grants within a twelve-month period. Applications will be considered by Council's Tourism Event Grant Allocations Delegated Committee.



Specific assessment criteria will apply regarding value for money, increased visitor numbers and increased yield.

Assessment:

There are two (2) phases of the assessment process:

Phase 1 – Applications are forwarded each month to members of Council's Tourism Event Grant Allocations Delegated Committee.

Phase 2 - Council's Tourism Event Grant Allocations Delegated Committee will determine projects to be funded and the level of funding to be provided for the project. Applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application within one week of the panel meeting.

It is expected that the assessment process will be completed within a period of one to five weeks depending on when in the month an application is received.

The Director Community Wellbeing is responsible for the program with support from the Executive Manager Events and the Arts.

3.1.3 Community Impact Grants Program

Community Impact Grants are for local community projects and initiatives which increase community participation, encourage connected communities, promote healthy lifestyles and build resilient communities. Applications from not-for-profit organisations will be considered for up to \$20,000, including a small grants option for applications under \$2,000. Applications will be considered via a quarterly rounds process with the requirement for grants to be acquitted within a twelve-month period. Community Impact Grants are not available over multiple years, although groups are welcome to submit multiple applications for different projects up to a maximum of \$20,000 of grant funding each financial year. Applications will be considered by Council's Grant Allocations Delegated Committee.

Specific assessment criteria will apply regarding value for money and community need for the project. The Community Impact Grants Program will accept arts & culture, sport and active living, youth, environmental sustainability, and heritage-themed applications.

Assessment:

The Community Impact Grants Program has up to four rounds of funding per year. Dates of grant round opening and closure will be published in advance. Rounds will cease when all allocated funds for the program for the year have been distributed.

There are two (2) phases of the assessment process:

Phase 1 - The application is forwarded to Council's Community Impact Grant Allocations Delegated Committee for assessment in accordance with the criteria relevant to the program.



Phase 2 - The Community Impact Grant Allocations Delegated Committee will determine projects to be funded and the level of funding to be provided for the project. Applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application within two weeks of the determination of the Grant Allocations Delegated Committee.

It is expected that the assessment process will be completed within eight weeks of the grant round closing.

The Director Community Wellbeing is responsible for the program with support from the Executive Manager Engaged Communities.

3.2 Budget and Timing

Council budget allocations are made each financial year and each funding program has its own dedicated budget.

The Strategic Partnerships Program will have designated windows for receiving applications in August and February each financial year.

Tourism Event Grants Program will be open from the first Monday in July at the start of the new financial year.

The Community Impact Grants Program will be run on a quarterly basis commencing in July/August of the new financial year.

All programs will be closed once the annual budget allocated to that specific program is exhausted.

3.3 Equity of Grant Distribution

To ensure an equitable distribution of funding through each funding program and to extend the benefits of Council funding most broadly across the community, the following limits to the number of applications will apply:

- Organisations applying to the Tourism Event Grants Program are welcome to submit multiple applications as long as the funding is sought for different and unrelated events or activities.
- Groups are welcome to submit multiple applications to the Community Impact Grants Program for different projects and can access up to a maximum \$20,000 each financial year.
- In response to the Gender Equality Act 2020, it is expected that all applications for funding will demonstrate that they have considered how people of different genders may be impacted by their proposed program, activity or event. This includes demonstrating that they have made attempts, where relevant, to provide an equitable opportunity.

3.4 Fundraising Events

Events that have a primary purpose to raise funds and where the majority of profits generated are distributed to third-party organisations, agencies or charities without limited direct benefits to City of Ballarat residents, are not eligible for funding from the Council.

Where an event includes fundraising as a secondary purpose to a community event or activity with high local and visitor attendance (e.g. tourism event) and the fundraising will directly benefit City of Ballarat residents, align with the Council Plan or are seed funding, it may be considered.



3.5 Ongoing Funding

None of the grant programs are designed for continuous ongoing funding. Whilst available over multiple years Strategic Partnerships can only operate throughout the lifetime of the Council, and both the Tourism Event Grants Program and the Community Impact Grants Program operate a twelve-month acquittal process. All grant recipients are encouraged to ensure the appropriate conclusion or ongoing sustainability of projects at the end of the Council funding commitment.

3.6 Grant Conditions

- Funded organisations will be required to sign a funding agreement prior to commencement of any funded project.
- All funded projects must be based in the City of Ballarat or otherwise provide evidence that the project/event/activity will involve and support a significant amount of people from the municipality
- Council funding must be used in accordance to the project approved by the Council as detailed in the funding agreement. Where funds are used for non-approved purposes, it is expected that funds will be repaid to Council.
- All funded projects must include all relevant and required consents, permits or approvals prior to commencement.
- Funded organisations are required to meet all relevant legislative requirements (e.g. Occupational Health & Safety, Risk, Equal Opportunity, Child Safety Standards, Workers Compensation).
- The support of the City of Ballarat for funded projects must be acknowledged as detailed in the funding agreement and the City of Ballarat provided with an opportunity to speak at launches and openings.
- Funded organisations are required to ensure volunteers are registered with the organisation and adequately covered by insurance as detailed in the funding agreement.
- Funds are required to be expended within 12 months of the signing of the funding agreement, unless otherwise provided for within that agreement.
- Funds not expended within the agreed timeframe are to be returned to the City of Ballarat unless a written extension is obtained from Council.
- Funded organisations will be required to provide Council with a tax invoice if they are registered for GST, or an invoice if they have an ABN but not registered for GST, or an invoice and signed 'statement by supplier' if they do not have an ABN.

3.7 Schedule of Payments

The schedule of payments for funded projects shall include:

- Strategic Partnership agreement payments will be paid on an annual basis, subject to the submission of satisfactory annual milestone reports.
- All one-off grant payments over \$10,000 will receive a maximum of 50% of the grant up-front. The remainder of the funding will be provided upon completion of the project and on receipt of a satisfactory acquittal.
- For projects receiving \$10,000 or less in Council funding, recipients will receive a single full payment. All projects of \$10,000 or less will still be required to submit a satisfactory acquittal upon completion of a project.



3.8 Acquittals

- Funded organisations must submit a signed acquittal report to Council within one month of completion of the funded project as detailed in the funding agreement. Organisations who fail to provide an acquittal report will not be eligible to make any further funding applications until the outstanding acquittal is approved.
- Where organisations fail to acquit a grant, City of Ballarat may request that the funding be returned.
- Acquittals are required from all grant recipients. All acquittals should be submitted using the official City of Ballarat template and include evidence of agreed expenditure.
- Completion of the official acquittal assessment form is to be completed by Council officers upon receipt of acquittal documents from grant recipients.
- Acquittals are subject to an ongoing audit process whereby each individual grant is reviewed with the aim of ensuring a consistent approach to the grants policy, processes and documentation.
- A summary of all acquittal documents be provided to Councillors on an annual basis via a Council Report as part of an overall grants summary report.

3.9 Checklists, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

- The SmartyGrants online platform is to be used across all funding programs, including the filing and retention of all documentation within the platform. This includes but is not limited to: application forms, quotes, supporting letters, assessment reports, Committee or Council decisions, milestone reports, variations, acquittals and general correspondence.
- The use of a full detailed checklist charting all phases of documentation requirements within the grant process shall be subject to an internal annual review.
- On occasions the figure allocated to an organisation via a Strategic Partnership may change from the original application as a result of discussion in the Council Chamber. Where this is the case the Council meeting minutes should reflect the change and the rationale or reasoning for the variation in the grant award.
- Satisfactory annual milestone reports for Strategic Partnerships grants funded over multiple years are required before recipient's drawdown additional years of funding. Milestone reports should be submitted using the official City of Ballarat template and include evidence of agreed expenditure.
- Summary information from received milestone reports is to be used within the annual grants summary report to Council demonstrating progress made against agreed outputs.

The Director Community Wellbeing is responsible for the co-ordination of an annual grants summary report to Council which will provide a review of the allocation and acquittal information over the preceding 12 months.

3.10 Ensuring Community Capacity to apply for grants

Council will promote the availability of grants and the process through Council publications, website, videos, social media and information sessions.

All grant applications must be made online using the SmartyGrants platform.

Council support will be available to organisations and individuals who have difficulty in accessing the Council's website and navigating the SmartyGrants platform.

4.0 Supporting documents and references

**4.1 Legislation**

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Gender Equality Act 2020*

4.2 Associated Documents

- *Council Plan 2017-2021. The Council Plan 2021-2025 will replace the 2017-2021 plan once adopted in mid-2021.*
- *Grant Programs Guidelines and Assessment Criteria*

4.3 Definitions**5.0 Policy owner**

Chief Executive Officer. Enquiries regarding this policy can be directed to the Executive Manager Engaged Communities.

6.0 Authorisation

Adopted by Ballarat City Council, **DATE AND RESOLUTION NUMBER**

8.12. WELCOMING CITIES NETWORK

Division: Community Wellbeing
Director: Matthew Wilson
Author/Position: Jenny Fink – Executive Manager Learning and Community Hubs

PURPOSE

1. This report outlines an application from the Intercultural Advisory Committee to Council requesting that the City of Ballarat joins the Welcoming Cities Network.

BACKGROUND

2. The Intercultural Advisory Committee (IAC) is an advisory committee to Council, The purpose of this committee is to maintain dialogue and active partnerships between participating agencies, associations and organisations which share a set of beliefs, attitudes and values that support and celebrate the diversity of our city.
3. The Welcoming Cities Network supports local governments to advance communities where everyone can belong and participate in social, cultural, economic and civic life. Welcoming Cities is a global network of cities, shires, towns and municipalities recognised for being welcoming and inclusive.

KEY MATTERS

4. **Welcoming Cities** works cooperatively with a broad range of international organisations that have been consulted and have informed the development of the Australian Standard for Welcoming Cities, with significant feedback and input from an Australian audience. A list of Australian Welcoming Cities is an attachment to this report.

5. **Reasons to join Welcoming Cities**

The Welcoming Cities network consists of 250 municipalities around the world. The network is built around:

- **Knowledge Sharing** – Supporting local governments to access evidence-based research, resources, policies and case studies.
- **Partnership Development** – Facilitating and resourcing multi sector partnerships to maximise learning, reach and impact.
- **Celebrating Success** – Recognising local governments that demonstrate leading practice and innovation in welcoming efforts.
- **Standard and Accreditation** – Setting the National Standard for cultural diversity and inclusion policy and practice in local government.

The benefits of joining Welcoming Cities for the City of Ballarat include:

- Joining an existing network of local councils across Australia and internationally.
- Being formally recognised and promoted as a member of the network.
- Access to the members group and knowledge sharing platform.

- Access to a library of leading cultural diversity and inclusion research, policies, plans and research.
- Access to a suite of images and promotional materials for social media.
- Invitations to state-based meetings.
- Discounted tickets to Welcoming Cities Symposiums.
- Access to the established accreditation level (base membership).
- Access to the advanced, excelling and mentoring accreditation levels (premium membership).
- Support to develop and promote case studies that support Council's work.
- Media and publicity opportunities.
- Opportunity to present and be profiled at the annual Welcoming Cities Symposium.
- Consultancy support including advice referrals, workshops and other services as needed.

6. **Membership Fees**

Fees for Premium members are based on the population size of the Local Government Area and paid annually for the duration of the council's involvement in Welcoming Cities. Membership fees help to ensure the sustainability of the initiative and provide effective support to local councils across the country. Membership fees for the City of Ballarat would be \$3,000. These costs can be absorbed in the current Intercultural Services budget.

7. **Standard and Accreditation**

It is recommended that Council join as a premium member to gain access and use of the standard and accreditation levels as a strategic action in the Intercultural Strategy 2021-2026.

