

OFFICIAL

# Council Meeting

## Agenda

24 August 2022 at 6:30pm

Council Chamber, Town Hall, Sturt Street,  
Ballarat





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](http://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 attending this meeting may be filmed. By remaining in the public gallery once the meeting commences, members of the public give their consent to being filmed, and for the recording of them to be made publicly available and used by council.

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## **PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS**

- Public representations may be made on any items listed on the agenda in a Council Meeting apart from those listed in the confidential section.
- All attendees are encouraged to register their attendance by 4:30pm on the day of the meeting
- If you do wish to attend the meeting in person to make a submission, please contact [governance@ballarat.vic.gov.au](mailto:governance@ballarat.vic.gov.au) or call 5320 5875 to register
- Members of the public who wish to make a submission on an agenda item but who are unable to attend the meeting in person may make a submission in writing:
  - Submissions must be submitted in writing to [governance@ballarat.vic.gov.au](mailto: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.

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**The next Meeting of the Ballarat City Council will be held on Wednesday 28 September 2022.**

## 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

- Members of the Public may attend the meeting in person to ask a question however all attendees must register by midday on the day of the meeting to ensure Council adheres to the number of attendees permitted.
- If you do wish to attend the meeting in person to ask your question, please contact [governance@ballarat.vic.gov.au](mailto:governance@ballarat.vic.gov.au) or call 5320 5875 to register
- Those members of the public who are unable to attend can still participate in question time by submitting their questions in writing.
- No person may submit more than two questions.
- The questions must be in English, must be 75 words or less and not include a preamble, other additional material, or multiple parts.
- Questions must be submitted via email to [governance@ballarat.vic.gov.au](mailto:governance@ballarat.vic.gov.au) by no later than 4:30pm on the day of the Council meeting

## 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

##### 3. Final designs for the Bridge Street redevelopment unveiled

The City of Ballarat has unveiled the final designs for the \$15 million redevelopment of the Bridge Mall precinct into a vibrant tree-lined destination, soon to be known as Bridge Street. The designs demonstrate how the magnificent Sturt Street gardens will extend into Grenville Street, creating a landscaped entry into Bridge Street – attracting shoppers, diners, residents and visitors – to meet and stay longer. The final designs reveal how one-way, low-speed vehicle access will create a shared streetscape, enabling vehicle movement through the area, where bollards will be used to block off vehicle access as needed, particularly for markets, festivals and events. The designs also demonstrate how smart street lighting, including façade projections, will use the buildings in Bridge Street as a canvas for creative activations. Preliminary works are expected to begin this year with major civil works commencing 2023. Construction is expected to take 12 to 18 months. The City of Ballarat shop in Coliseum Walk, has all the designs on display, along with examples of landscape plantings, and the precinct plan.

##### 4. Winter Festival attracts thousands

On Sunday 17 July, the annual Ballarat Winter Festival wrapped up after another successful year with record attendance numbers and a smorgasbord of new and exciting events. Headlined by Sovereign Hill's Winter Wonderlights program, which attracted more than 90,000 visitors, the 2022 Festival included several new events

such as the Beyond Dark and Design Exchange event, which attracted more than 4,000 people. Despite Patricia Piccinini's Skywhales not launching, more than 6,000 people attended Sunday's event, and accommodation was booked out in Ballarat over this weekend. The ice-rink was another popular addition with more than 18,000 ice skaters taking to the rink. During the three weeks central Ballarat businesses saw an uptake in families attending their hospitality and retail businesses. The success of the Ballarat Winter Festival is largely due to the collaboration of multiple local businesses and the City of Ballarat.

#### **5. City of Ballarat celebrates NAIDOC Week**

From Sunday 3 to Sunday 10 July, City of Ballarat celebrated NAIDOC Week, to recognise and celebrate the living history of the Wadawurrung and all Traditional Owners. On Monday 4 July, there were two flag raising ceremonies hosted by the Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co-operation (BADAC) and the City of Ballarat. Later in the afternoon, Ballarat Library held a Basket Weaving workshop with Aunty Marjorie Pickford. On the Tuesday, the Library again played host to a wonderful Boomerang Painting Workshop presented by Shu Brown from BADAC along with Uncle Rob and Uncle Paul. The workshop, which had over 40 participants, discussed the different symbols that Aboriginal people use to depict stars, children, waterholes and Australian animals. NAIDOC Week is an important part of both the City of Ballarat's Reconciliation Action Plan 2022-2024 (due for release this October) and the Intercultural City Strategic Plan. It's important we turn our increased awareness and learnings from this week into action that will make a difference.

#### **6. City Oval lights up for local netballers**

The City Oval netball court has received a significant upgrade with the installation of four competition light towers with 200 lux LED, a reconstruction of the existing court, and an upgrade to the associated shelter and court fencing. The City Oval upgrade will help improve playing surfaces, increase programmable hours, increase participation and provide competition standard lighting. The project has been made possible through City of Ballarat funding of \$383,000, in partnership with a \$150,000 contribution from the State Government.

#### **7. Redeveloping the Ballarat Library**

On 14 July, City of Ballarat released the tender for the Ballarat Library's major redevelopment and expansion. The scope of the Library's redevelopment, which has not been upgraded since 1993, will include an expansion to the second level of the building, a new entrance, purpose-built teaching areas, quiet areas, open space for socialisation, and specialised children's and family areas. The full set of tender documents were made available for interested parties through City of Ballarat's website. It is predicted the Ballarat Library will be closed for 12 months and will reopen in late 2023. During that time, a condensed version of the Ballarat Library will be available for the community to access the library's materials, internet and other services. City of Ballarat officers are currently finalising the temporary location, which will be announced to the community shortly.

#### **8. Alfredton Sports Club gets upgrade**

The Alfredton Recreation Reserve has been transformed with new practice wickets, an electronic scoreboard, changerooms and more. The upgrade is a huge win for footballers, bowlers and netballers as well as local schools and residents. The new

facilities at the reserve were made possible by a \$3.7 million investment from the State Government's Local Sports Grant initiative. The upgrade includes new female friendly player and umpire change rooms with amenities, a kitchen/kiosk, public toilets, an undercover viewing area, new five wicket cricket training nets, a new electronic scoreboard and extra car parking. The City of Ballarat also made a financial contribution of \$1,260,000 and Cricket Victoria contributed \$75,000 to the project.

#### **9. Outdoor dining on Sturt Street gets the green light**

Outdoor decking and landscaping have begun installation on the 400 block of Sturt Street, in anticipation for spring 2022. Following a trial of temporary outdoor dining spaces in this area in 2020 and 2021, the dining precinct in front of L'Espresso, Higher Society and Europa will be transformed into a vibrant outdoor space for community and visitors alike. This project is all thanks to funding from the Victorian Government's COVID Safe Outdoor Activation Fund 2021. The outdoor activation project aims to attract more people to the area by creating an energetic and inviting precinct.

#### **10. Council continues its advocacy campaign for 2022 Commonwealth Games**

In July, the State Government released an expression of interest process for additional sports to be included in the 2026 Commonwealth Games, which will be held between 17 and 29 March. The City of Ballarat's advocacy and communications teams have been working hard to present Ballarat's case for more sport events, which include rowing, mountain biking (in collaboration with Hepburn Shire Council), and the marathon. The City of Ballarat is also focused on ensuring the Commonwealth Games delivers a legacy that extends well beyond sport and will bring benefits to the city for decades to come. Some of these legacy investments will be in the areas of transport, housing, community spaces, tourism assets, and local sporting infrastructure. This is an opportunity to bring forward important work to support our growing city that might otherwise have taken five, 10 or 20 years to be funded and built.

### **OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**

#### **11. That Council:**

##### **11.1 Receive and note the CEO's Operational Report.**

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

## 8. OFFICER REPORTS

### 8.1. DRAFT RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN 2022 - 2024

**Division:** Community Wellbeing  
**Director:** Matthew Wilson  
**Author/Position:** Frances Salenga, Intercultural Services Coordinator

#### PURPOSE

1. To update Councillors regarding the development of the draft Reconciliation Action Plan 2022 – 2024 (RAP) and to seek approval to place the Strategy on public exhibition for feedback prior to presenting for adoption at a future meeting.

#### BACKGROUND

2. This RAP will continue to progress the success of previous RAPs, with a focus on developing policies, processes and practices that are inclusive of the cultural needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.
3. This is the City of Ballarat's fourth RAP. It builds on the significant gains from our work toward reconciliation to date.
4. This RAP commits us to do better in removing the barriers to inclusion and making sure the voices and aspirations of First Nations People are reflected within our organisation, in our policies, plans and programs, and in the decision-making that affects our city and community.

#### KEY MATTERS

5. The KEAG Advisory Committee has been instrumental in guiding the engagement process and development of the Plan.
6. The Inclusive Ballarat engagement process took place between early April and early May 2022, with 886 people providing input across a range of engagement tools.
7. Key messages from engagement with registered Traditional Owners organisations, respondents to the community survey who identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background:
  - Meaningful engagement and consultation with Traditional Owners at the commencement of projects.
  - Greater awareness across the City of Ballarat of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' culture and the creation of safe spaces and recognition of significant land and waterways.
  - Improved culturally appropriate engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and targeted initiatives to improve economic opportunities.

- More visibility of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander symbols, flags and artwork at cultural events, sporting venues, City of Ballarat buildings and community spaces.

