



Ballarat Major Events Precinct.

Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games legacy opportunities for Ballarat

› Investment from the Victorian Government for the delivery of the Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games will facilitate the staging of the largest major sporting event in Ballarat's recent history.

Ballarat has been selected to host athletics and para-athletics, boxing and T20 cricket events. A bid has been made to have rowing included as an additional sport and hosted at Lake Wendouree during Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games.

Critically, this investment will also accelerate the delivery of essential housing, transport, visitor economy and sporting infrastructure already identified in multiple masterplans and strategies adopted by Ballarat City Council; in turn delivering on multiple Council and community priorities and bringing benefits across the municipality and the region.

The Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games represents a once in a generation opportunity to fast-track key elements of the vision articulated by community and Council in the *City of Ballarat Council Plan 2021–2025*.

› Legacy

The legacy of the Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games will be unparalleled in our city's history.

The significant promotional opportunity this international sporting event will bring will be matched by a suite of works bringing tangible and enduring benefits to the city, residents and businesses.

The catalyst of the Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games means works planned for delivery 10 or more years

from now will be built at a vastly increased rate and be completed prior to the Games – including in the transport, housing, sporting infrastructure, visitor economy and public spaces.

This will be an historic legacy for Councillors in this term, one that is unlikely to be matched in decades to come.

› Strategic Alignment

City of Ballarat has a range of existing adopted plans and strategies which align with the needs of the Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games.

Working together in partnership with the Victorian Government will help ensure the delivery of an optimal outcome for the Ballarat community and broader region, Government, athletes and the Games.

By drawing on Council's local expertise and strategic work already completed - including extensive local community engagement - an opportunity exists to create a legacy of transformational community infrastructure that will benefit the Ballarat community for generations.

- [City of Ballarat Council Plan 2021–2025](#)
- [Ballarat Integrated Transport Action Plan](#)
- [Ballarat Creative City Strategy Precinct Master Plan](#)
- [Traveller Experience Plan 2021–2030](#)
- [City of Ballarat Priority Projects for Advocacy](#)

 **Ballarat Railway Station.**

Transport Infrastructure

Transport infrastructure enhancements will deliver long term benefits including improved connections between the CBD, Mars Stadium and Lake Wendouree, better walking and cycling options, greater accessibility and improved public transport services.

All modes and routes to Game's venues will be built to enable full accessibility, helping to move Ballarat closer to universal access.

› Rail

Railway station projects include accessibility enhancements at Ballarat Railway Station to achieve *Disability Discrimination Act* compliance, **Ballarat Railway Station South Side** works including relocation of the regional bus interchange and development of a new forecourt to expand capacity to funnel crowds during major events.

Two options exist around a **potential third station** to support the Games and transport requirements for the city:

- a Creswick Road gameday station to provide direct access to Mars Stadium for major events and potential use as a commuter station to reduce demand on Ballarat Central Station
- a station on the Ararat line within walking distance of Mars Stadium – this would most easily fit into existing V/Line timetables.

Wendouree Railway Station South Side works include a bus interchange and direct pedestrian access from the southern side platform.

› Road

The **duplication of Creswick Road** will create a grand northern entrance to the city (similar to Victoria Street), address traffic capacity issues on the road and improve access to Mars Stadium.

› Active Transport

Improved walking and cycling networks including connections between Lake Wendouree and Mars Stadium via Dowling Street, introduction of strategic cycling and walking corridors between the CBD, railway stations and Mars Stadium.

› Bus Network

Overhaul the local bus network to provide cross-city services to meet commuter usage demands.

Park and ride stations across the city – including the Major Events Precinct – to service peak commuter demand periods.

› Aviation

Potential direct domestic passenger services for athletes, supporters and visitors during the Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games via scheduled main runway lengthening works (underway) and delivery of stages two and three works to strengthen the runway at Ballarat Airport. These works will create ongoing increased capacity for Ballarat aviation businesses and improved regional connections.

Ballarat Airport Stage 2 Works

- Strengthening the runway to provide a consistent PCN of 20. This will provide capacity for larger aircraft to land and takeoff

Ballarat Airport Stage 3 Works

- **Taxiways:** build a new taxiway and upgrade the existing taxiway
- **Airport Terminal:** upgrade to improve functionality and amenity

Housing Infrastructure

> Athletes' Village

A Ballarat Athletes' Village may have capacity to accommodate up to 2,000 athletes, officials and support staff for the Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games.

This substantial investment could create a significant legacy of affordable housing options, including a mix of social, affordable, and privately owned homes.