The Welcoming Cities Standard (the Standard) is a central element of the Welcoming Cities Network. The Standard establishes the framework for local councils to:

- Benchmark their cultural diversity and inclusion policies and practices across the organisation
- Identify where and how further efforts could be directed; and
- Assess progress over time.

The Standard applies to all local councils in Australia. This includes cities, shires, towns, or municipalities. Councils can access and progress through the Standard according to their capacity and resources. These levels (from lowest to highest) are *Established*, *Advanced*, *Excelling*, and *Mentoring*.

The extent to which local councils measure their activity against the Standard will be based on their understanding of their community's needs. The Standard validates existing efforts and recognises the connections to fostering cultural diversity and inclusion.

The Standard has six categories:

- Leadership
- Social and Cultural Inclusion
- Economic Development
- Learning and Skills Development
- Civic Participation
- Places and Spaces

Accreditation with Welcoming Cities benchmarks councils across the six categories of the Standard. Councils provide evidence of active policies and programs. Accreditation through Welcoming Cities has a range of benefits, including:

- Increasing the impact of council initiatives for the whole community
- Providing a mechanism to plan for improvement and change
- A positive and welcoming reputation; and
- Opportunities for shared learning

Accreditation is an optional undertaking for members of the Welcoming Cities network who want to better understand where their council is positioned in regard to social cohesion and economic participation across the community.

In order to ensure the programs and policies demonstrated in the assessment stay current, accreditation must be renewed every three years.

8. How does Council become a member?

To be recognised as a member, a council must return a commitment form, signed by the council's Mayor or CEO. This form highlights the commitment of the council to:

- Join, and participate in, a network of cities and communities that are committed to becoming more welcoming and inclusive.
- Identify at least one key staff contact that will liaise directly with the Welcoming Cities team.
- Communicate regularly with the Welcoming Cities team, through at least three conference calls each year and an annual in-person meeting, to progress planning and share and learn from practices of other welcoming cities and communities.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

9. That Council:

9.1 Enter into a premium membership with The Welcoming Cities Network and commence work towards the first accreditation level.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Governance Review [8.12.1 - 2 pages]
2. List-of- Welcoming- Cities- Members-14-04-21 [8.12.2 - 1 page]

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ALIGNMENT WITH COUNCIL VISION, COUNCIL PLAN, STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

1. The City of Ballarat Intercultural Strategy 2018-2021 is a key strategic document listed in the Council Plan 2017-2021. The Intercultural City Strategic Plan reinforces the City of Ballarat's commitment to its various intercultural communities through leadership and advocacy. It recognises that it has a significant role to play in promoting wellbeing, empowering and providing opportunities for everyone regardless of their cultural, linguistic or religious backgrounds.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

2. Joining the Welcoming Cities Network will support the community via policy and practice such as welcoming newly arrived migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum into local communities and to develop long-term strategies for inclusive relationships that bring different cultures together.

CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

3. Accreditation levels within the Welcoming Cities categories ensure that participating Councils display and commit to indicators such as leadership, economic development and innovation in all aspects of Council operations. All of these indicators have implications for environmental sustainability best practice for the whole community.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

4. Welcoming Cities recognise that economic growth relies on an inclusive economy that encourages the active participation of all its residents. Welcoming Cities facilitate access, to migrant communities, giving opportunities for employment, business development and entrepreneurship.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5. Fees for Premium members are based on the population size of the Local Government Area and paid annually for the duration of the council's involvement in Welcoming Cities. Membership fees help to ensure the sustainability of the initiative and provide effective support to local councils across the country. Membership fees for the City of Ballarat would be \$3,000 in the first year, further fees in subsequent years will rise according to accreditation levels. The highest accreditation level fee is \$10,000 for three years. These costs can be absorbed in the current Intercultural Services budget.

LEGAL AND RISK CONSIDERATIONS

6. Risk considerations are moderate to low, the accreditation process provides an opportunity for Council to comprehensively investigate the quality of service currently offered to the Intercultural community and should be seen as a positive process.

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HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

7. It is considered that the report does not impact on any human rights identified in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

8. Further community consultation will be undertaken with the Intercultural community in regard to the standard and accreditation process and to evaluate the current level and quality of service provision.

GENDER EQUALITY ACT 2020

9. There are no gender equality implications identified for the subject of this report.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST THAT HAVE ARISEN IN PREPARATION OF THE REPORT

10. Council officers affirm that no general or material conflicts need to be declared in relation to the matter of this report.

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List of Member Councils

Australian Capital Territory (1)

Australian Capital Territory

New South Wales (12)

Lake Macquarie City Council
City of Parramatta
City of Newcastle
City of Sydney
Waverley Council
City of Blacktown
City of Canterbury-Bankstown
Leeton Shire Council
City of Wagga Wagga
Liverpool City Council
City of Ryde
Wollongong City Council

Queensland (10)

Balonne Shire Council
Livingstone Shire Council
Brisbane City Council
Central Highlands Regional Council
Toowoomba Regional Council
City of Townsville
Gladstone Regional Council
Bulloo Shire Council
Paroo Shire Council
Cairns Regional Council

Tasmania (4)

Glenorchy City Council
City of Hobart
West Coast Council
City of Clarence

Victoria (17)

Moreland City Council
City of Greater Bendigo
City of Whittlesea
Warrnambool City Council
City of Darebin
City of Monash
Hume City Council
Knox City Council
City of Yarra
Ararat Rural City Council
City of Melton
Wyndham City Council
City of Greater Dandenong
Manningham Council
City of Melbourne
Moonee Valley City Council
Banyule City Council

Western Australia (4)

City of Stirling
City of Canning
City of Cockburn
City of Melville

South Australia (8)

City of Adelaide
City of Port Adelaide Enfield
City of Tea Tree Gully
The Rural City of Murray Bridge
City of Unley
Tatiara District Council
City of Salisbury
City of Playford

8.13. BALLARAT: OUR FUTURE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

Division: Community Wellbeing
Director: Matthew Wilson
Author/Position: Kate McCluskey - Coordinator Community Participation

PURPOSE

1. To present to Council for their acknowledgement the Ballarat: Our Future Community Engagement Report (Engagement Report).

BACKGROUND

2. Ballarat: Our Future was the community engagement process undertaken by Council between February and May 2021 to inform the Community Vision, Council Plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, Budget and Financial Plan.
3. A two-stage process was developed. Stage one involved participatory engagement with the purpose of engaging a wide variety of people across a range of tools to identify community priorities. Over a six-week period, 1,981 responses were received providing over 4,000 ideas. From this stage of engagement, a summary of key themes and messages was developed.
4. For the second stage of the process, a Community Panel (the Panel) was appointed comprising of 50 residents that broadly matched the demographics of the Ballarat community. Selection of Panel members was managed by an external consultant independent from Council. Seventeen-thousand invitations were sent to households throughout the municipality and interested parties were asked to complete an expression of interest process. From a pool of 192 community members, 50 were selected based upon their demographic characteristics. The role of the Panel was to transform the broad themes and messages from the first stage of engagement into more tangible directions for Council. Over two weekend workshops, the Panel developed a vision statement and principles for decision-making, consolidated themes and identified areas for action under each theme.
5. The details of the engagement process and results are presented in the Engagement Report.

KEY MATTERS

6. The main priorities emerging from stage one of the engagement were:
 - a. **Infrastructure provision** with a sub-theme of **Growth and Development** - Provision of a range of transport, community and recreation infrastructure to enable people to go about their business and live healthy and connected lives. Ensuring sustainable growth and the timely provision of infrastructure to new areas while also maintaining assets in existing areas to ensure equitable access.
 - b. **Environmental sustainability** – Working to limit, and adapt to, climate change, protect our ecological assets and promote environmentally sustainable development.

- c. **Community** - Working to ensure that everyone has their basic needs met, and that our urban design promotes healthy living and social connection. Developing an inclusive city where everyone is valued and can full participate in life. Ensuring adequate health and social services and delivering events and programs that help people to live healthy, fulfilling lives.
 - d. **Economy** – A diverse economy that employs local people who are trained in existing and new industries. Revitalisation of the Central Business District to promote economic and cultural gains.
 - e. **Equity** – Working to ensure that people who face additional health, social and economic challenges are supported to participate fully in life.
7. The Community Panel further developed these priorities to develop a vision statement, principles for decision-making, themes for action and priorities under each theme.
8. These outputs have been used to inform the Community Vision, Council Plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, Budget and Financial Plan.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

9. That Council:

9.1 Note the Ballarat: Our Future Community Engagement Report.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Governance Review [8.13.1 - 2 pages]
- 2. Ballarat Our Future Engagement Report [8.13.2 - 97 pages]

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ALIGNMENT WITH COUNCIL VISION, COUNCIL PLAN, STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

1. The community engagement outlined in the Ballarat: Our Future Community Engagement Report has informed the development of the Community Vision, Council Plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and Budget. It will also be used to inform a range of other strategies and policies.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

2. The Ballarat: Our Future Community Engagement Report ensures that community sentiment is considered in Council decision-making.

CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

3. There are no climate emergency and environmental sustainability impacts arising from this report.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

4. There are no economic sustainability implications arising from this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

LEGAL AND RISK CONSIDERATIONS

6. The *Local Government Act 2020* requires that Council undertake community engagement processes and specifies that deliberative engagement is required for the Council Plan, Community Vision, Financial Plan and Asset Plan. The process outlined in the Ballarat: Our Future Community Engagement Report meets legislative requirements for community engagement for the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

7. It is considered that the report does not impact on any impact on human rights identified in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

8. The Ballarat: Our Future Community Engagement Report outlines the engagement process undertaken to inform the development of a range of strategic documents. The publishing of the Report aligns with Council's Community Engagement Policy with regard to reporting outcomes back to the community.

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GENDER EQUALITY ACT 2020

9. There are no gender equality implications identified for the subject of this report.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST THAT HAVE ARISEN IN PREPARATION OF THE REPORT

10. Council Officers affirm that no general or material interests need to be declared in relation to the matter of this report.

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CITY OF BALLARAT
**Ballarat: Our Future
Engagement Report**



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Executive Summary

Ballarat: Our Future was the community engagement campaign undertaken to inform the development of Ballarat's new Community Vision, Council Plan, Budget, Financial Plan and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

A two-stage engagement process was designed. Stage one was a participatory engagement process, aiming to engage a large number of people to canvas general opinion. Stage two was a deliberative engagement process involving a representative Community Panel of 50 residents. An external consultant was engaged to manage recruitment for the Community Panel independently from Council. Seventeen-thousand invitations were sent out to households across the municipality and interested parties were asked to express their interest. People were then selected from the pool of those who had responded to the expression of interest. Panellists were selected to meet demographic goals to broadly match the demographic profile of the municipality. Characteristics considered in the development of the Panel included:

- Age
- Gender
- Ward
- Education level
- Home ownership or rental status
- Identification as LGBTIQ
- Identification as someone with a disability
- Cultural identification (language other than English; Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander)

There were 1,981 responses (consisting of more than 4,000 ideas) received in Stage one of the engagement process. These responses were sorted into themes. These findings were then further developed by the Community Panel into more tangible recommendations for Council.