Other key findings from engagement with CoB Staff:

- Over 60% of the respondents are aware of the RAP while 23% are unaware.
- 70% of CoB staff have not participated in Council provided cultural awareness training in the past 3 years.
- Over 50% of CoB staff are not confident in delivering an Acknowledgement of Country.

8. This Plan forms part of the draft Inclusion Framework 2022 - 2026, Council's whole-of-organisation approach to inclusion and reconciliation.
9. The following key principles underpin the Inclusion Framework:
  - a) Our diversity is our strength
  - b) Equity
  - c) Intersectionality
  - d) Diversity and inclusion = business as usual
  - e) Strong partnerships
  - f) Inclusive engagement
10. The RAP has five key priority areas:
  - Relationships
  - Respect
  - Opportunities
  - Truth Telling
  - Governance.
11. This Plan seeks to build on the success of our previous Reconciliation Action Plans, we commit to challenging and questioning the status quo and encouraging strong and courageous leadership in pursuing reconciliation activities across the organisation and within the community it serves.
12. Action Plan priorities for the next two years predominantly involve, engage in meaningful consultation with Traditional Owners on projects, developing resources to educate the general community and building staff capacity to increasingly provide more visibility and inclusive services, programs, initiatives, and events.

## OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

**13. That Council:**

**13.1 Approve the public exhibition of the draft Reconciliation Action Plan 2022 -24 for a period of four weeks from 26 August to 23 September 2022.**

## ATTACHMENTS

1. Governance Review [8.1.1 - 3 pages]
2. Engagement summary RAP (1) [8.1.2 - 4 pages]
3. Reconciliation Action Plan 2022-2024 [8.1.3 - 31 pages]

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**ALIGNMENT WITH COUNCIL VISION, COUNCIL PLAN, STRATEGIES AND POLICIES**

1. Alignment with the Council Vision, Council Plan (specifically Goal 2: A healthy, connected and inclusive community; Goal 6: A Council that provides leadership and advocates for its community), strategies and policies is explicit throughout the Reconciliation Action Plan; it builds upon the work and successes of previous RAP; and links with other plans and strategies in the City of Ballarat strategic framework, including:

10 Year Horizon Community Vision 2030  
 Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2031  
 Community Infrastructure Plan 2021-2036  
Four Year Horizon The Council Plan (2021- 2025)

**Other relevant plans, strategies, and frameworks:**

Ballarat Strategy 2015  
 Ballarat Planning Scheme Community Engagement Framework  
 Libraries and Learning Strategy 2022-2027  
 Circular Ballarat Framework 2021  
 Intercultural Strategic Plan 2022-2026  
 Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025  
 Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022-2024  
 LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Plan 2022-2024  
 Active Women and Girls Strategy 2018  
 Ballarat Creative City Strategy 2019  
 Ballarat Event Strategy 2018-2028  
 Ballarat Heritage Plan 2017-30  
 Food Strategy 2019-2022

**COMMUNITY IMPACT**

2. There are 2094 residents in Ballarat who identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
3. Over the past 10 years there has been an increase of 84% in the number of people identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander in Ballarat, the ABS suggest this is partly due to residents being more likely to identify than in the past.
4. 31 residents indicated they speak an Australian Indigenous language.
5. The draft Reconciliation Action Plan 2022 – 2024 supports the identification of priorities and planning to meet the diverse needs of our First Nations people with a strong focus on:
  - Meaningful engagement and consultation with Traditional Owners
  - More visibility of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander symbols, flags and artwork at cultural events, sporting venues, City of Ballarat buildings and community spaces
  - Improved culturally appropriate engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and targeted initiatives to improve economic opportunities
  - Increased recognition and frequency of cultural celebrations involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

**CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

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6. There are no Climate Emergency and Environmental Sustainability implications identified.

**ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

7. There are no economic sustainability implications identified.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8. There is an allocated budget by Council towards the delivery of the Reconciliation Action Plan 2022 – 2024. The action plan also identifies links to business cases to be developed in line with other strategic plans eg. Intercultural Plan 2022-2026 and other associated Council Plans as highlighted in the strategy.

**LEGAL AND RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

9. There are no immediate risks that have been identified.

**HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS**

10. It is considered that the report does not impact on any human rights identified in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.
11. It is considered that the RAP will address issues in reference to the following:
  - Equal Opportunity Act 2010
  - Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001
  - National Anti-Racism Strategy 2012

**COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

12. In 2022, a broad, collaborative community engagement process 'Inclusive Ballarat' was undertaken.
13. Inclusive Ballarat used a participative design approach that involved consultation with the broader community and targeted engagement with First Nations communities via local networks, KEAG and City of Ballarat staff.
14. This RAP has been informed by the key findings from Inclusive Ballarat. A range of engagement methods and tools was used such as a community survey, community-led conversations, and interactive engagement tools.

**GENDER EQUALITY ACT 2020**

15. There are gender equality implications identified for the subject of this report. Specifically, it is recommended that the Reconciliation Action Plan:
  - Includes the following specific key principles
    - i. co-design with people with people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds
    - ii. accessible communication and universal design
  - Recognises key sources of discrimination such as negative community attitudes, reduced access to decision making opportunities, inaccessible information and communication methods, difficult employment or pathways to

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employment, and public events and activities that are not accessible and/ or inclusive.

- Includes the development of a Universal Design Policy to guide future practice at the City of Ballarat, along with staff training and associated guidelines relating to engagement, information provision, events and community buildings.
- Incorporates broader community engagement to build trust and awareness of any changes to the local context or impacts on particular genders or communities. Is produced in formats that are more accessible for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, but also meets broader accessibility requirements where possible.
- In addition, it is recommended that the implementation of the action plan:  
Applies a gender lens that recognises:
  - i. the importance of safety including cultural sensitivity, safety, physical safety and social safety
  - ii. barriers to accessibility, and considers times, physical space, communication methods, available transport options, comfort, visibility of diversity etc. for more inclusive programming
- Is operationalised using an intersectional lens to understand and seek to improve inclusion more broadly
- Occurs in collaboration with members of the Koorie Engagement Action Group (KEAG) whenever possible.
- This recommendation will deliver more equitable, inclusive and accessible services, programs and policies for people with disability, their families and carers. This recommendation will also contribute to broader inclusion work including increased community participation at future events and activities, more accessible buildings and public spaces, more accessible information and increasingly accessible employment opportunities resulting in a more diverse workforce.

**CONFLICTS OF INTEREST THAT HAVE ARISEN IN PREPARATION OF THE REPORT**

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

**PROCUREMENT COLLABORATION**

**(For Contracts Only)**

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## Inclusive Ballarat engagement summary

The Inclusive Ballarat consultation engagement process was open from early April until early May 2022. This engagement process was designed to inform the following plans:

- Inclusion Framework
- Disability Access and Inclusion Plan
- LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Plan
- Ageing Well Strategy
- Reconciliation Action Plan
- Intercultural Plan

The engagement process was a two-phased engagement which attempted to engage the general community (particularly regarding general inclusion sentiment) and to target the specific groups for which the plans listed above apply. Therefore, there are a greater proportion of respondents from each of those target groups that would normally be seen for an engagement process targeted at the general community.

A range of methods were employed including a survey, community-led conversations, a mapping tool, a community poll and interactive activities. Engagement methods were chosen to allow inputs from people in written word, spoken word, through drawings, identifying places on a map and in a range of languages.

Consultation findings were analysed using a combination of quantitative analysis and qualitative thematic analysis, grouping responses into overarching themes that shaped priorities.

### Demographics

Eight hundred and eighty-six (886) people provided input to the Inclusive Ballarat engagement process with the online survey and community-led conversations proving to be the most popular avenues for engagement (Table 1).

Table 1: Engagement by method

Inclusive Ballarat tools	Number of people providing input
Surveys*	256
Conversation Kits	269
Interactive boards	74
Town planning activity*	25
Mapping tool	17
Activity sheets*	29
Written submissions	1
Quick poll	70
First Nations school group consultation	15
Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Postcards	19
Internal RAP workshops	30
Internal RAP survey	102
<b>Total number of people providing input</b>	<b>886</b>
*Town planning activity and activity sheets were both completed by a class of 21 school students. This number has only been counted once in the final sum. One survey was submitted on behalf of 20 people.	

Demographic information is only available for the online survey, which accounts for approximately 29 per cent of respondents. This is a trade-off between gathering full demographic data and the provision of a range of methods requiring different levels of input to encourage the broadest possible engagement across the community.