> Addressing Need

Post the Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games the Athletes' Village could create the potential to address housing insecurity and reduce rates of homelessness and waiting lists for social housing in Ballarat.

This has potential to create diversity in housing stock, particularly in addressing the needs of single residents.

In total, more than 2,550 people in the Ballarat region are on the waiting list for social housing.

The most recent figures from the not-for-profit sector indicate that in Ballarat 225 households were homeless and waiting for transitional or crisis housing and that in the first half of 2022 more than 200 people were sleeping rough.

Additional housing stock may also help address the critical shortage of properties for rent in Ballarat. In May 2022 Ballarat's rental vacancy rate was 1.4 per cent – lower than the 1.7 per cent rate across regional Victoria and 4.7 per cent in Melbourne.



 Ballarat CBD



📷: Art Gallery of Ballarat.

Visitor Economy and Public Spaces

The Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games presents opportunities to strengthen Ballarat's Visitor Economy, our capacity to host large numbers of visitors and major events, to expand a skilled workforce, and to enhance the amenity, safety and beauty of our public spaces.

Establishment of a **live site** in the CBD to broadcast Games events will provide an ongoing meeting place with improved connections to local attractions through upgrades to walking and cycling routes and wayfinding signage.

➤ Games-related Opportunities:

- **An extensive cultural programme** will unite communities, visitors and countries around the Commonwealth in the lead up to, and during the Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games. The programme will bring to life the values of the Games, embrace diversity and cultures across the Commonwealth and celebrate First Nations people.
- **Skills-based educational opportunities** with workforce development designed to build Ballarat's visitor economy and hospitality workforce to cater for the Games and as an ongoing resource for local industry; training volunteers and officials and sports science opportunities.
- **Lead-up events** potentially based on Game's themes of humanity, destiny and equality – to build momentum around the Games – and lift the profile of Ballarat and the region as an ongoing visitor destination.

- **Tourism infrastructure** including supporting the private sector to increase capacity, and to develop new products to surprise and delight visitors – before, during and after the Games.
- **Hospitality opportunities** including offsite catering during the Games and as an ongoing resource for peak periods and future large events.
- **Potential events infrastructure** includes an indoor or covered exhibition space for large scale touring events, weather proofing weather-dependent events such as farmer's markets, create business event spaces for 100 to 500 people to support increased mid-week visitation.

➤ Hospitality and Civic Pride:

- **Work with and support local residents** to act as Game's volunteers, hosts and ambassadors for visiting friends and relatives to add to accommodation capacity.
- **Engage athlete ambassadors** from visiting nations to create marketing content showcasing Ballarat to their countries to support future ongoing international visitation.
- **Leverage the Made of Ballarat campaign** to continue to build on Ballarat's reputation as creative and vibrant so that potential visitors associate Ballarat with premium food and drink and as a getaway destination.
- Opportunities to activate key precincts based on the Creative City Strategy Precinct Master Plan and CBD Strategy and Action Plan, i.e. using Armstrong Street for major event activations, Camp Street and the Town Hall Plaza as live sites.

Sporting Infrastructure

A major legacy piece of the Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games could be an unprecedented investment in Ballarat's sporting infrastructure.

Significant State Government investment has already occurred at Mars Stadium and the Ballarat Sports and Events Centre. The Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games provides a great opportunity to further enhance the Ballarat Major Events Precinct – for the Games and for future generations.

> A number of key projects will facilitate these objectives:

- **Ballarat Major Events Precinct** is a Tier 1 advocacy project of the City of Ballarat – as the site for athletics and para-athletics events it will be the centrepiece of the Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games in Ballarat.
- **Legacy infrastructure** could include an additional Mars Stadium grandstand that could (in combination with temporary grandstand infrastructure), cater for a Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games crowd of up to 30,000 people. Under this model Mars Stadium could be left with a permanent capacity of 20,000 people making the venue event-ready for a range of sport and entertainment events.
- **An additional multipurpose oval** would allow local sport to continue uninterrupted during the major construction phase at Mars Stadium. Post the Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Games this will provide much needed oval capacity at the Major Events Precinct to cater for increases in participation in female and junior sport.
- **A warm up athletics track** will deliver the best athlete experience and the legacy of a new permanent home for local and regional athletics.
- **Advocacy for additional sports in the region** – rowing, marathon and joint advocacy with Hepburn Shire for mountain biking – will largely utilise existing infrastructure in Ballarat and the region and provide additional opportunities for local and regional residents to experience Victoria 2026 Commonwealth Game's events.



 Mars Stadium.