Core themes from the engagement process are shown in Figure 1:

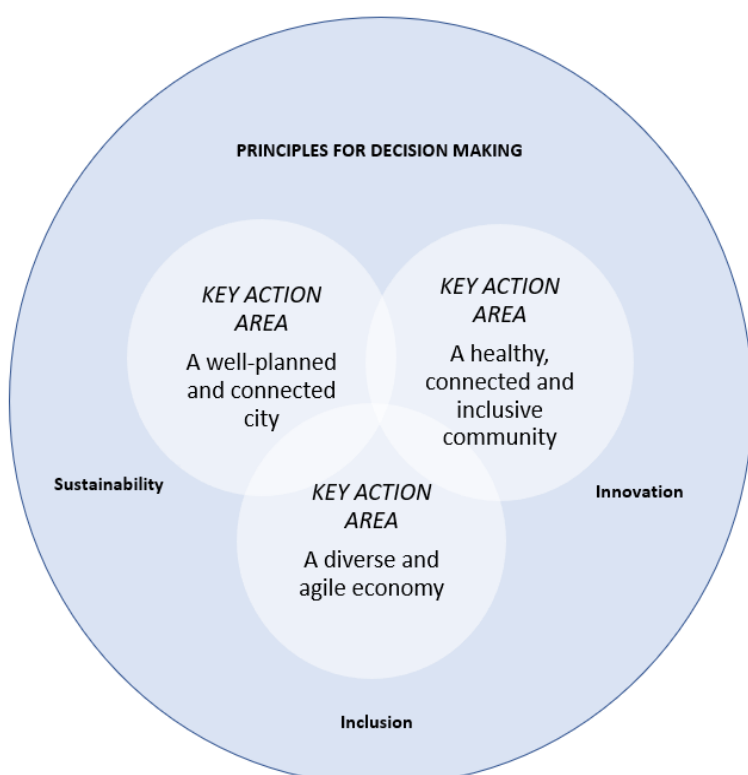


Figure 1: Model for Council action based upon community feedback

Key principles to guide decision-making:

Environmental sustainability – This was a widespread theme. Environmental sustainability-related ideas were raised in all tools, under all topics and by all genders and ages. General sentiment was that Council needs to take a leadership role in this area.

Inclusion - The role of equity and inclusion in creating a liveable community was outlined in feedback received across a range of tools and topics including community, heritage, economy and infrastructure. This was solidified by the Community Panel who elevated inclusion to incorporate it in their overarching Vision statement.

Innovation – There is a desire to try new things and harness opportunities. Challenges should be viewed with a creative eye to identify innovative responses.

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Key areas for action:

A well-planned and connected city – The provision of necessary infrastructure for a growing community was the key sentiment shared by the community through the engagement process. There was a desire to get around the city easily, not only in vehicles but also on bikes, on foot and by public transport. There was strong support for additional active transport facilities and advocacy for better public transport services in recognition of the practical, environmental and health benefits that come from reduced car dependence. There was a clear demand for a range of recreation infrastructure, beyond traditional organised-sport facilities. Community centres, schools, medical facilities, shops, parks, libraries and arts and cultural facilities were also important. Infrastructure should be provided in a timely manner, particularly in new growth areas. It is important, however, to ensure that existing areas aren't forgotten with a desire for equitable access to facilities of similar quality across the municipality.

A healthy, connected and inclusive community - The role of equity and inclusion in creating a liveable community was highlighted. There was recognition of the range of social issues facing the city, including homelessness, lack of affordable housing, family violence, social exclusion and poor mental health. While recognising that Council is not necessarily responsible for addressing all of these issues, there was clear sentiment that Council is a stakeholder and can facilitate better outcomes through policy, partnership and advocacy. The community supported activities that promote inclusion, social connection and healthy lifestyles. There was strong feedback about the need for better active transport and informal recreation opportunities, and support for community food initiatives such as community gardens. Universal design of facilities and spaces was important to ensure inclusivity. There was a desire for more engaged citizens who are active in their communities and the local economy, and that participate in decision-making that impacts them. There was concern about the ability of existing health and community services to meet the need of the growing community. Related to this was support for a second public hospital in one of the growth areas.

A diverse and agile economy - While the economy didn't emerge as strongly as a theme as infrastructure and community, there were strong links between economy, environmental sustainability, health and wellbeing and infrastructure. There is a strong sentiment that existing industries should continue to be supported, but that there are many opportunities arising and that the local economy should be agile enough to harness these opportunities. The opportunity for establishment of stronger links between industry and the tertiary education sector was highlighted. There was a desire for residents to be trained in the relevant fields to work locally. A diverse economy was favoured, with a variety of industries and support for 'big business', as well as small and micro-businesses.

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Introduction

Ballarat: Our Future was the community engagement campaign undertaken for the City of Ballarat's 2021 Integrated Strategic Planning Framework (ISPF). The Local Government Act (2020) requires community engagement to be undertaken for a range of plans that form the ISPF, specifically:

- Community Vision
- Council Plan
- Financial Plan
- Asset Plan
- Budget
- Revenue and Rating Plan

The Act also requires deliberative engagement to be undertaken for the first time for the Community Vision, Council Plan, Asset Plan and Financial Plan. Community engagement is also required for the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

A two-stage engagement process was designed. Stage one was a participatory engagement process, aiming to engage a large number of people to canvas general opinion. Stage two was a deliberative engagement process involving a representative Community Panel of 50 residents.

This Report outlines the methods used to engage with the community, limitations of the engagement process, results and discussion of results. A range of appendices are attached that provide more detailed information.

"We need to have places, spaces and services that acknowledge the changing population's social and health needs, consider the impacts of climate change, connect us with the modern and sophisticated world beyond, but also pay respect to our heritage and regional setting."

"Positioning ourselves in the state as a progressive city that respects the past but values the present and prepares for the future"



"Make everywhere in Ballarat a safe and attractive place to walk or cycle, which will reduce traffic, reduce emissions, stimulate spending in our local economy, and improve people's health"

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Methodology

Stage one

As an exploratory process, a mixed-methods design (Figure 2) was chosen for Stage one of the engagement process. Most questions were open-ended to allow for deep engagement. Some questions were unstructured to allow for the identification of topics of interest to the respondents. Others were framed around the 'golden threads' (Figure 3) that emerged from the City of Ballarat's [Prosperity Framework](#). Community were asked to identify priorities related to the environment, community, economy, heritage and creativity to correspond with the 'golden threads' identified through previous community engagement. A range of quantitative questions were also used to identify priorities amongst a pre-selected group of options, such as a range of health and social issues or a list of priority areas. This allowed for analysis of open-ended questions to be compared and contrasted with results from the quantitative questions (Figure 2).

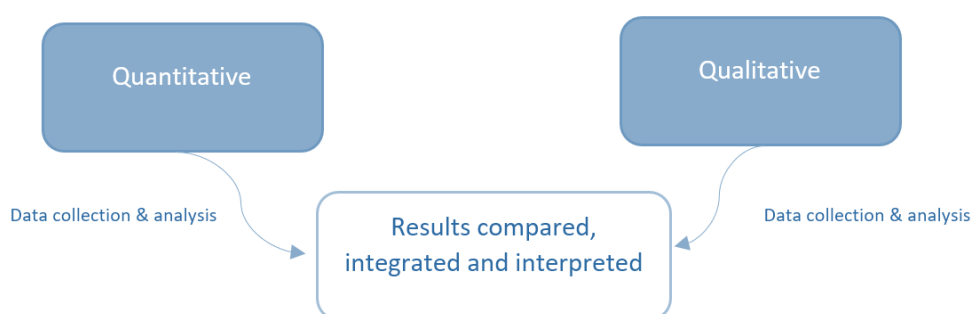


Figure 2: Mixed-methods engagement design

Eight tools were used to collect data over six weeks between February and March 2021:

- Short survey
- Community Priorities Survey
- Kitchen Table conversations
- Group Huddles
- Written submissions
- Facebook contributions
- Community Conversations in the Park
- Points for priorities

The range of tools allowed for people to contribute brief thoughts and priorities or to provide longer responses of greater depth. Responses could be given online, in hard-copy written form, via email or Facebook, and face-to-face with Council and/or with friends and family. All tools are included in [Appendices B to G](#).



Figure 3: The Golden Threads from City of Ballarat's Prosperity Framework

Stage two

Stage two of the engagement process involved the development of a broadly representative Community Panel (Panel) to take the results of the first stage and create tangible recommendations to Council.

The Community Panel participated in three sessions over ten days. Sessions involved a range of activities which included working alone, small group work and large group discussions.

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The first session provided an orientation for the Panel about how the process would work, what the group needed to achieve and time for the Community Panel members to get to know each other. During this session, a baseline survey was conducted to understand Community Panel member knowledge and trust in Council decision-making processes. Panel members also discussed their 'rules of engagement', which described how they would work together respectfully throughout the sessions.

In session two the Panel received important information to support the creation of a draft working Vision statement. This information included the Stage one community engagement findings, including the key themes:

- Infrastructure
- Growth and development
- Environmental sustainability
- Community and equity
- Economy

Panel members then participated in a series of small group discussions with Council Officers from relevant areas of Council to discuss Council's role in that theme and work already underway. The Panel then worked in small groups to describe their aspirations for the city. A group of four Panel members worked to draft a Community Vision statement based upon the outcomes of the small group discussions. The remaining Panel members took part in theme-based conversations where they developed ideas for action, objectives and measures.

The final session provided an opportunity to revisit and finalise the working Vision statement. The Panel also worked to prioritise draft focus areas for action under each theme. The final activity involved the Panel presenting their recommendations to Councillor and Executive representatives from the City of Ballarat.

Limitations of the engagement process

There were several limitations to the engagement process. The process was an opt-in process which results in participation from those who are aware of the process and motivated to share their ideas. The engagement design aimed to address this in part by promoting the process widely and using a variety of tools and data collection methods to appeal to different preferences. There were also incentives for taking part in Kitchen Table Conversations and Group Huddles, and the Community Panel.

The engagement process was designed to allow maximum participation through a variety of tools and methods. There was no requirement for respondents to register personal details. There are trade-offs in using such a flexible design. Although more people are inclined to participate, less demographic data is collected such that it is not possible to provide a hard number of participants or to analyse demographics from all tools. There is also the likelihood that a small number of people shared their ideas across multiple tools.

The engagement process included significant qualitative data collection. Analysis of qualitative data is subjective. This was partially addressed by having several people to undertake analysis of some components of the data. The use of a Community Panel also tested the analysis from Stage one of the engagement process. The Community Panel feedback matched strongly with the Stage one feedback.

Due to the limited time frame for engagement process design and data collection, it was not possible to engage well with schools and early learning facilities to engage with children. They are therefore under-represented in the study cohort. This was partly addressed by seeking input from some representative groups including the Youth Council. Data from [recent engagement](#) with children (aged from two to 13 years), and a 2020 engagement with the Youth Council was considered in the development of advice to Council.

A high volume of responses (1,300+) were received over a matter of days on one tool (Points for Priorities – Infrastructure). Investigation revealed this to be a result of an advocacy effort to provide a new animal shelter. This incident skewed the data from the Points for Priorities tool. This was evident as the animal shelter did not appear as a priority project in the other data sets from other tools. To deal with the implications of this, data received during the peak traffic period identified as being linked to the advocacy efforts was set aside and remaining data analysed. The animal shelter project was noted as an infrastructure project that has significant support from a part of the community.

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Participation

Stage one

Number of participants

There were 1,981 responses received in Stage one (excluding those responses resulting from the animal shelter advocacy). More than 4,000 ideas were received. The number of responses for each tool is shown in Table 1. The Short Survey and Points for Priorities activities were the most popular for individual responses. Both tools allowed people to share their priorities in only a couple of minutes. A range of individual responses were also garnered from the comments on a Facebook post written by The Courier on February 5, 2021. The Community Conversations in the Park were face-to-face sessions in community parks. Two sessions were run in each electoral ward. These were not well attended with 75 participants over six sessions. Sessions were rescheduled multiple times due to a COVID snap lockdown. This initially prohibited meetings of any type and then resulted in gathering limits. The rescheduling is likely to have caused the poor turnout. Summaries of Community Conversations are shown in [the appendices](#).