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Two-hundred and thirty-six survey respondents that provided demographic information as summarised in Table 2:

Table 2: Demographic characteristics of survey respondents

Characteristic	Proportion of survey respondents
<b>Gender</b>	58.9% woman 27.5% man 7.2% non-binary 2.5% self-described 4.2% prefer not to answer
<b>Age group</b>	12-17 years: 0.8% 18-24 years: 3.8% 25-34 years: 9.3% 35-49 years: 34.6% 50-59 years: 19.4% 60-69 years: 17.7% 70-84 years: 11.4% 85+ years: 0.4% Prefer not to answer: 2.5%
<b>Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person</b>	4.6%
<b>Person with disability</b>	25.3%
<b>LGBTIQ+ person</b>	24.5%
<b>Cultural background other than Australian</b>	25%
<b>Parent to a child/children aged 17 years or less</b>	30.4%

### Key Findings

Presented here are the general inclusion results from the Inclusive Ballarat engagement. Summaries have also been prepared in relation to feedback relevant to the:

- Disability Access and Inclusion Plan
- Reconciliation Action Plan
- LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Plan
- Intercultural Plan

Survey respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with a range of statements. Results are summarised in the table below:

Table 3: Survey respondent agreement with inclusion statements

Statement	Proportion of survey respondents that 'agree' or 'somewhat agree' with the statement
<b>Ballarat is an inclusive city</b>	57%
<b>I feel accepted and valued in Ballarat</b>	58%
<b>I feel safe in Ballarat</b>	58%
<b>I don't feel welcome in Ballarat</b>	21%
<b>I have experienced discrimination in Ballarat</b>	50%
<b>Council services are inclusive</b>	50%
<b>Council sport and recreation facilities are inclusive</b>	43%
<b>Council is an inclusive workplace</b>	21% (42% did not know)
<b>Council information is accessible and inclusive</b>	48%
<b>Council buildings are inclusive</b>	43%

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People were asked several questions about inclusion. The key responses are outlined below:

**When I am included, I feel...**

- Respected and valued
- Safe, supported and cared for
- That I belong
- That I am seen, heard and my needs are considered
- That I can be actively involved and contribute to my community

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*"When I am included, I feel that I am being heard and I am making a difference."*

Community survey response

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When people were asked how they felt when they were included, they frequently commented that they felt valued and respected. A sense of safety was often raised, along with feeling supported and cared for. They felt that they belonged in the Ballarat community. Many people commented about feeling as though they had been seen and heard, with their needs considered, when they were included. Comments were also made about feeling like they could contribute to the community when they were included.

**Inclusion means...**

- Everyone has the opportunity to contribute and participate
- That I am accepted as I am
- That I can have a say and that I am listened to
- That I am respected and valued
- That I feel safe

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*"Inclusion means a safe space where I can be who I am without fear, I feel valued and can contribute to the best of my abilities to make everyone feel welcome and feel the same."*

Community survey response

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When asked what inclusion means to them, respondents overwhelmingly commented that it means that all people have the opportunity to contribute and participate. For a lot of people, inclusion means being accepted as they are and that they can voice their ideas and opinions. Feeling respected, valued and safe were also common responses.

**Inclusion is important because...**

It creates a more cohesive, vibrant and safer community

- It makes people feel valued and is important for good health
- There are serious individual and community consequences when people are excluded
- All people have the right to feel safe, welcome and accepted in their community

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*"Inclusion is important because it strengthens the community by giving as many people as possible opportunities to be involved in society and in decision making. It helps foster social responsibility, confidence and wellbeing."*

Community survey response

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When asked why inclusion was important, the most common response was about the positive societal impacts of an inclusive community. Following the same train of thought, many people made comments referencing the positive impacts on individuals when they are included. The negative impacts on individuals and the broader community (such as mental health impacts) were also cited as reasons why inclusion is important.

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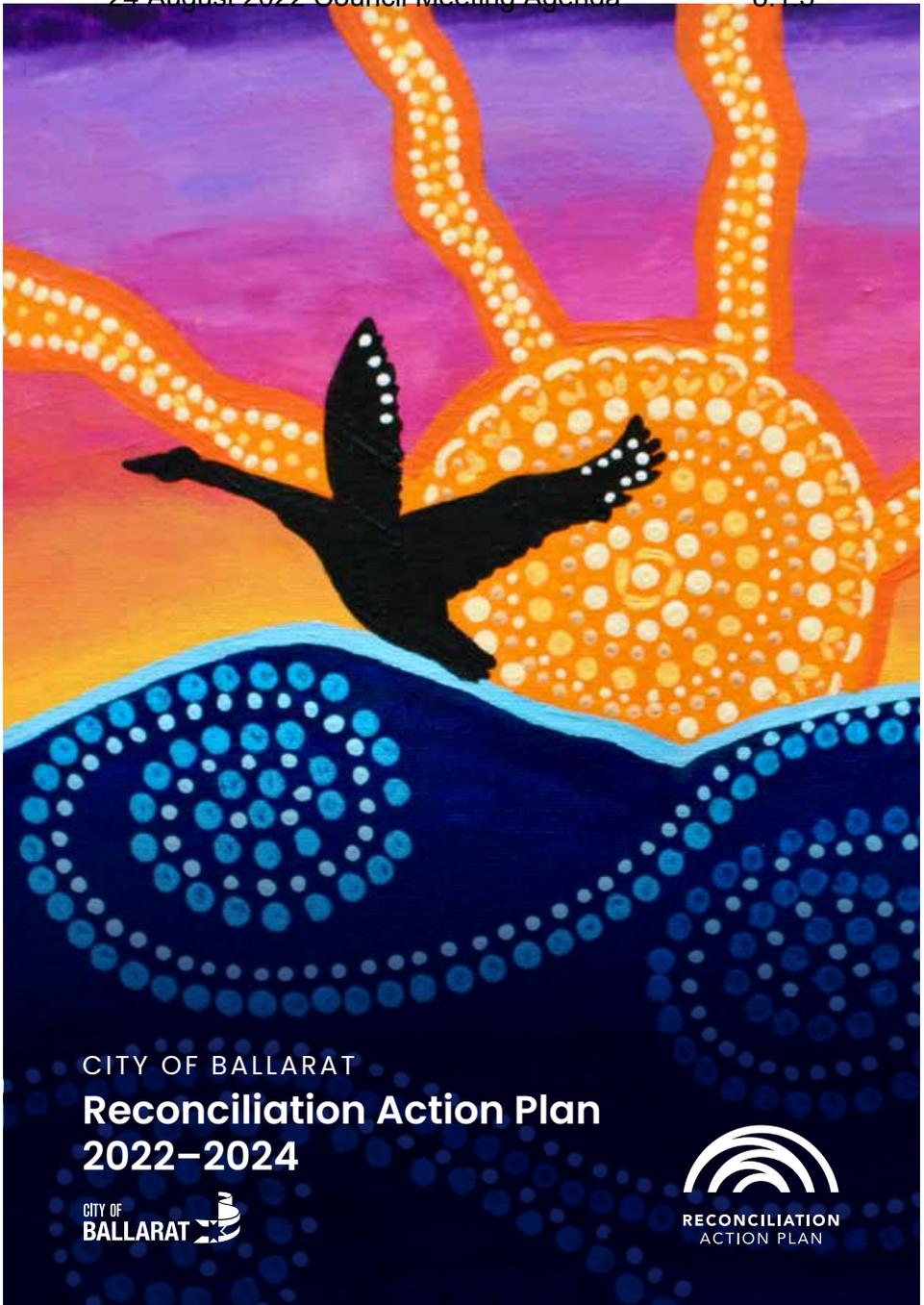
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#### Key Findings – Reconciliation Action Plan

Presented here are the general inclusion results from the Inclusive Ballarat engagement relevant to the Reconciliation Action Plan.

- Improve culturally appropriate engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and targeted initiatives to improve economic opportunities
- Provide more visibility of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander symbols, flags and artwork at cultural events, sporting venues, City of Ballarat buildings and community spaces
- Increase recognition and frequency of cultural celebrations involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples
- Educate young people about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history to promote cultural awareness from a young age.

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CITY OF BALLARAT

# Reconciliation Action Plan 2022–2024





## Statement of respect

**As an organisation we are committed to raising awareness about reconciliation, demonstrating this commitment and raising the profile of reconciliation in our community.**

**We recognise and value the work and teachings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People and their communities across this region.**

**We need to develop an understanding of and reflect on the injustices that continue to impact our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.**

**The City of Ballarat believes in raising awareness and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture, and that through ongoing learning and education we will deepen our connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.**

**Through working together, we can collectively build our understanding for a better future, based on meaningful 'conversations' and stronger relationship building between all Australians.**



—  
 The City of Ballarat acknowledges the Traditional Owners 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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Community quotes from the Inclusive Ballarat engagement process can be found throughout this document.



*“Walk the talk. Walk beside us.”*

Community-led conversation



## This is our RAP

Reconciliation Action Plan is a long title to repeat many times so we refer to it simply and affectionately as 'RAP'.

*“This is the City of Ballarat’s fourth RAP. It builds on the significant gains from our work towards reconciliation to date.*

*We recognise that as an organisation we cannot progress towards reconciliation in isolation. By its very nature the reconciliation process must be collaborative, founded on a strong working partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and supported by the broader community.*

*We commit to working hard to make Ballarat a place for all First Nations People to be proud of and an inclusive city where we can all live together in harmony.*

*I sincerely thank everyone who has contributed to this RAP and all those who will support our work to achieve our vision for reconciliation.”*



**Cr Daniel Moloney  
City of Ballarat Mayor**

.....  
**This RAP is to be reviewed and endorsed by Traditional Custodians / Owners’ groups – Ballarat and District Aboriginal Cooperative, Dja Dja Wurrung Traditional Owners and Wadawurrung Corporation – the external advisory group Koorie Engagement Action Group (KEAG) and Reconciliation Australia.**  
.....



## Our Vision for Reconciliation

**The City of Ballarat acknowledges the histories and continuing contributions made by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples – in particular the Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung Peoples.**

**We will support, foster and encourage walking together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as well as non-Indigenous community members.**

We are committed to reconciliation and believe that it is everyone's business. We value, understand and promote the full landscape of our community, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People's cultural heritage and knowledge.