1,981
responses,
4,000+ ideas

Table 1: Number of responses by tool

Short survey	434
Long survey	171
Kitchen table conversations	224
Group Huddles	77
Submissions	458
Facebook comments	88
Community Conversations	75
Points for priorities	454
TOTAL	1981

There were multiple opportunities for informal and formal groups to provide feedback. The Kitchen Table Conversations were designed to be used by small groups of family and friends and 224 people took part in these conversations. Although only broad demographic data was collected, it appeared that this was popular with family groups with demographics within conversations appearing to show participation over multiple generations (i.e. parents and children, and elderly participants and adult children). Group Huddles were designed for more formal groups to provide feedback about their opportunities, challenges and priorities. Eight submissions were made, representing 77 people. Submissions were received by an additional 18 formal

groups representing an estimated 458 people. A list of submitters is included in [Appendix A](#) and a summary of group feedback is included in [Appendix H](#). The Points for Priorities tool was a quick tool that asked people to allocate up to 200 points to the Council services and infrastructure they valued the most. The infrastructure option received significantly more responses than the services option (1,812 and 454, respectively). This was the result of a large amount of traffic coming directly from a single Facebook post to the infrastructure Points for Priorities page. In terms of estimating the number of responses that would have been received on this tool without the direct link, the response to the services option was used.

Estimates of participation are conservative. Where the number of people represented by a group submission was unknown, an arbitrary value of 20 was applied. This is likely to be an under-estimation. The number of responses to the Points for Priorities tool is also likely to be under-estimated as 454 responses were received for the services section alone. It is likely that there were a number of people who only completed the services or infrastructure sections and therefore actual participation of individuals may have been higher.

Demographics of participants

As mentioned earlier, solid demographic information was collected only for those who responded to the Short Survey or the Community Priorities Survey.

Women were over-represented, comprising 60 per cent of the sample, compared with 37 per cent of men. One per cent of people identified as non-binary or self-described and two per cent preferred not to say (Figure 4). In terms of representation from different age cohorts, people aged 35+ years were over-represented in the survey samples

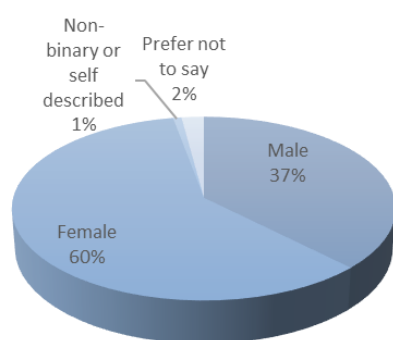


Figure 4: Gender of respondents

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(Figure 5). Those aged 5-11 years, 12-17 years and 18-24 years were under-represented. This was partially addressed via written submissions by the Youth Council, a class of Federation College and the Climate Action Co-op who were aged 12-24 years. The Kitchen Table discussions also included more young people and children, as many appear to have been completed by family units.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community were well-represented, comprising 3.9 per cent of survey respondents, compared with a population proportion of 1.4 per cent. Further engagement was also undertaken with the Aboriginal community at the Ballarat and District Aboriginal Cooperative and the Koori Engagement and Action Group also made a written submission. People who speak a language other than English were also well-represented, comprising 11 per cent of the sample compared with a population share of 5.3 per cent.

Geographically, areas were grouped as they appear on the Census data platform used by Council, Profile id. There was lower representation from Sebastopol-Redan, Wendouree and Delacombe than the composition of the population would expect. This was partly off-set by submissions made by the Spotlight on Sebastopol Reference Group and the Kitchen Table conversations which included a number of people from Sebastopol-Redan and, to a lesser extent, Wendouree. It is likely, however, that there was a lower representation across the board from Wendouree, Delacombe and Sebastopol-Redan. There was a lower representation from the Rural East but an over representation from the Rural West, suggesting that rural residents were well represented in the survey samples.

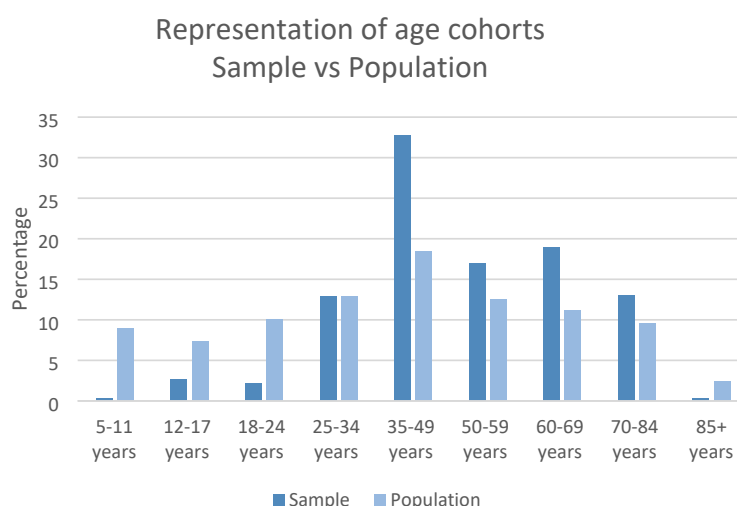


Figure 5: Representation of different age groups of survey respondents vs proportion of population per age group

Stage two

An external consultant was engaged to manage recruitment for the Community Panel independently from Council. Seventeen-thousand invitations were sent out to households across the municipality and interested parties were asked to express their interest. One-hundred and ninety-two people expressed interest in being a part of the Panel.

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These people were then selected to meet demographic goals to broadly match the demographic profile of the municipality. Characteristics considered in the development of the Panel included:

- Age
- Gender
- Ward
- Education level
- Home ownership or rental status
- Cultural identification (language other than English; Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander)
- Identification as someone with a disability
- Identification as LGBTIQ+

Fifty people were selected to take part in the panel process. Demographic characteristics of the Panel are shown in Figure 6.

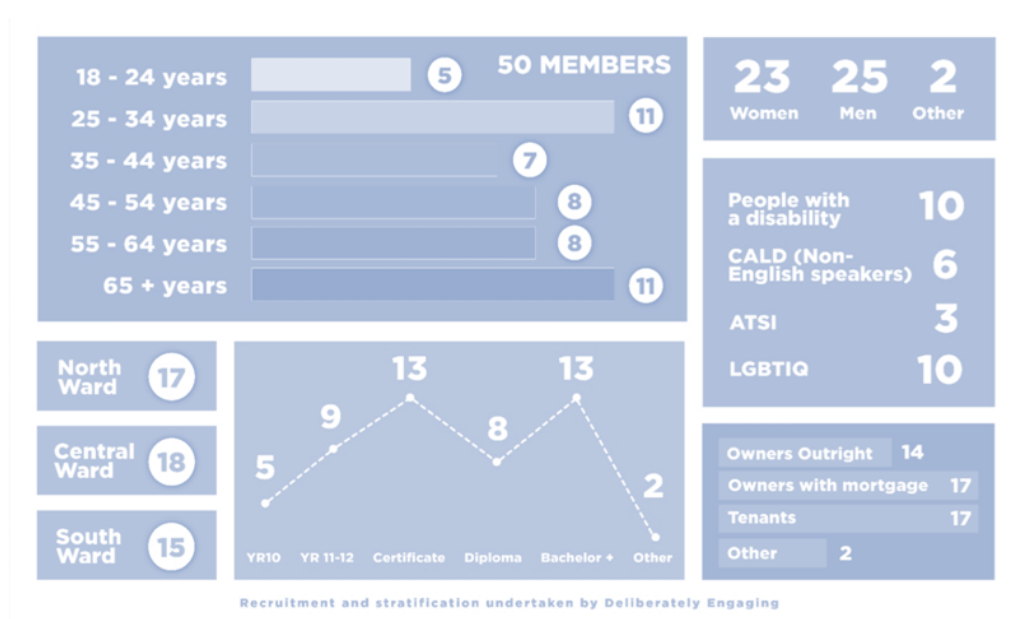


Figure 6: Demographic characteristics of Community Panel

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Results

Stage one

Ranking of ‘Golden Threads’

The first stage of the engagement process was structured around the ‘golden threads’ of Council’s Prosperity Framework. This provided a quick snapshot of community priorities and allowed respondents to identify anything that they felt was missing.

This ranking question was asked in the Short Survey and the Community Priorities Survey. As shown in Figure 7, ‘our future sustainability’ was considered the most important of all five threads.

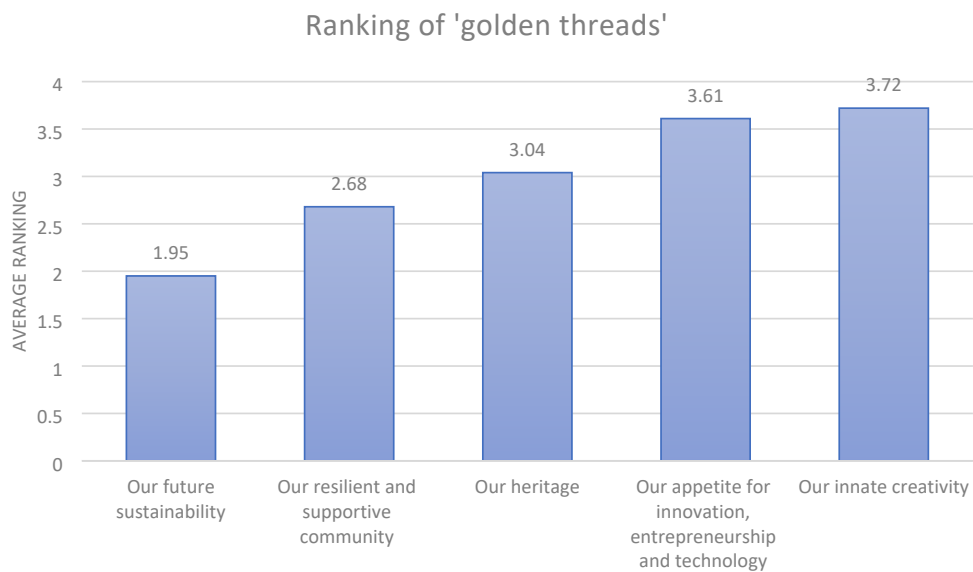


Figure 7: Ranking of 'golden threads' (1 = most important; 5 = least important)

Respondents were asked if anything should be added to the ‘golden threads.’ There were a lot of infrastructure-related comments indicating that this was a topic that some respondents felt wasn’t strongly enough emphasised. Health, equity and inclusion were other topics raised by respondents. There was a desire for recognition of the health and social issues (such as family violence and entrenched disadvantage) facing the community and the

“Climate change is the only issue that will be of any importance by 2031. We need to be getting busy now reducing emissions, growing renewable energy, making housing sustainable and climate appropriate.”

strengths that could be harnessed in the community to create better outcomes via grass-roots community development initiatives. A range of comments were made regarding Council operations. There was a desire for transparency, easy engagement with Council staff, community engagement and strong financial management. Safety was raised by some respondents with reference to road safety and family violence.

Core themes

The core themes emerging from the engagement are shown in Figure 8.

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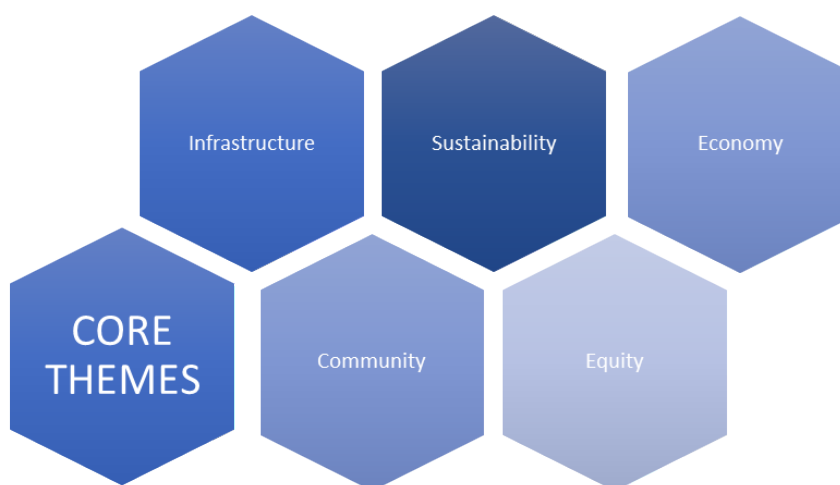


Figure 8: Core themes from the engagement process

Infrastructure

The most frequently cited responses to unstructured questions related to the provision of infrastructure and growth and development (34 per cent of total unstructured responses). As previously stated, the Community Priorities Survey was based around the five 'golden threads' of the Prosperity Framework. While infrastructure itself is not a 'golden thread', infrastructure-related responses were received to questions across all five areas, consolidating infrastructure provision as a stand-alone theme.

The most mentioned infrastructure was related to traffic management and the provision of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. Public transport infrastructure was frequently mentioned. Recreation infrastructure was also a priority with an emphasis on informal recreation infrastructure as opposed to facilities for organised sport. Preferences for investment included bike trails, play spaces with toilets and shade, gardens, parks and nature reserves and water parks. Recreation options for young people were also highlighted. Community infrastructure (including libraries, community hubs, arts and cultural facilities, housing and health facilities) were frequently mentioned.

"Infrastructure to support our expanding city and population. This includes roads, public transport and hubs or precincts for shopping and services"

This data was supported by the Points for Priorities tool. Infrastructure priorities in descending order of importance were:

1. Waste management
2. Roads, drains, bridges and footpaths
3. Arts and cultural facilities
4. Buildings and related facilities
5. Ballarat Animal Shelter
6. Major facilities that promote tourism or events
7. Sport and recreation facilities
8. Aquatic facilities

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“Planning for growth. Ensuring infrastructure is provided ahead of requirement - roads, kinders, sport, libraries”

Growth and development was a sub-theme of infrastructure. Respondents were concerned about the nature of development. There was particular concern about urban sprawl. People were generally in favour of more infill development (with appropriate height limits) rather than continued sprawl of the city. There was a desire for compact neighbourhoods where people could get to work, education, recreation, shops and services within an easy and short trip. People expressed concern about the timely delivery of necessary infrastructure to service new communities including schools, roads, medical facilities, cycling

networks, shops, public transport, community centres, green spaces and recreation facilities. There were also concerns about food and water sources for a growing city. Environmentally sustainable development was important with ‘green’ planning standards and the protection of ecological assets, farmland and heritage.

Project ideas for the ‘infrastructure’ theme are included in [Appendix J](#). Project ideas for the ‘growth and development’ sub-theme are included in [Appendix K](#).

Sustainability

Accounting for approximately 16 per cent of unstructured responses, environmental sustainability was the second-strongest theme to emerge from the Stage one engagement. Respondents felt that the State and Federal governments were too slow to act and looked to the Council to lead in this space by prioritising carbon neutrality and sustainable development. They suggested investment in sustainable industry and a circular economy and wanted a collaborative approach with neighbouring municipalities. They expected Council to recognise and harness the economic, social and health benefits of sustainable action. Ideas for action included:

- Sustainable urban design, planning and development
- Protection and enhancement of the natural environment and promotion of biodiversity
- Waste management
- Clean energy opportunities
- Accelerate tree canopy goals
- Growing of food – protect agricultural land and encourage urban food growing

In the Community Priorities Survey, respondents were asked for ideas that would work to value and protect our natural environment and address the impacts of climate change. Themes of responses to this question are shown in Figure 9. While most categories are self-explanatory, the ‘miscellaneous’ and ‘Council operations’ categories require more explanation. Activities categorised as ‘miscellaneous’ included community education and awareness-raising; encouraging community stewardship of natural assets; loosening regulations for small scale eco-adaptations such as water tanks and becoming energy-independent; and using regulatory tools to enforce the protection of natural assets. The Council operations category relates to ideas such as the development and implementation of relevant strategies, greater human resourcing for environment-related services, and conversion of Council services and facilities to more energy-efficient options.

“I would like to see Ballarat become a champion of sustainable development - a world-leading example of development that takes into consideration reduction of emissions across energy use, transport, and all other sectors and minimising the effects of climate impacts”

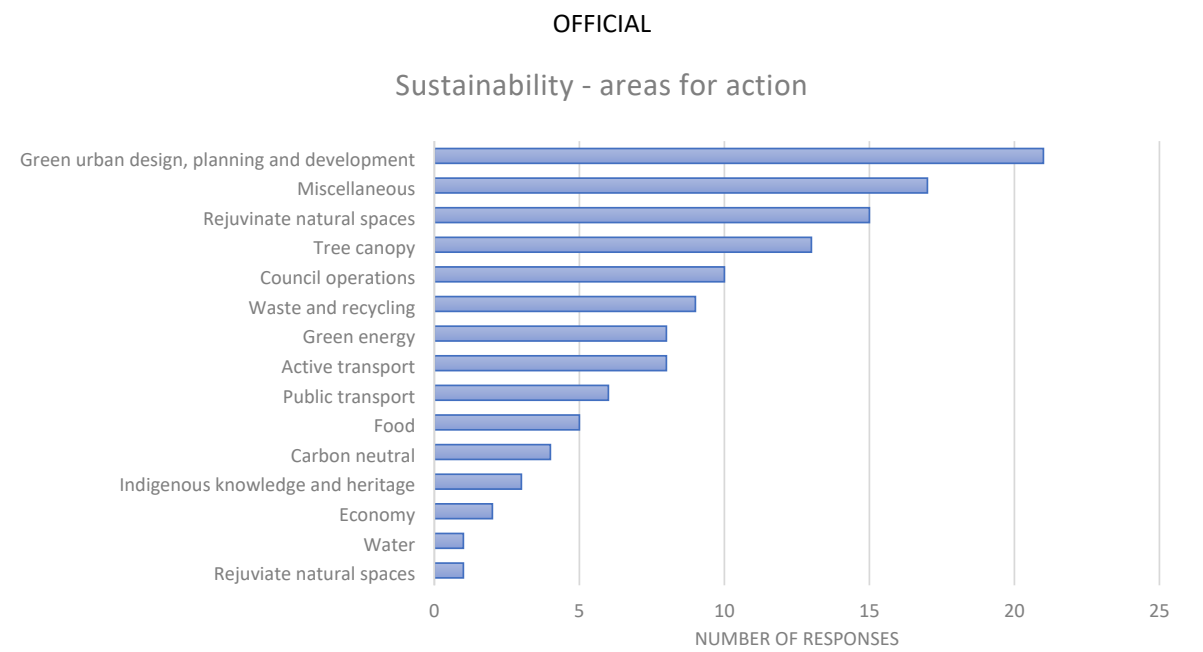


Figure 9: Areas for action under the theme of environmental sustainability

Environmental sustainability was a topic that emerged through both structured and unstructured questions. Environmental sustainability was raised when people were asked questions about economy, heritage, health, infrastructure provision and growth and development. It was ranked the most important of the five ‘golden threads’ and climate change was ranked as the most important health and social issue from a list of 16. Addressing climate change and its impact on health also ranked number one of the State government’s ten health and wellbeing priorities. Environmental services, climate change-related services, waste and recycling and emergency management were four of the top five service priorities identified in the Points for Priorities tool.

Project ideas for the ‘sustainability’ theme are included in [Appendix L](#).

Community

Community-related ideas accounted for approximately 14 per cent of unstructured responses. When respondents were asked to rank the ‘golden threads’, ‘our resilient, supportive community’ was rated the second-most important behind ‘our future sustainability’. Respondents also stated that the ‘golden threads’ didn’t emphasise community-related concerns enough.

“Keep people socialising to help gain a sense of community. This is what keeps Ballarat feeling like a big country town, a strong sense of community.”

Ensnconced within the ‘community’ theme are topics such as health services and infrastructure, community engagement, social and economic inclusion, health issues and social issues such as homelessness and unemployment.

In the Community Priorities survey, respondents were asked to provide their ideas for promoting a healthy, resilient and supportive community. These responses were categorised as shown in Figure 10. The diversity of responses is shown by the list of categories and the fact that the largest category is ‘miscellaneous’. This category included suggestions for Council to give greater consideration to the social impacts of decisions, to promote social wellbeing and do its part in addressing social issues at their core. There were also several comments in relation to emergency preparedness, perhaps in reflection of the 2019/2020 bushfire season and the COVID-19 pandemic. Other ideas related to the support of local social enterprise or volunteer-run organisations. Nutrition and food-related suggestions formed the second-largest category. These ideas largely related to growing of food (particularly

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community gardens), promotion of healthy food in retail outlets and the support of local food producers and markets. Events, better health and community services and urban design to promote healthy lifestyles round out the top five categories of responses.

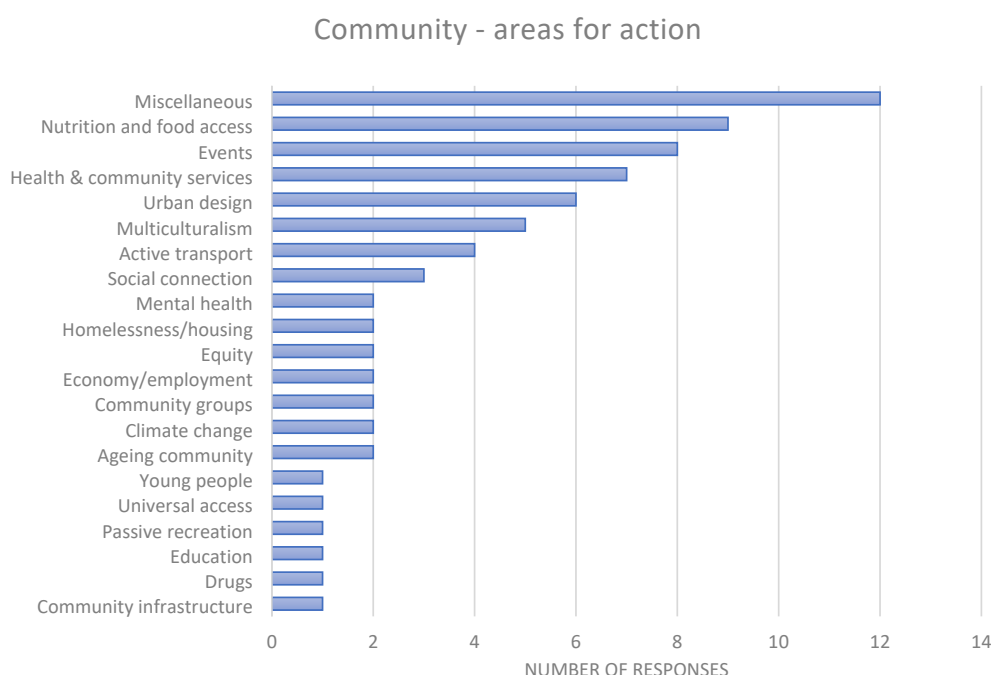


Figure 10: Areas for action under the theme of community

Respondents wanted to see increased infrastructure to assist people to live healthy lives including:

- Passive recreation infrastructure to allow a diverse range of activity
- Active transport infrastructure to increase walking and cycling
- Community infrastructure to encourage opportunities for people to meet and share interests
- Food growing infrastructure to ensure a local food supply and benefit from the social connection opportunities that arise with such activities.