Building on the success of our previous Reconciliation Action Plans, we commit to challenging and questioning the status quo and encourage strong and courageous leadership in pursuing reconciliation activities across the organisation and within the community it serves.

We aspire to become an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, strengthening our service offering to the community.

Together we celebrate our strong and vibrant Traditional Owners, the Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung Peoples, and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples who call this municipality their home.



# Our Story

**The municipality of Ballarat fits within the boundaries of the Kulin Nation, an alliance of five Aboriginal nations in central Victoria that have similarities in language, custom and tradition.**

**It extends across parts of the Traditional Country of the Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung People who have lived here for at least 50,000 years and remain connected to these lands, waterways and skies.**

**Their ancestors shaped the landscape through their activities and through knowing it deeply and imbuing it with important cultural and spiritual meanings. The whole Country embodies songlines and storylines**

**that connect Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung People to places.**

**Ballarat has become home to many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People from right across Australia, sometimes under difficult circumstances such as being survivors of the Stolen Generations.**

**Through continued strength and resilience, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People strive to sustain their languages, lore, cultural practices and care for Country.**

**Ballarat is thought to be named from two Aboriginal words: 'balla' meaning elbow or reclining on the elbow, and 'arat', meaning place.**

## Why do we have a RAP?

**While Ballarat is well known for its colonial history, European settlement had devastating impacts on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.**

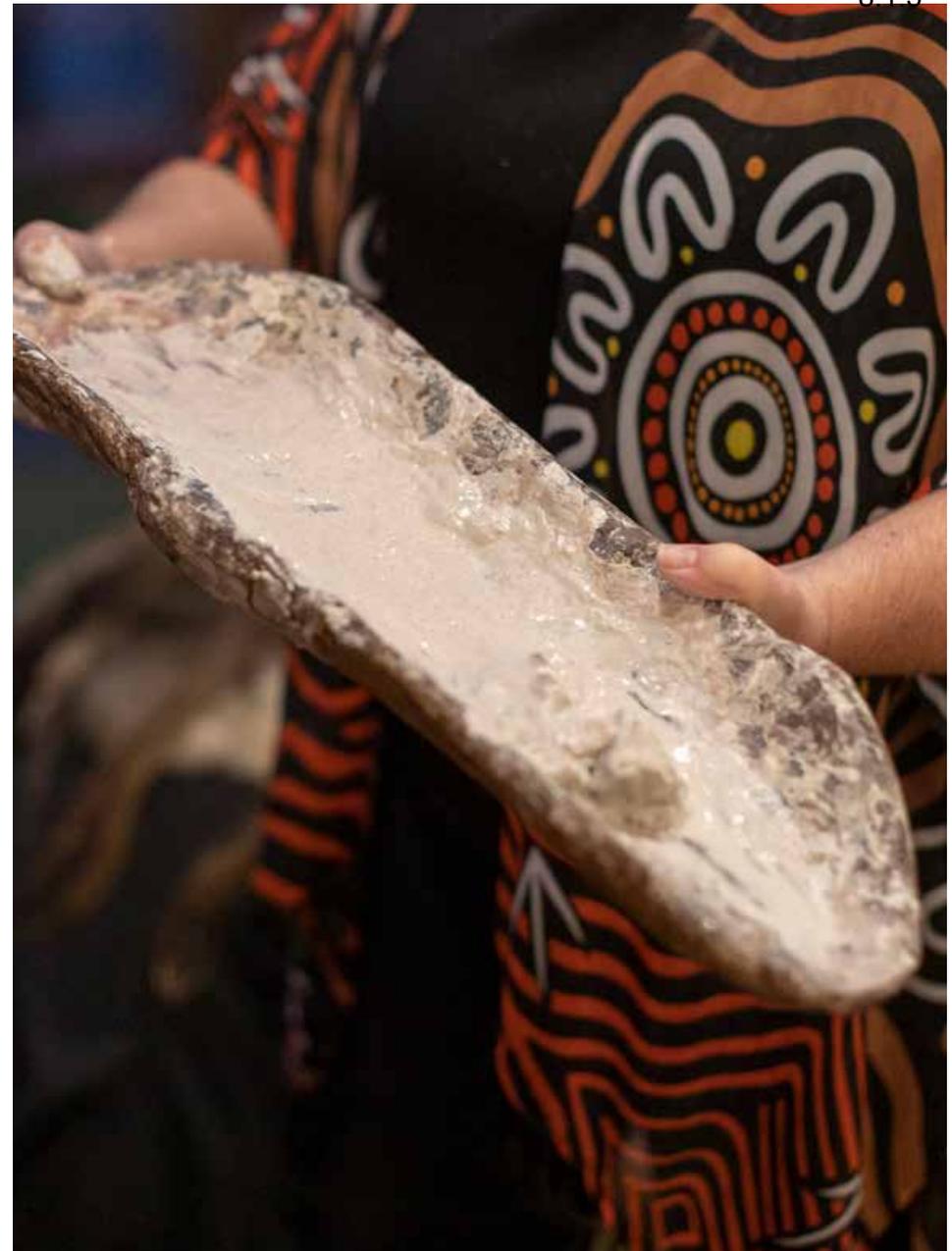
**The City of Ballarat acknowledges that genocide, intergenerational trauma and racism continue to negatively impact First Nations People today. We acknowledge the varied history and cultural stories of our city.**

As part of our reconciliation journey, we will work to enhance the acknowledgement, recognition and respect for this area's extremely rich cultural heritage and for the many places of cultural significance. We will achieve this through meaningful consultation, collaboration and partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

In this RAP, we have added truth telling as a core area of focus, in addition to relationships, respect, opportunities and good governance. This demonstrates our commitment to being honest about our past and how the past shapes today, recognising that truth telling has been an important part of enabling healing for many communities around the world.



**This RAP commits us to do better in removing the barriers to inclusion and making sure the voices and aspirations of First Nations People are reflected in our organisation: in our policies, plans, programs and in the decision-making that affects our city and community.**



# Our community

**Our city has a strong First Nations history and, today, it has very brave and active First Nations communities.**

**Wadawurrung people are the Traditional Owners of the land and waters that encompass the area from the Great Dividing Range in the North to the coast in the South, from Werribee River in the East to Aireys Inlet in the West, which includes Geelong and Ballarat.\***

**The Dja Dja Wurrung people are the traditional owners for part of Central Victoria. Their area extends from north of the Great Dividing Range near Daylesford and includes part or all of the catchments of the Richardson, Avon, Avoca, Loddon and Campaspe Rivers. It includes, inter alia, Crown land in the City of Greater Bendigo, Lake Boort and part of Lake Buloke.\*\***

\*wadawurrung.org.au

\*\*en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dja\_Dja\_Wurrung

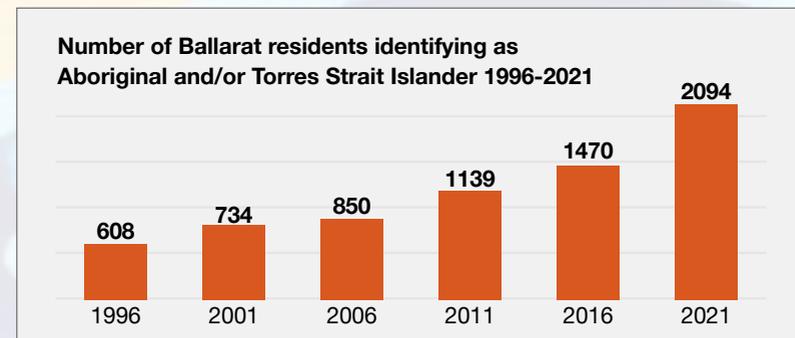
As at August 2021 there were:

There are 2094 residents in Ballarat who identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander in the 2021 Census.

Over the past 10 years there has been an increase of 84% in the number of people identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander in Ballarat. The ABS suggest this is partly due to residents being more likely to identify than in the past.

There are 31 residents who speak an Australian Indigenous language.

The median age for people identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander in Ballarat is 22 which is much younger than the median for the non-Indigenous Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander population of 39. Almost 80 per cent of the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander population are aged under 45 years.\*



\*Source: Census 2021



## Our reconciliation journey

In 2003, the City of Ballarat embarked on a journey towards reconciliation with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities with a Statement of Commitment.

### 2003 **Statement of Commitment to the Local Indigenous Community**

This Statement of Commitment was developed through a process of negotiation and consultation with members of the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, the general community and the City of Ballarat’s Unfinished Business Advisory Committee.

### 2004 **First Reconciliation Strategy**

This strategy provided a framework for the implementation of the Statement of Commitment.

### 2009 **Community forum on reconciliation**

This forum involved the City of Ballarat working directly with our First Nations community on how we could best support reconciliation. This forum prompted the re-energising of the existing advisory committee, KEAG, who were empowered to support the development of the City of Ballarat’s first RAP.

**2011**

**First RAP 2011–2013**

Key achievements include:

- Visible and significant participation of First Nations People in major community events and the swearing in of the new Council in 2012.
- Strengthening KEAG.
- Improving employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People at the City of Ballarat and auspiced by the City of Ballarat.
- Flying the Aboriginal flag at prominent City of Ballarat venues.
- Including Acknowledgement of Country at Council meetings and prominent events.
- Displaying First Nations artwork at City of Ballarat venues.