Adequate health and community services were important too, with interest in a second public hospital, mental health facilities and alcohol and other drug rehabilitation services. There was interest in addressing some of the broader determinants of health, particularly housing, education and employment. People wanted an active community where people took an interest in their neighbourhoods and participated in Council decision-making. There were also many comments about access and inclusion for a range of community sub-groups including the homeless, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents, people from a range of cultural backgrounds, LGBTIQ+ people, people with disabilities, children, older people, young people and women.

"Our diversity - we celebrate all walks of life, inclusiveness and the spectrum of outlooks and lived experience that everyone can bring to our community"

Other common topics raised as priorities to create a healthy, resilient and supportive community included:

- Action on climate change and environmental sustainability
- A focus on young people as a particular group in need of support and engagement
- Events and programs to promote physical and mental wellbeing and social connection

Respondents were asked to select their top five priorities from a range of health and social issues. The top ranked issues (in order of priority) were (Figure 11):

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1. Climate change
2. Mental health and wellbeing
3. Prevention of family violence
4. Environments that promote active living

These results echo the results outlined under 'environmental sustainability' and 'infrastructure' in terms of addressing climate change and urban design to promote active living. Comments about mental health and family violence had been made a few times but did not emerge as a priority itself until this question was asked.

Ranking of health and social issues

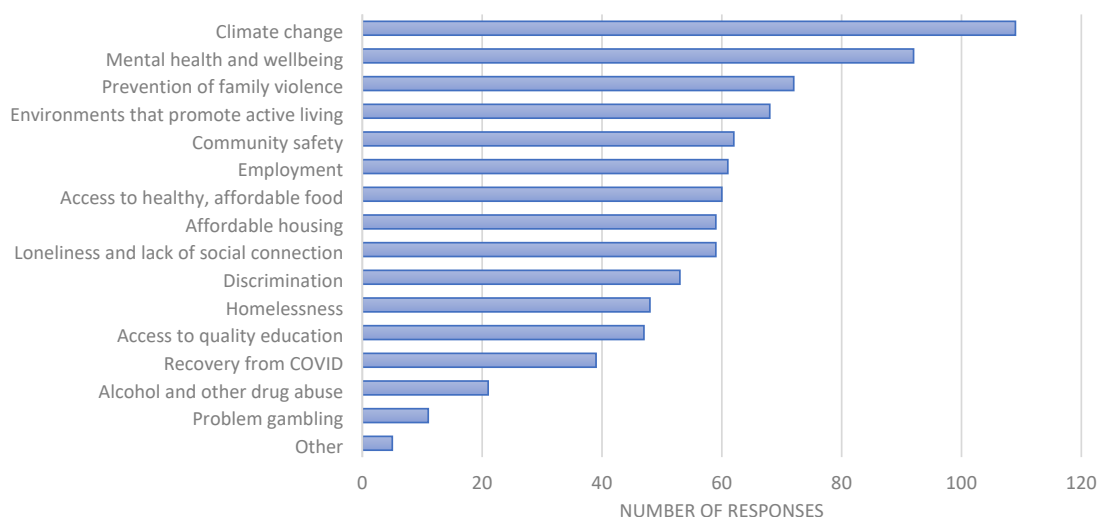


Figure 11: Ranking of health and social issues

When asked to rank the Victorian health and wellbeing priorities from one to ten, rankings were similar (Table 2):

1. Preventing all forms of violence
2. Tackling climate change and its impact on health
3. Improving mental wellbeing
4. Increasing active living

Table 2: Average ranking of Victorian health and wellbeing priorities (1 = most important; 10 = least important)

Issue	Average rank
Preventing all forms of violence	3.27
Tackling climate change and its impact on health	3.48
Improving mental wellbeing	3.57
Increasing active living	3.84
Increasing healthy eating	4.98
Reducing harm from alcohol and drug use	5.59
Reducing injury	7.26
Decreasing the risk of drug-resistant infections in the community	7.26
Improving sexual and reproductive health	7.86
Reducing tobacco-related harm	7.89

Project ideas for the 'community' theme are included in [Appendix M](#).

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Economy

Economy-related responses accounted for approximately 8.5 per cent of unstructured responses. Central Business District (CBD) revitalisation accounted for approximately 7 per cent. Together, these themes accounted for approximately 15.5 per cent of unstructured responses.

“A strong regional city with a diverse and innovative economy is an ongoing important goal to push forward into the future, providing jobs and great initiatives to benefit Ballarat.”

In the Community Priorities Survey, respondents were asked for their ideas to build a strong economy and encourage innovation in Ballarat. Categories of responses are shown in Figure 12. There was general support for the promotion of existing industries including tourism, health, education and arts and culture. There was also a desire for the local economy to leverage off emerging opportunities including sustainability businesses (especially a circular economy), research and design, and technology (including medical technology). There was support for the attraction of the public and private sectors. There was interest in the attraction of some major employers, but also the nurturing of local small and micro-business. Support for local business included rate relief and the brokerage of affordable rents in underutilised spaces.

The provision of infrastructure to stimulate the economy, attract industry and make it easier to do business was important. Parking and transport infrastructure (including tram, train, bus and air travel infrastructure) were highlighted to allow easy access within the city, but also throughout Victoria and to other parts of the country. Mobile phone infrastructure was also mentioned. There was also interest in specific infrastructure to foster particular industries, including a Makers’ Space, expanded Technology Park and facilities like Runway Ballarat.

Under the ‘promoting health and wellbeing’ category, responses included ensuring links between local universities and industry and promoting training opportunities, particularly for people facing disadvantage. There was a desire to put community before economy and to ensure that economic development benefited those most in need. There were several comments regarding the use of affordable housing to boost the economy and deliver social outcomes. Ideas under the ‘miscellaneous’ category included ideas for Council operations (including project prioritisation) and creating an ‘atmosphere of desirability’ to get locals out and about and to attract visitors.

Economy - areas for action

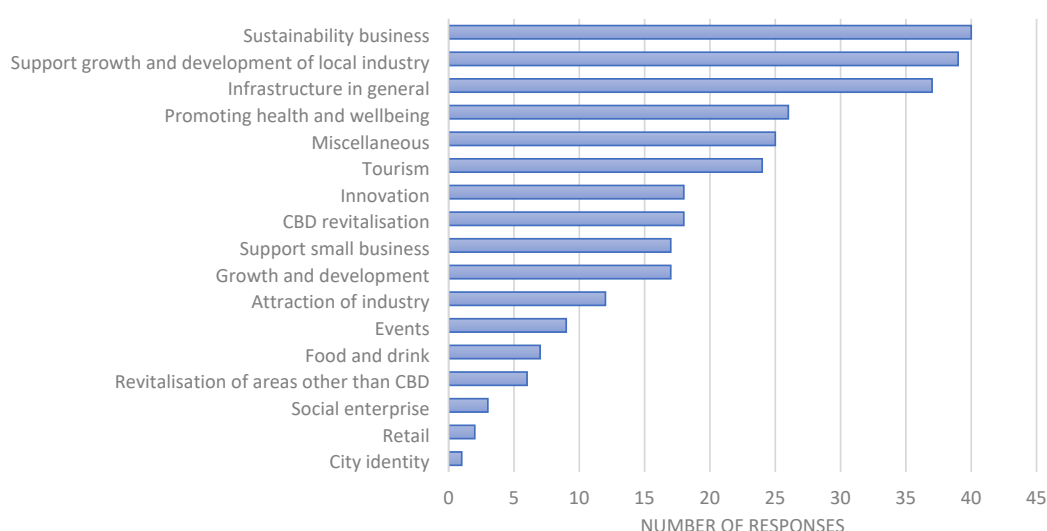


Figure 12: Areas for action under the theme of economy

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“Attracting employment opportunities for people through industry, small businesses & government. If you have employment you have people spending and investing in the city and it will prosper.”

Central Business District (CBD) revitalisation was a theme of its own, although also mentioned in the economy-related questions. There was strong support for mixed use of the area with a combination of social and economic activities with higher density living. There were many comments about the redevelopment of Bakery Hill and the Bridge

Mall. Many supported the CBD as an arts and cultural hub, with a complementary food and drink scene. There were mixed sentiments around transport in the CBD: many supported a reduction in car dependence while others suggested more and cheaper parking.

Project ideas for the ‘economy’ theme are included in [Appendix N](#).

Equity

Another key theme that arose both in unstructured responses and those framed around the ‘golden threads’ was equity. Respondents identified the need to work towards equality by providing and improving opportunities and support to those who experience poorer health, economic and social outcomes. Unsurprisingly, this theme emerged strongly in ideas to promote a healthy, resilient and supportive community. However, the need to work towards equitable outcomes was also articulated in responses about the economy, infrastructure and heritage. Groups that were identified as potentially being marginalised or subject to discrimination included:

- People with disabilities
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Young people
- Older people
- People from diverse cultural backgrounds
- Rural residents
- People identifying as LGBTIQ+
- Homeless people
- Those who are most economically and/or socially disadvantaged

“Focus... on policies that address the social determinants of health to improve the health and wellbeing of ALL members of our community.”

Feedback on remaining ‘golden threads’

The structure of the first stage of the engagement involved the submission of ideas related to:

- Our future sustainability
- Our resilient and supportive community
- Our heritage
- Our appetite for innovation, entrepreneurship and technology
- Our innate creativity

Sustainability and a resilient, supportive community came through strongly as independent themes. The questions around innovation, entrepreneurship and technology were framed in an economic lens for the engagement and the results have been outlined in the ‘economy’ theme. The remaining two ‘threads’ did not emerge as themes in their own rights but there were still many ideas shared.

Our heritage

Heritage was not frequently cited in the Stage one engagement, accounting for approximately four per cent of unstructured responses. Respondents to the Community Priorities survey were asked for priorities to protect and celebrate our heritage (including Aboriginal cultural heritage). Categories of responses are shown in Figure 13.

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Recognition and celebration of Aboriginal cultural heritage was strongly supported, with ideas including dual placenames, Aboriginal representation in public art, cultural tours and trails, and an Aboriginal Cultural Centre. There was strong sentiment that the recognition and understanding of Aboriginal history and heritage should be commonplace, in our schools, workplaces and public spaces. Some identified a need to undertake further research to identify places of cultural significance. Aboriginal people should be involved in the decisions that affect them. There was a strong message about the need for partnership with the Aboriginal community to meet joint goals. There was interest in using traditional land management practices. There was also support for a change of date for Australia Day.

“Stronger focus on Aboriginal culture and history - we need a stronger focus on celebrating our Aboriginal heritage and telling our Aboriginal history”

The ‘miscellaneous’ category included a range of sometimes conflicting ideas such as the installation of heritage facades in streetscapes versus streetscapes that blend modern buildings, green walls and heritage buildings. There were several comments about the need for the Lydiard Street railway gates to be reinstated.