This plan focused on the development of the Koorie Engagement Action Group with the following purpose:

- enhancing and promoting understanding within the Ballarat community of Koorie culture, society and heritage.
- providing a Koorie perspective to the operation of local government and other agencies within the sub-region.
- identifying issues affecting the health and wellbeing of Koorie people and developing responses in collaboration with key partners, agencies and other tiers of government.

**2011**

- Influencing change processes in agencies providing services to Koorie people to assist in building cultural sensitivity and service integration that facilitates greater responsiveness to the needs of Koorie people.
- Advocating for and supporting key elements of the existing current service and support infrastructure in Ballarat for Koorie people.

**2014**

**RAP 2014–2017**

This plan was informed by extensive review and analysis, consultation and collaboration.

Key achievements include:

- Demonstrating respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Peoples and their history and culture.
- Ensuring and respecting that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have equal opportunity to participate in the decision-making processes that affect their everyday lives.
- Encouraging an ‘open doors’ approach, creating interest in our services and enabling easy access to information.
- Supporting the aspirations of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community by committing to the identified key actions of the RAP and ensuring that Councillors, staff and members of the community are able to contribute to reconciliation.

**2018**

**RAP 2019–2021**

This plan continued to progress the success of previous RAPs, with the City of Ballarat committed to challenging and questioning the status quo and encouraging strong and courageous leadership in pursuing reconciliation activities across the organisation and within the community it serves. Key achievements include:

- Engaging five RAP champions from across Council in key areas for the implementation of the RAP.
- Committing to working with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities, networks and organisations.
- Employing Council's first Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer.
- Implementing change in line with Reconciliation Victoria's guidelines for the delivery of activities on 26 January 2020
- Delivering the inaugural 26 January Survival Day Ceremony which was recognised by Reconciliation Victoria as a finalist in the annual HART Awards.
- City of Ballarat Heritage team working in partnership with BADAC in redeveloping the Koorie Heritage Trail, first launched in 2003.
- Facilitating Cultural Awareness Training to Councillors and staff.

**2018**

- Conducting Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of all important internal and external meetings, including Citizenship Ceremonies.
- Celebrating Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC Week and other important events.

**2022**

**RAP 2022–2024**

This plan will work towards the following:

- Progressing the five priority areas of the RAP.
- Achieving cultural proficiency across the organisation to enable staff to work respectfully with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and to deliver culturally responsive services.
- Developing policies, processes and practices that are inclusive of the cultural needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.
- Implementing City of Ballarat policies to promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment, procurement and engagement.

*“Building on the work and the success of our previous RAPs, we will challenge and question the status quo as we continue our commitment to working towards reconciliation.*

*We will do this as a provider of services, programs, infrastructure and facilities. As a partner and facilitator, working with and bringing together other groups that are doing good things in our community.*

*We will work as a leader, advocate and positive role model, encouraging strong and courageous leadership by pursuing reconciliation activities across our organisation and within the community we serve.*

*As an employer, we will strive towards our aspiration to become an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. As a customer of goods and services from local businesses and contractors. And as a planner and law maker.*

*We acknowledge and thank all those who will support us in this work.”*

*Evan King*

**Evan King  
City of Ballarat  
Chief Executive Officer**

*“Educating young people about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and history to promote cultural awareness from a young age. Having a historical understanding is so important to understand issues that are faced today by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.”*

Community consultation



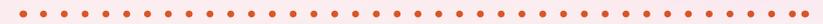
# What our community told us

In 2022, a broad, collaborative community engagement process 'Inclusive Ballarat' was undertaken.

Inclusive Ballarat used a two-phased approach that involved consultation with the broader community and targeted engagement with First Nations communities via local networks, KEAG and City of Ballarat staff.

This RAP has been informed by the key findings from Inclusive Ballarat. A range of engagement methods and tools was used such as a community survey, community-led conversations and interactive engagement tools.

## We heard...



*"Sharing culture and heritage, collaborate with land management and consultation with Elders."*

Community consultation



*"Promote us through mainstream."*

Community consultation



*"Arts - TV commercials, promotion of events, more personal care, more awareness of our Elders."*

Community consultation



*"Answer a self-call out to see if we need anything."*

Community consultation



## We heard...

.....

*“More educational programs for kids and teens.  
More celebrations of culture and Aboriginal  
People around the world and not just NAIDOC.  
Programs for community in art and language  
outside of Ballarat Co-op.”*

Community consultation

.....

.....

*“Support young members of the community.  
Provide education of the Aboriginal culture in  
schools and out of school to everyone.”*

Community consultation

.....

.....

*“Encourage recognition of culture across region.  
Celebrate pre-goldrush history to visitors. More  
use of traditional places.”*

Community consultation

.....



## Priorities identified by our community

- Meaningful engagement and consultation with Traditional Owners at the commencement of projects
- Greater awareness across the City of Ballarat of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples’
- Culture and the creation of safe spaces
- Recognition of significant land and waterways
- An inclusive whole-of organisation approach to address the needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- Increased recognition and frequency of cultural celebrations involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples
- Improved culturally appropriate engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples
- Targeted initiatives to improve economic opportunities
- More visibility of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander symbols, flags and artwork at cultural events, sporting venues, City of Ballarat buildings and community spaces
- Increased financial support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander initiatives across the municipality



## How will we track our progress?

We will monitor and review our progress against the actions detailed in this RAP to ensure it remains relevant and responsive to our community's needs. Our progress will be reported annually to Councillors and made public.

Work on developing our next RAP will start 6 months before this one is due to conclude.

## How will we achieve our vision for reconciliation?

### Core pillars

The City of Ballarat will take a range of practical actions over the coming two years as we work towards an inclusive city. We have structured these actions around priority areas identified below in the development of this plan.

**How we will deliver these priorities is detailed in the action plan which can be found on page 32.**

Priority areas	
	<p><b>Pillar 1: Relationships</b></p> <p><i>"We build mutually beneficial relationships to promote reconciliation through respect and trust."</i></p>
	<p><b>Pillar 2: Respect</b></p> <p><i>"We promote respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories."</i></p>
	<p><b>Pillar 3: Opportunities</b></p> <p><i>"We take a whole-of-organisation approach to promoting reconciliation."</i></p>
	<p><b>Pillar 4: Truth telling</b></p> <p><i>"We support truth telling for a greater understanding of our history and the resilience and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People."</i></p>
	<p><b>Pillar 5: Governance</b></p> <p><i>"We commit to monitoring, evaluating and reporting on our progress towards reconciliation."</i></p>

## 2-year action plan

 <b>Pillar 1: Relationships</b> <i>"We build mutually beneficial relationships to promote reconciliation through respect and trust."</i>		
We will achieve this by:	We will:	When
<b>1. Establishing and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations</b>	Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement	Year 1
	Develop a Memorandum of Understanding to build relationships and facilitate collaborations with Registered Traditional Owners	Year 1
	Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations	Year 1
	Upgrade the 'Koorie Trail' and provide information on local historical Aboriginal sites via QR codes	Year 2

 <b>Pillar 1: Relationships</b> <i>"We build mutually beneficial relationships to promote reconciliation through respect and trust."</i>		
We will achieve this by:	We will:	When
<b>1. Establishing and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations</b>	City of Ballarat's Koorie Engagement Action Group (KEAG) to work to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisational participation</li> <li>Strengthen the influence of advisory committees across the organisation</li> <li>Develop a cultural audit tool to update and guide City of Ballarat staff</li> <li>Continue to foster engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally and linguistically diverse communities and Early Years learning services, kindergartens, and schools to facilitate the continuous development of cultural competencies</li> <li>Include a list of past and current KEAG members on the City of Ballarat website</li> </ul>	Year 1

 <b>Pillar 1: Relationships</b> <i>"We build mutually beneficial relationships to promote reconciliation through respect and trust."</i>		
We will achieve this by:	We will:	When
<b>2. Building relationships by celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW)</b>	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to City of Ballarat staff and the community via social media, Customer Service hold messaging, internal lock screens and display monitors	Year 1
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event	Year 1
	Provide the opportunity, encourage and support City of Ballarat staff and specifically senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW	Year 2
	Lead at least one NRW event each year, taking direction from KEAG	Year 2
	Register all City of Ballarat NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website	Year 1

 <b>Pillar 1: Relationships</b> <i>"We build mutually beneficial relationships to promote reconciliation through respect and trust."</i>		
We will achieve this by:	We will:	When
<b>3. Promoting reconciliation in the areas where we have influence</b>	Implement strategies to engage City of Ballarat staff in reconciliation such as 'in person' cultural training	Year 1
	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly through media and communications	Year 2
	Collaborate with Reconciliation Australia and other like-minded organisations to develop ways to advance reconciliation	Year 2
	Develop an inclusion program and appoint an Aboriginal Ambassador/s at the Ballarat Aquatic & Lifestyle Centre	Year 1
	Consider a program based around the Commonwealth Games to celebrate and acknowledge Aboriginal excellence and participation	Year 2
	Ensure City of Ballarat-led children's and family services are culturally safe and culturally appropriate in accordance with accreditation standards	Year 1

 <b>Pillar 1: Relationships</b> <i>"We build mutually beneficial relationships to promote reconciliation through respect and trust."</i>		
<b>We will achieve this by:</b>	<b>We will:</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>4. Promoting positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies</b>	Conduct a review of staff policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions and future needs	Year 2
	Develop and maintain a culturally safe environment for Aboriginal children which considers their unique identities and experiences to ensure these are respected and valued	Year 2
	Consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors regarding the City of Ballarat's anti-discrimination policy	Year 1
	Educate all City of Ballarat staff and particularly senior leadership on the impact of racism through the implementation of the City of Ballarat's Cultural Awareness Koorie Training Program	Year 2