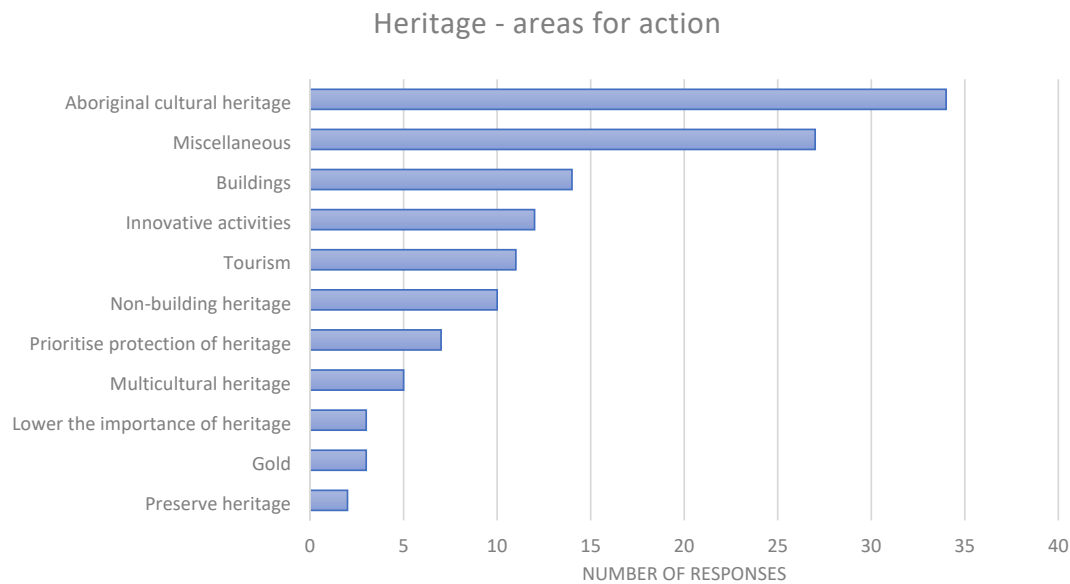


Figure 13: Areas for action under heritage theme

Project ideas for the ‘heritage’ topic are included in [Appendix P](#).

Our innate creativity

In the Community Priorities Survey respondents were asked to provide their ideas to build a sense of creativity and the creative scene in Ballarat. Categories of responses are shown in Figure 14.

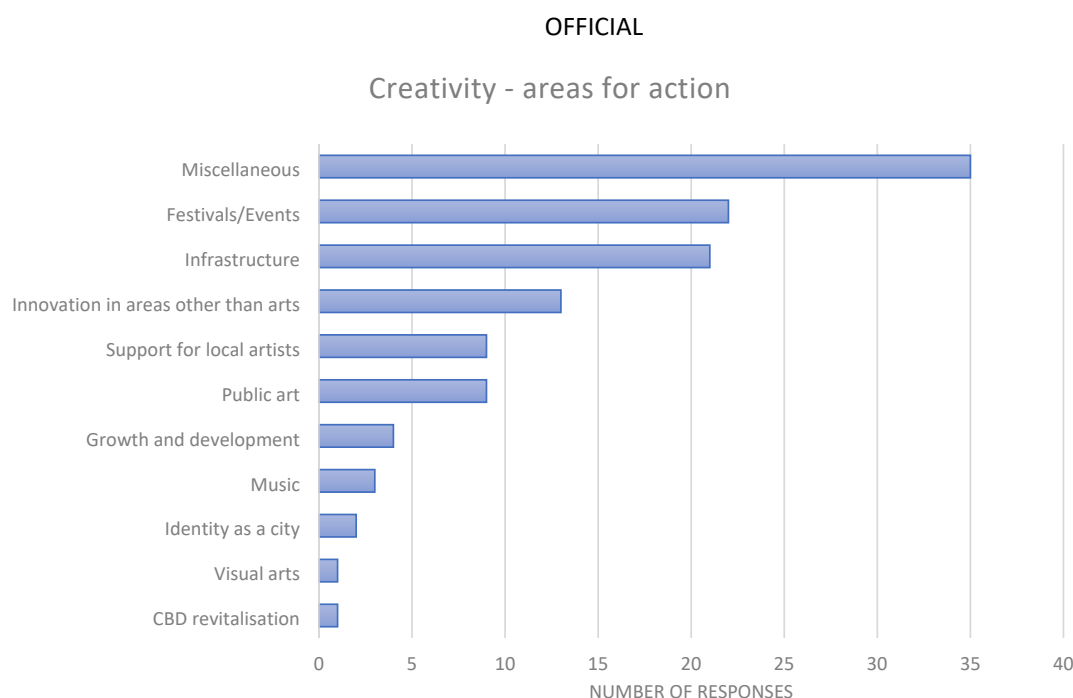


Figure 14: Areas for action under 'creativity' theme

The 'miscellaneous' category included a wide range of ideas about promoting creativity in the city. Ideas included fostering relationships between business, health and community services, universities, schools and community groups to promote the wellbeing and therapeutic benefits of creative activities. The hosting of competitions and awards, promotion of multicultural and Indigenous art and the use of creatives to tackle everyday issues (including traffic calming) were other ideas suggested. There was also multiple comments about providing support to Sovereign Hill.

Festivals and events to attract and show case arts and culture were also popular suggestions. The third most-common category related to infrastructure and included ideas about the improvement to existing facilities such as the Civic Hall, Art Gallery, libraries, laneways, public gardens, Her Majesty's Theatre and the Mining Exchange. There were also ideas about new facilities including:

- New indoor music venue
- Creative Hub or community hubs with creative facilities
- New showgrounds
- Centre for Rare Trades
- Creative public spaces
- Performance and exhibition spaces and studios

"Events that involve all the arts (music, performance, visual, etc.) are a win for everyone - the community loves them, arts community is employed/can be creative, tourism and businesses win."

Project ideas for the 'creativity' topic are included in [Appendix O](#).

Council operations

A range of ideas were shared about how Council could alter its operations and choices to better meet community need. Project ideas for 'Council operations' are included in [Appendix Q](#).

Responses by gender

Responses to the Short Survey and the Community Priorities Surveys can be analysed by gender. There were only four respondents who identified as non-binary or self-described gender across the two surveys. This sample size is

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not sufficient to conduct gender analysis of responses for non-binary or self-described genders. Therefore, results are disaggregated by male and female genders only in this case. The data presented here is descriptive only. No statistical significance tests have been undertaken on this data.

Differences identified in responses from males and females include:

- Infrastructure, sustainability and growth and development were the top three themes for both men and women. Men then prioritised economy whereas women raised community-related issues as the fourth most-important theme.
- When prioritising action over the coming four years, men were more likely to favour infrastructure-related priorities. Women prioritised a wider range of works inclusive of infrastructure but also sustainability and community-related matters.
- When identifying additional priorities not included in the 'golden threads', women were more likely than men to cite community-related matters.
- Under the economy theme, women were more likely than men to raise health and wellbeing-related matters.
- Under the heritage topic, women were more likely than men to raise Aboriginal cultural heritage matters.
- Under the community theme, men were more likely than women to raise infrastructure, urban design, active transport and economy-related matters. Women were more likely to raise nutrition and food security, events and programs, and health and community services-related matters.
- There were no real differences in terms of responses under the environmental sustainability and creativity topics.
- In terms of ranking Victoria's health priorities, women were more likely than men to rate the prevention of violence as one of their top two priorities. Women were more likely than men to rank climate change as their number one issue. Men were more likely than women to rate increasing active living as one of their top two priorities. Men were more likely than women to rank sexual and reproductive health lowest on their list of priorities.
- When ranking a range of health and social issues, men identified a range of issues with similar priority. Women rated climate change and mental health and wellbeing as the two outstanding priorities, followed by a range of issues with a more even spread. Men were more likely than women to rank environments for active living as a priority. Women were more likely than men to rank discrimination as a priority issue.

Generally, there was wide agreement between men and women on the top priorities for the municipality. Women were generally more likely than men to raise community-related matters. In terms of health and social issues, men were more likely than women to raise active living, and the infrastructure and urban design to support active living. Women were more likely than men to prioritise the prevention of violence, discrimination and sexual and reproductive health. It should be noted, however, that sexual and reproductive health was not a high priority for either men or women.

Responses by age

Responses to the Short Survey and the Community Priorities Surveys can be analysed by age. There were only two respondents across the two surveys aged 5-11 years. There were also only two respondents in the 85+ year age group. These sample sizes are not sufficient to include in age-based data analysis for either survey. There were only three 12-17 year old respondents and one 18-24-year-old respondent to the Community Priorities Survey. These age groups have not been included in age-based analysis of the Community Priorities Survey. There were 12 respondents aged 12-17 years, and 12 respondents in the 18-24 year age group in the Short Survey. Analysis does include these groups however caution is required when interpreting these results due to the small sample sizes.

Differences identified in responses from different age groups include:

- The environmental sustainability theme ranked first or second for 10-year priorities for all age groups included in the analysis, except for the 50-59 years age group where it was ranked fourth.
- Infrastructure was included in the top two priorities for all age groups up to 59 years. It was the top priority for people aged 25-59 years.

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- Economy-related priorities were more commonly cited by 18-24 year old respondents than any other age group over a 10-year outlook.
- People aged 18-24 years were more likely to cite CBD revitalisation and other economic-related priorities than other age groups over a four-year outlook.
- When ranking the 'golden threads', environmental sustainability was the clear top-ranking element for all age groups except the 50-59 years group, where the resilient and supportive community element ranked similarly to environmental sustainability.
- When asked about Victorian health priorities, climate change was ranked the number one issue for all aged groups. People aged 35-49 years were more likely than any other age group to prioritise the prevention of violence as one of their top two priorities.
- When asked to rank a range of health and social issues, most age groups followed similar patterns in rankings except for those aged 60-69 years who ranked loneliness and lack of social connection much higher than other age groups. Those aged 70-84 years were more likely than other age groups to prioritise access to healthy, affordable food and the creation of environments that promote active living than other age groups.

Ranking of the top priorities didn't differ a great deal between age groups. It is interesting to note that employment and economy-related matters were raised more commonly in the 18-24 year age group when people are early in their careers. It is also perhaps noteworthy that people aged 60-69 years were more likely to think loneliness and social isolation was important. This is a time in life when people traditionally transition from work to retirement.

Stage two

The Community Panel undertook a range of discussions to further develop key themes emerging from the Stage one engagement. They developed an overarching Vision statement that encompassed their priorities and outlined their aspiration for Ballarat: **"Ballarat, Victoria's heritage city: leading the way as a sustainable, innovative and inclusive community."**

The Panel also prioritised areas for action under each of the main themes as shown below in Table 3.

Table 3: Community Panel priorities

Theme	Areas for action (in priority order under each theme)
Community and equity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthen community participation in Council decision-making processes 2. Advocate for housing for all community members 3. Create a more inclusive and welcoming community 4. Support access to health services 5. Access to educational support 6. Access to community information 7. Partner with key organisations to strengthen community safety
Growth and development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure growth is located in appropriate areas to protect agricultural land 2. Ensure new developments retain and add to the City of Ballarat character and heritage 3. Make provision for population growth including housing, medical, jobs, agricultural land and industry 4. Promote City of Ballarat as a destination for innovation in health, education and technology 5. Retain the facades of the heritage buildings in the CBD but approve some rezoning for housing for inner city living 6. Ensure there are a range of housing types and choices 7. Expand the 'free food' initiatives to include community gardens throughout Ballarat

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Look into the development of the east of Ballarat rather than all to the west
Environmental sustainability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Lead a circular economy to reduce waste Encourage new developments to go above and beyond minimum environmental sustainability design requirements Increase and promote recycling stations to reduce waste going to landfill Invest in education and community awareness around sustainable practices in all areas Encourage developers to create designated green canopies using native/indigenous & heritage trees Include green waste/organic waste in the green bin/curb side pick up
Economy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Revitalise the CBD Promote diverse retail/business opportunities Invest in tourism Open Ballarat to new forms of transport Create and promote more events Bring new 'big business' to Ballarat
Infrastructure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for improved public transport across the City of Ballarat Strengthen accessibility of spaces, places and paths Create more community gardens Self-supported water system/reservoir Advocate for a third hospital in the City of Ballarat Increase number of runways at airport

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Discussion

The provision of necessary infrastructure for a growing community was the key sentiment shared by the community through the Ballarat: Our Future engagement process. This aligns with findings from the 2016-2019 annual Community Perception Surveys undertaken by Council. The community outlined the need for the infrastructure required to promote economic, physical and social wellbeing. There was a desire to get around the city easily, not only in vehicles but also on bikes, on foot and by public transport. There was strong support for additional active transport facilities and advocacy for better public transport services in recognition of the practical, environmental and health benefits that come from reduced car dependence. There was a clear demand for a range of recreation infrastructure, beyond traditional organised-sport facilities. Community centres, schools, medical facilities, shops, parks, libraries and arts and cultural facilities were also important. Infrastructure should be provided in a timely manner, particularly in new growth areas. It is important, however, to ensure that existing areas aren't forgotten with a desire for equitable access to facilities of similar quality across the municipality.