 <b>Pillar 1: Relationships</b> <i>"We build mutually beneficial relationships to promote reconciliation through respect and trust."</i>		
<b>We will achieve this by:</b>	<b>We will:</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>4. Promoting positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies</b>	Increase the participation of young Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander People in City of Ballarat volunteer and leadership programs	Year 2
	Provide the opportunity for greater Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation across City of Ballarat advisory committees and working groups such as the Intercultural Advisory Committee, Disability Advisory Committee and LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee, Heritage Committee	Year 1
	In collaboration with Traditional Owners explore options for a designated site/s in Ballarat for smoking ceremonies and community events	Year 2
	Support sporting programs in NAIDOC Week and host a national First Nations football and netball carnival	Year 2

 <b>Pillar 2: Respect</b> <i>"We promote respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories."</i>		
<b>We will achieve this by:</b>	<b>We will:</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>1. Increasing our understanding, recognition and valuing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning</b>	Deliver our Cultural Awareness Training Program and 'On Country' experiences to City of Ballarat staff using the data from the May 2022 staff survey as a baseline	Year 2
	Revise our Cultural Learning Strategy in consultation with local Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders	Year 2
	Implement and communicate our Cultural Learning Strategy for City of Ballarat staff via the 'Koorie Hub' intranet site	Year 2
	Create opportunities for the recognition, promotion and display of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community art and creativity	Year 1

 <b>Pillar 2: Respect</b> <i>"We promote respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories."</i>		
<b>We will achieve this by:</b>	<b>We will:</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>1. Increasing our understanding, recognition and valuing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning</b>	Build cultural safety and awareness by strengthening the City of Ballarat's visible commitment to reconciliation at our venues and facilities and generally in the public realm, such as the Town Hall, Art Gallery, Ballarat Aquatic & Lifestyle Centre, Ballarat libraries, Her Majesty's Theatre, Eureka Centre, sporting grounds and facilities, community hubs and venues and public space and gardens	Year 2
	Research and build on Traditional knowledge to learn from and leverage sustainable solutions for environmental conservation, biodiversity protection and climate change actions	Year 1
	Link 'Caring for Country' within climate and biodiversity strategic planning in reference to Traditional Owner's Country Plans	Year 2
	Develop a Cultural Safety Standards checklist for City of Ballarat services	Year 1

 <b>Pillar 2: Respect</b> <i>"We promote respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories."</i>		
<b>We will achieve this by:</b>	<b>We will:</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>2. Demonstrating respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples by observing cultural protocols</b>	Increase the understanding of City of Ballarat staff of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols such as Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country	Year 1
	Deliver a calendar of City of Ballarat-led events to increase awareness and build respect within the organisation and the community (where possible, partnering with other organisations in the delivery of these events) Survival Day Dawn Ceremony (26 January), Apology Day (13 February), National Sorry Day (26 May), National Reconciliation Week (June), NAIDOC Week (July) and Aboriginal Children's Day (4 August)	Year 1

 <b>Pillar 2: Respect</b> <i>"We promote respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories."</i>		
<b>We will achieve this by:</b>	<b>We will:</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>2. Demonstrating respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols</b>	Invite a local Traditional Owner to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural practice at significant events based on adopted protocols developed in a Memorandum of Understanding with Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung Traditional Owners	Year 1
	Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate practice at the commencement of important meetings	Year 1
	Include Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC Week and Harmony Day as core calendar items in all City of Ballarat Early Years learning programs	Year 1
	Identify opportunities that celebrate diverse children for child audiences such as publications, public art and other initiatives	Year 1

 <b>Pillar 2: Respect</b> <i>"We promote respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories."</i>		
<b>We will achieve this by:</b>	<b>We will:</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>2. Demonstrating respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols</b>	Consider dual place naming to Wadawurrung/Dja Dja Wurrung language in communications	Year 2
	Establish township signage featuring Acknowledgement of Country and plaques acknowledging Traditional Owners as standard practice across the municipality	Year 1
	Consider Aboriginal artwork at City of Ballarat sites and include signage at playgrounds with the Wadawurrung/Dja Dja Wurrung language for 'play' where appropriate	Year 2
	Explore opportunities for teaching children about Aboriginal culture and connection to the land across the municipality	Year 1

 <b>Pillar 2: Respect</b> <i>"We promote respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories."</i>		
<b>We will achieve this by:</b>	<b>We will:</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>2. Demonstrating respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols</b>	Add a page about the Wadawurrung/Dja Dja Wurrung area, People and maps to the early childhood Green Book	Year 2
	Display a framed narrative about Wadawurrung birthing practice and care in infancy and introduce Wadawurrung language for 'mother', 'birth', 'baby' and 'family' in Maternal & Child Health Centres	Year 2
	Provide support for City of Ballarat staff who may be exposed to cultural conflict and intergenerational violence	Year 1
	Ensure that whenever images of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People are used they are properly acknowledged and include reference to people who have passed away	Year 1

 <b>Pillar 2: Respect</b> <i>"We promote respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories."</i>		
<b>We will achieve this by:</b>	<b>We will:</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>3. Building respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week</b>	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event	Year 1
	Promote and encourage participation by all City of Ballarat staff in external NAIDOC events	Year 1
<b>4. Increasing integration and building capacity in our commitment to RAP outcomes</b>	Strengthen the City of Ballarat RAP Working Group and identify a City of Ballarat RAP champion who will communicate regularly to staff, community and Councillors about the RAP via the City of Ballarat website and social media	Year 1
	Report on <i>Reconciliation Across the Business</i> via the completion of an annual survey and report card by City of Ballarat business units	Year 1

 <b>Pillar 2: Respect</b> <i>"We promote respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories."</i>		
<b>We will achieve this by:</b>	<b>We will:</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>4. Increasing integration and building capacity in our commitment to RAP outcomes</b>	Include music and arts workshops and events that promote the performance and artistic skills of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People in the FREEZA program	Year 1
	Provide opportunities for youth volunteers to participate in KEAG to strengthen the voice of young people	Year 1

 <b>Pillar 3: Opportunities</b> <i>"We take a whole-of-organisation approach to promoting reconciliation."</i>		
<b>We will achieve this by:</b>	<b>We will:</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>1. Facilitating improved employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People</b>	Build understanding of the experience of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment and professional development opportunities	Year 2
	Consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff on our recruitment, retention and professional development and explore the establishment of an Aboriginal Staff Network	Year 2
	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Recruitment, Retention and Professional Development Strategy	Year 2
	Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach a wide audience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders	Year 1

 <b>Pillar 3: Opportunities</b> <i>"We take a whole-of-organisation approach to promoting reconciliation."</i>		
<b>We will achieve this by:</b>	<b>We will:</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>1. Facilitating improved employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People</b>	Increase the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People employed at the City of Ballarat by strengthening HR and recruitment procedures to remove barriers to their participation in our workforce	Year 1
	<b>2. Facilitating improved economic and social outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities</b>	Continue to implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy
Maintain membership of Kinaway and establish membership of Supply Nation		Year 1
Develop opportunities for the procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and communicate these to City of Ballarat staff		Year 2
Increase City of Ballarat contractors who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People		Year 1

 <b>Pillar 3: Opportunities</b> <i>"We take a whole-of-organisation approach to promoting reconciliation."</i>		
<b>We will achieve this by:</b>	<b>We will:</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>2. Facilitating improved economic and social outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities</b>	Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses by providing opportunities for them to be City of Ballarat suppliers	Year 1
	Display Aboriginal artefacts and crafts and feature local artists and performers in exhibitions and commercial outlets in collaboration with Traditional Owners	Year 2
	Explore membership of UNESCO First Nations City of Craft	Year 2
	Explore partnerships with local First Nations services in the development of Early Years plans and activities	Year 1
	Include Wadawurrung Country and logo branding on signages and billboards throughout the municipality	Year 2

 <b>Pillar 3: Opportunities</b> <i>"We take a whole-of-organisation approach to promoting reconciliation."</i>		
<b>We will achieve this by:</b>	<b>We will:</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>2. Facilitating improved economic and social outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities</b>	Expand the collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural history in City of Ballarat libraries	Year 1
	Collaborate with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders to inform the community about the adaptation of ATSILIRN (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library and Information Resource Network) protocols for City of Ballarat libraries, archives and information services	Year 1
	Deliver interactive workshops, storytelling initiatives and tours to City of Ballarat staff and the broader community to inform them about Traditional Owners, Aboriginal history, place names and cultural heritage sites	Year 2

 <b>Pillar 3: Opportunities</b> <i>"We take a whole-of-organisation approach to promoting reconciliation."</i>		
We will achieve this by:	We will:	When
<b>2. Facilitating improved economic and social outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities</b>	Collaborate with Parks Victoria and/or the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Catchment Management Authorities and Central Highlands Water to explore the possibility of engaging First Nations People to facilitate 'Walking on Country' programs	Year 2
	Investigate potential opportunities for First Nations' storytelling to increase cultural awareness	Year 1
	Develop a policy for delivering Acknowledgement of Country and to specify whether an event is being held in Wadawurrung or Dja Dja Wurrung Country and for all major events to incorporate a Welcome of Country from a Traditional Owner	Year 1
	Showcase Aboriginal culture and history during the Ballarat Heritage Festival	Year 1

 <b>Pillar 3: Opportunities</b> <i>"We take a whole-of-organisation approach to promoting reconciliation."</i>		
We will achieve this by:	We will:	When
<b>2. Facilitating improved economic and social outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities</b>	Host or support at least two Aboriginal performances or shows at Her Majesty's Theatre Ballarat annually	Year 1
	Undertake advocacy with Visit Victoria to profile state-wide First Nations' tourism	Year 1
	Add Wadawurrung language to the labels of native plant species at the Ballarat Botanical Gardens	Year 2
	Consult with Traditional Owners and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning about their knowledge in emergency management, particularly in reference to land management and controlled burns during off-peak season	Year 1
	Apply 'Designing with Country' principles to our planning processes for open spaces and gardens	Year 1

 <b>Pillar 3: Opportunities</b> <i>"We take a whole-of-organisation approach to promoting reconciliation."</i>		
<b>We will achieve this by:</b>	<b>We will:</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>2. Facilitating improved economic and social outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities</b>	Consider Aboriginal signage and interpretation where possible	Year 1
	Introduce dual language (Aboriginal and English) signage at City of Ballarat Early Years facilities /other facilities	Year 2
	Enable self-determination for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander families by offering a choice of services and referrals to community organisations	Year 1
	Increase participation in library programs by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community by delivering meaningful programs	Year 1

 <b>Pillar 3: Opportunities</b> <i>"We take a whole-of-organisation approach to promoting reconciliation."</i>		
<b>We will achieve this by:</b>	<b>We will:</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>2. Facilitating improved economic and social outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities</b>	Facilitate accessible workshops to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community about the process to nominate for Council and vote in Council elections	Year 2
	Identify opportunities for the City of Ballarat and the Ballarat Chamber of Commerce to establish a mentoring project that links Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander jobseekers to professional mentors	Year 2

 <b>Pillar 4: Truth telling</b> <i>“We support truth telling for a greater understanding of our history and the resilience and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.”</i>		
<b>We will achieve this by:</b>	<b>We will:</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>1. Facilitating education</b>	Share information and support capacity building within the tourism space	Year 1
	Build knowledge about massacre sites with proper acknowledgement of what occurred	Year 1
	Deliver a public truth telling talk/discussion to enable a greater understanding of past and present Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples’ experiences	Year 1
	Feature permanent information about local Aboriginal history as it relates to the goldfields at the Eureka Centre	Year 2
	Deliver at least one local Aboriginal history exhibition or storytelling opportunity about the goldfields	Year 1

 <b>Pillar 4: Truth telling</b> <i>“We support truth telling for a greater understanding of our history and the resilience and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.”</i>		
<b>We will achieve this by:</b>	<b>We will:</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>1. Facilitating education</b>	Appoint an Aboriginal art curator at the Art Gallery of Ballarat	Year 2
	Collaborate with agencies to deliver interactive ways of learning about Traditional Owners at Ballarat libraries	Year 1
	Reintroduce tours and information days about local Aboriginal history facilitated by Traditional Owners for City of Ballarat staff	Year 1
	Make truth telling and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history available on the City of Ballarat website	Year 1
	Co-deliver services for children and families with cultural partners and organisations	Year 1

 <b>Pillar 5: Governance</b> <i>"We commit to monitoring, evaluating and reporting on our progress towards reconciliation."</i>		
<b>We will achieve this by:</b>	<b>We will:</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>1. Establishing and maintaining an effective RAP Working Group to drive governance of the RAP</b>	Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RAP Working Group	Year 1
	Establish and apply Terms of Reference for the RAP Working Group	Year 1
	RAP Working Group to meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor implementation of the RAP	Year 1 and 2
<b>2. Providing appropriate support for the effective implementation of RAP commitments</b>	Define resource needs for implementation of the RAP	Year 1
	Engage City of Ballarat staff and particularly senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments	Year 1
	Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments	Year 1
	Appoint an internal RAP Champion from senior management	Year 1

 <b>Pillar 5: Governance</b> <i>"We commit to monitoring, evaluating and reporting on our progress towards reconciliation."</i>		
<b>We will achieve this by:</b>	<b>We will:</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>3. Building accountability and transparency by reporting on RAP achievements, challenges and learnings internally and externally</b>	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia	Year 1 and 2
	Submit an annual RAP progress report to Council and the Executive Leadership Team	Year 1 and 2
	Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings annually	Year 1 and 2
	Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer survey	Year 2
<b>4. Continuing our reconciliation journey by committing to starting development of our next RAP in a timely way</b>	Register our commitment to develop a new RAP on Reconciliation Australia's website	Year 2

## Appendices

### Core Acknowledgements

The City of Ballarat sincerely thanks everyone who contributed to this plan.

We would like to acknowledge the input of the community and the following groups and organisations in the development of this plan:

- Traditional Owner groups: Ballarat and District Aboriginal Cooperative, Dja Dja Wurrung Traditional Owners and Wadawurrung Corporation
- Koorie Engagement Action Group (KEAG): external advisory group
- City of Ballarat RAP Working Group: made up of representatives from KEAG, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and City of Ballarat senior management

The City of Ballarat sincerely thanks Jenna Oldaker, Wadawurrung Traditional Custodian, for granting permission to use her artwork throughout this document.



**Artwork Name:**  
Kunuwarra (Black Swan)

**Material(s):**

Acrylic on canvas

**Description:**

*Once Bundjil, our Spirit Creator, had finished creating our beautiful Wadawurrung Country and all the living things, he gathered his wives – one of whom was Gunanwarra, the black swan.*

## Glossary

**ATSILIRN** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library, Information and Resource Network

**CALD** Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

**KEAG** Koorie Engagement Action Group

**MOU** Memorandum of Understanding

**NAIDOC** National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee

**NRW** National Reconciliation Week

**RAP** Reconciliation Action Plan

- To receive this document in another format, phone 5320 5500, using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or email the Community Participation Team: [communityengagement@ballarat.vic.gov.au](mailto:communityengagement@ballarat.vic.gov.au).
- This document can also be found in other formats on our website [www.ballarat.vic.gov.au](http://www.ballarat.vic.gov.au).



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August 2022

## 8.2. DRAFT LGBTIQA+ INCLUSION PLAN 2022 - 2026

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

### PURPOSE

1. To provide the draft LGBTIQA+ Inclusion Plan 2022 - 2026 (Plan) for Councillor consideration and to seek approval to place the Plan on public exhibition for community feedback.

### BACKGROUND

2. The LGBTIQA+ Inclusion Plan 2022 – 2026 is an important tool to promote inclusion for LGBTIQA+ people in the City of Ballarat municipality.
3. This is the City of Ballarat's inaugural LGBTIQA+ Inclusion Plan 2022 – 2026 following the establishment of the LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee in 2021.
4. This is a four-year plan with an initial two-year action plan.
5. This Plan forms part of the draft Inclusion Framework, Council's whole-of-organisation approach to inclusion.

### KEY MATTERS

#### Community engagement

6. The LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee has been instrumental in guiding the engagement process and development of the plan.
7. The Inclusive Ballarat engagement process took place between early April and early May 2022, with 886 people providing input across a range of different engagement tools.
8. This data along with engagement with City of Ballarat staff, has informed the development of the following documents:
  - Inclusion Framework
  - Reconciliation Action Plan
  - Intercultural Plan
  - LGBTIQA+ Inclusion Plan
  - Disability Access and Inclusion Plan
  - Ageing Well Strategy
9. Community survey responses from LGBTIQA+ people identify that there are areas for improvement:

- 60 per cent feel valued and accepted in Ballarat
- 53 per cent feel safe in Ballarat
- 75 per cent have experienced discrimination in Ballarat
- 50 per cent believe Council services are inclusive
- 45 per cent believe Council information is accessible and inclusive
- 32 per cent believe that Council buildings are inclusive

10. Other key findings from the engagement include:

- LGBTIQA+ is not a catch-all category: LGBTIQA+ communities are diverse and intersectional. Some LGBTIQA+ people and groups are more marginalised and/or isolated e.g., youth, aged, trans people.
- Engagement with the LGBTIQA+ community is vital to inform inclusive action.
- Education & inclusivity training are essential to creating safer spaces for LGBTIQA+ people.
- LGBTIQA+ visibility and representation through public art/displays, events, photos/communications, flags/stickers, and a diverse workforce are important to normalise gender diversity.

11. Key actions supported by LGBTIQA+ people included:

- Supporting opportunities to connect with others in the LGBTIQA+ community
- Supporting opportunities to increase mental and physical health
- Supporting dedicated LGBTIQA+ spaces
- Supporting amenities inclusive of all genders
- Providing inclusivity training for Council staff
- Consultation and engagement with LGBTIQA+ people
- Displays of flags, posters and safe space stickers
- LGBTIQA+ inclusive public-facing materials such as websites and newsletters
- Support for LGBTIQA+ Days of Significance

### **Key components of the LGBTIQA+ Inclusion Plan 2022 - 2026**

12. The LGBTIQA+ Inclusion Plan is comprised of three key components:

- Principles
- Priority areas
- Two-year action plan

13. The link between the Plan and the Inclusion Framework is detailed explicitly in the LGBTIQA+ Inclusion Plan 2022 - 2026. This Plan incorporates the key principles underpinning the Inclusion Framework:

- a) Our diversity is our strength
- b) Equity
- c) Intersectionality
- d) Diversity and inclusion = business as usual
- e) Strong partnerships
- f) Inclusive engagement

14. An additional principle of 'safety' has been included and is specific to the LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Plan.