There was concern about the nature of the city's growth, particularly in relation to urban sprawl. There was general support for well-considered infill development and the development of compact neighbourhoods where people can easily access work, study, recreation, shops and services a short journey from home. There was strong support for revitalisation of the central business district, including the development of higher density living options. Some expressed concern about food and water security considering climate change, housing development on farmland and increased population.

There was a clear message about the need to act on climate change prevention and adaptation. This was a widespread sentiment. Environmental sustainability-related ideas were raised in all tools, under all topics and by all genders and ages. While perhaps this wasn't as clear in community engagement processes in previous years, concern about climate change is becoming more mainstream. General sentiment was that Council needs to take a leadership role in this area, in lieu of state and federal governments doing so. Community wanted Council to see climate change as not just a problem, but an opportunity: How can Council harness the social, health and economic opportunities that environmental action provides? There was clear feedback that Ballarat could become a leader in sustainable development, with the establishment of 'green' planning standards to ensure that new developments aid the city's sustainability.



The role of equity and inclusion in creating a liveable community was reflected by feedback of this nature across a range of tools and topics including community, heritage, economy and infrastructure. This was solidified by the Community Panel who elevated inclusion to include it in the overarching Vision statement.

There was a recognition of the range of social issues facing the city, including homelessness, lack of affordable housing, family violence, social exclusion and poor mental health. While recognising that Council is not necessarily responsible for addressing all of these issues, there was clear sentiment that Council is a stakeholder and

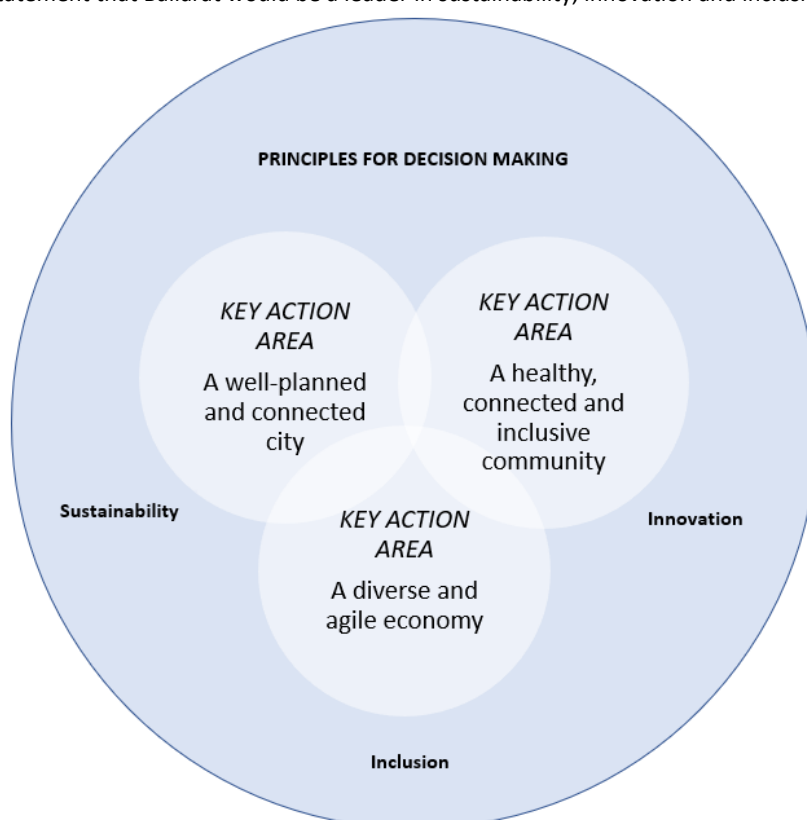
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can facilitate better outcomes through policy, partnership and advocacy. The community supported activities that promote inclusion, social connection and healthy lifestyles. There was strong feedback about the need for better active transport and informal recreation opportunities, and support for community food initiatives such as community gardens. Universal design of facilities and spaces was important to ensure inclusivity. There was a desire for more engaged citizens who are active in their communities and the local economy, and that participate in decision-making that impacts them. There was concern about the ability of existing health and community services to meet the need of the growing community. Related to this was support for a second public hospital in one of the growth areas.

While the economy didn't emerge as strongly as an independent theme as infrastructure and community did, there were strong links between economy, environmental sustainability, health and wellbeing and infrastructure. There was a strong sentiment that existing industries should continue to be supported, but that there are many opportunities arising and that the local economy should be agile enough to harness these opportunities. There was interest in the development of stronger links between industry and the tertiary education sector. There was a desire for residents to be trained in the relevant fields to work locally. A diverse economy was favoured, with a variety of industries and support for 'big business', as well as small and micro-businesses.

While heritage didn't emerge as a strong theme, the nature of the feedback received about heritage is of interest. Much of the feedback related to the recognition of Aboriginal cultural heritage. A broader definition of heritage was supported which included Indigenous history, ecological heritage, artisanal trades, multicultural history and the gold rush era. The importance of heritage was elevated by the Community Panel who included a reference to it in the Vision statement.

None of the key themes emerging from the engagement stands alone. Figure 15 shows a model for Council action based on the findings of the community engagement process. The Community Panel identified in their Vision statement that Ballarat would be a leader in sustainability, innovation and inclusion. These form the three



overarching principles that should guide decision-making to ensure that every action taken is a step towards that aspirational Vision statement. The three main themes of feedback from the community form the areas for action. They are all inter-related. A strong economy is not possible without physical infrastructure and people who are trained, supported and well enough to work. A healthy, connected community is not possible without housing, parks, pathways, community hubs, education and employment. And infrastructure is a wasted investment without people to activate it. Action in all three areas is required to ensure that Ballarat remains a liveable city into the future.

Figure 15: Model for Council action based upon community engagement

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Appendix A – List of submissions received from groups and individuals

Group	Number of people represented
Aboriginal community members at Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co-operative	47
Ballarat African Association	20
Ballarat Climate Action Co-op	28
Ballarat Community Garden	80
Ballarat Specialist School	21
Buninyong and District Residents Association	20
Buninyong Bowling Club	122
Disability Advisory Committee	9
E. Fry (individual)	1
Extinction Rebellion	20
Friends of Ainaro Community Advisory Committee	8
Friends of Canadian Corridor Inc.	65
G. Waldron (individual)	1
G. Wilson (individual)	1
Ingenia Lifestyle Parkside	1
J. Barnes (individual)	1
K. Ruddick (individual)	1
Spotlight on Sebastopol Reference Group	12
TOTAL	458

Other groups who provided feedback through meetings, surveys, Group Huddles or Kitchen Table Conversations:

- Ballarat Renewable Energy and Zero Emissions (BREAZE)
- Ballarat Working Together and the Western Victoria Online PAG
- Central Highlands Prevention Network
- Commerce Ballarat
- Disability Advisory Committee
- Filipino Australian Association of Ballarat
- Food is Free Inc
- Koori Engagement Action Group
- Napoleans Enfield Landcare Group
- Youth Council

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Appendix B – Short Survey

Got just a minute? Answer our short survey!

Survey starts

Finish

CLOSED: This survey has concluded.

All fields marked with an asterisk (*) are required.

1. By 2031, we want Ballarat to be an even greater place to live. What is the most important initiative or priority for Council to work on over the next 10 years in order to make that happen? *

Please add your comment here...

2. What one project or priority do you think Council should focus on over the next four years? *

Please add your comment here...

3. Below is a list of 5 key elements of a great regional city. Organise them in order of

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priority for Ballarat (1 is the highest priority) *

Our appetite for innovation, entrepreneurship and technology – we adapt and respond to opportunities and challenges to build a strong local economy and a better life for all

Our innate creativity - we assist in the development and sustainability of the creative individual, businesses and sectors

Our heritage – we value and protect our heritage including our streetscapes, public spaces, stories, people and culture, including Aboriginal cultural heritage and sense of place.

Our future sustainability – we value and protect our natural environment and look for opportunities to improve health, quality of life and the economy at the same time.

Our resilient and supportive community – we are a connected, healthy and compassionate community where everyone feels welcome and valued.

Please tell us a little about yourself

We collect information about your age, gender and background because it helps us to see if we have reached a broad section of the community. It also lets us check whether some groups have common ideas and thoughts. For example - young people aged 18-24 years might have different ideas to people aged 50+ years. By breaking down the information, we can develop programs or projects that respond to each of those groups.

4. What is your gender? *

☐ Male

☐ Female

☐ Non-binary

☐

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- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Self-described (please specify)

5. What is your age? *

- ☐ 5-11 years
- ☐ 12-17 years
- ☐ 18-24 years
- ☐ 25-34 years
- ☐ 35-49 years
- ☐ 50-59 years
- ☐ 60-69 years
- ☐ 70-84 years
- ☐ 85+ years

6. Do you identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

- ☐ Yes, Aboriginal
- ☐ Yes, Torres Strait Islander
- ☐ Yes, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- ☐ No

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☐ Prefer not to say

7. Do you speak a language other than English at home?

☐ Yes

☐ No

8. Where do you live? *

☐ Alfredton

☐ Ballarat Central - Bakery Hill - Lake Wendouree (South), Newington

☐ Ballarat East - Eureka - Warrenheip

☐ Ballarat North - Invermay Park

☐ Buninyong - Rural South

☐ Cardigan Village - Bunkers Hill

☐ Delacombe

☐ Golden Point - Mount Pleasant - Canadian

☐ Lake Wendouree (North) - Lake Gardens

☐ Lucas - Cardigan

☐ Miners Rest - Mitchell Park

☐ Mount Clear - Mount Helen

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- ☐ Rural East
- ☐ Rural West
- ☐ Sebastopol - Redan
- ☐ Soldiers Hill - Black Hill - Nerrina (South) - Brown Hill (West)
- ☐ Wendouree
- ☐ Neighbouring municipalities
- ☐ Outside of the region
- ☐ Other (please specify)

9. How did you hear about this consultation? *

- ☐ Council Facebook
- ☐ Council webpage
- ☐ The Courier
- ☐ Poster/sticker
- ☐ At a group that I am part of
- ☐ Email from a friend or network
- ☐ Email from Council
- ☐ Radio
- ☐ Other (please specify)

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Appendix C – Community Priorities Survey

Got more to say? Take our Community Priorities Survey

Survey starts

Finish

CLOSED: This survey has concluded.

All fields marked with an asterisk (*) are required.

1. Below is a list of 5 key elements of a great regional city. Organise them in order of priority for Ballarat (1 is the highest priority)

If you have already answered this question in our 'Short Survey', you don't need to answer again. Just move to question two.

-
- Our appetite for innovation, entrepreneurship and technology – we adapt and respond to opportunities and challenges to build a strong local economy and a better life for all

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