15. The LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Plan 2022 – 2026 has four key priority areas that reflect community engagement findings and the Inclusion Framework's common areas for action:

- Safety: "I feel safe and accepted."
- Advocacy and Culture: "The City of Ballarat is recognised as an advocate for LGBTIQ+ people."
- Visibility: "I am visible and can see myself represented in my community."
- Inclusion: "I am supported, consulted and connected with others."

16. The two-year action plan outlines objectives and actions under each of these priority areas:

Priority area	We will achieve this by...
Safety "I feel safe and accepted"	Building the capacity of our staff to promote LGBTIQ+ safety Creating LGBTIQ+ safe spaces Tracking and reporting mechanisms for unsafe behaviour
Advocacy and culture "The City of Ballarat is recognised as an advocate for LGBTIQ+ people"	Advocating on key issues for LGBTIQ+ communities Promoting an inclusive workplace
Visibility "I am visible and can see myself represented in my community"	Ensuring LGBTIQ+ people are visible and represented in Council spaces Ensuring LGBTIQ+ people are visible and represented in public spaces
Inclusion "I am supported, consulted and connected with others"	Supporting LGBTIQ+ people to connect and participate Ensuring that LGBTIQ+ people are informed and consulted

## OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

**17. That Council:**

**17.1 Approve the public exhibition of the draft LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Plan 2022-2026 for a period of four weeks from 26 August to 23 September 2022.**

## ATTACHMENTS

1. Governance Review [**8.2.1** - 3 pages]
2. LGBTIQA Community Consultation Summary [**8.2.2** - 3 pages]
3. LGBTIQ A+ Inclusion Plan 2022–2026 [**8.2.3** - 20 pages]

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**ALIGNMENT WITH COUNCIL VISION, COUNCIL PLAN, STRATEGIES AND POLICIES**

1. This plan was drafted with close reference to the following:
  - Inclusion Framework 2022 – 2026 (Draft)
  - Reconciliation Action Plan 2022-2024 (Draft)
  - Intercultural Plan 2022 – 2026 (Draft)
  - Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022 – 2026 (Draft)
  - Ageing Well Strategy 2022 – 2026 (Draft)
  - Municipal Early Years Plan 2022-2026
  - Youth Strategy 2022-2026 (Draft)
2. This Plan outlines the key work that will be undertaken with one of the priority groups outlined in Council's 10-year Health and Wellbeing Plan and is therefore key to meeting health and wellbeing goals for this priority group.
3. This Plan outlines the actions that will work towards meeting goals 2 and 6 of the Council Plan:
  - a. Goal 2: A healthy, connected and inclusive community
  - b. Goal 6: A Council that provides leadership and advocates for its community

**COMMUNITY IMPACT**

4. Approximately 1 in 10 people in Ballarat identify as being LGBTIQ+.
5. In particular, stigma and discrimination results in LGBTIQ+ people being at higher risk of poorer health and wellbeing outcomes, including mental health ramifications.
6. This Plan seeks to support a culture of inclusion and celebration of our LGBTIQ+ communities.

**CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

7. There are no climate emergency or environmental sustainability implications identified.

**ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

8. There are no economic sustainability implications identified.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

9. Any projects identified from the implementation of the action plan that fall outside of recurrent budget will be subject to a business case approval process.

**LEGAL AND RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

10. There are no legal and risk considerations identified.
11. This Plan assists Council to adhere to the following legislation:
  - *Age Discrimination Act 2004*
  - Australian Government Guidelines on the Recognition of Sex and Gender

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- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- *Marriage Amendment Act 2017*
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*
- *Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*

**HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS**

12. 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**

13. The Inclusive Ballarat engagement process took place between early April and early May 2022, with 886 people providing input across a range of different engagement tools.
14. Engagement with City of Ballarat staff and LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee members was instrumental in developing the two-year action plan.
15. An Engagement Summary is attached to this Council Report.

**GENDER EQUALITY ACT 2020**

16. There are gender equality implications identified for the subject of this report.
  17. Specifically, it is recommended that the LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Plan 2022 - 2026:
    - Recognises key sources of discrimination such as negative community attitudes, reduced access to decision making opportunities, inaccessible information and communication methods, difficult employment or pathways to employment, and public events and activities that are not accessible and/ or inclusive.
    - Recognise that the LGBTIQ+ umbrella term is inclusive of a very diverse mix of people, some of whom are more vulnerable to exclusion and discrimination than others.
    - Recognise the impact of intersectionality of the experiences of LGBTIQ+ people.
    - Includes the development of a Universal Design Policy to guide future practice at the City of Ballarat, along with staff training and associated guidelines relating to engagement, information provision, events and community buildings.
  18. In addition, it is recommended that the implementation of the action plan:
    - Applies a gender lens that recognises the importance of safety including cultural safety, physical safety and social safety barriers to accessibility, and considers times, physical space, communication methods, available transport options, comfort, visibility of diversity etc. for more inclusive programming
    - Is implemented using an intersectional lens to understand and seek to improve inclusion more broadly
- 

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- Occurs in collaboration with members of the Diversity Access Equity and Inclusion Reference Group whenever possible to ensure an intersectional lens
- Seeks input from the LGBTIQ+ community on the delivery of actions (including the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee)

**CONFLICTS OF INTEREST THAT HAVE ARISEN IN PREPARATION OF THE REPORT**

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

**PROCUREMENT COLLABORATION**

**(For Contracts Only)**

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## LGBTIQ+ Community Consultation Summary

### Background

The Inclusive Ballarat consultation engagement process was open from early April until early May 2022. This engagement process was designed to inform the Inclusion Framework and five other plans including the LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Plan.

### Engagement

The engagement process sought input from Ballarat residents through a range of engagement tools including a survey, community conversations, mapping tool, community poll and interactive activities. It specifically attempted to both engage the general community and to target specific groups, including LGBTIQ+ people.

Engagement findings were analysed using a combination of quantitative analysis and qualitative thematic analysis, grouping responses into overarching themes that shaped priorities.

### Demographics

Overall, 886 people provided input to the Inclusive Ballarat engagement process. Demographic information was only collected for those who responded to the survey and some of those who recorded these details for community conversations. This is a trade-off between gathering full demographic data and the provision of a range of methods requiring different levels of input to encourage the broadest possible engagement across the community.

### Community survey

The Community Survey included a number of sections related to inclusion for different groups. These sections included:

- General inclusion questions
- Promotion of reconciliation and better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People
- Inclusion for LGBTIQ+ people
- Inclusion for older people
- Inclusion for people from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds
- Inclusion for people with disability

People were able to choose which sections they wanted to respond to and which questions within those sections they were interested in.

### LGBTIQ+ inclusion inputs

More than 190 inputs were received into the LGBTIQ+ consultation. These inputs include:

- 139 responses to the LGBTIQ+ survey section
- 32 community conversation participants, all of whom were LGBTIQ+ people
- 19 mapping inputs pinpointing LGBTIQ+ inclusive spaces in Ballarat
- A submission and supplementary submission received from the Victorian Pride Lobby.

Within this overall figure, there were:

- LGBTIQ+ community survey section: 55 responses from LGBTIQ+ people, 110 responses with links to the LGBTIQ+ community (including LGBTIQ+ people with links to community)

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- LGBTQIA+ survey combined with community conversations: 87 responses from LGBTQIA+ people, 142 responses with links to the LGBTQIA+ community (including LGBTQIA+ people).

<b>All respondents to LGBTQIA+ inclusion questions</b>		
Gender Total: 171 (survey + conversation)	Age Total: 171 (survey + conversation)	Intersectionality Total: 139 (survey only)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 49 per cent women (n=84)</li> <li>• 25 per cent men (n=42)</li> <li>• 12 per cent non-binary (n=20)</li> <li>• Seven per cent trans (n=12)</li> <li>• Four per cent prefer not to say (n=7)</li> <li>• Two per cent self-described (n=3)</li> <li>• One per cent gender fluid (n=2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nine per cent 12-17 years (n=15)</li> <li>• Six per cent 18-24 years (n=11)</li> <li>• 11 per cent 25-34 years (18.5 averaged)</li> <li>• 28 per cent 35-49 years (48.5 averaged)</li> <li>• 18 per cent 50-59 years (n=31)</li> <li>• 16 per cent 60-69 years (n=27)</li> <li>• Nine per cent 70-84 years (n=15)</li> <li>• Two per cent prefer not to say (n=4)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 29 per cent with a disability (n=40)</li> <li>• 21 per cent culturally and linguistically diverse (n=29) (including self-described other)</li> <li>• Four per cent Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander (n=6)</li> </ul>
<b>LGBTQIA+ respondents</b>		
Gender Total: 87 (survey + conversation)	Age Total: 87 (survey + conversation)	Intersectionality Total: 55 (survey only)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 39 per cent women (n=34)</li> <li>• 23 per cent non-binary (n=20)</li> <li>• 17 per cent men (n=15)</li> <li>• 13 per cent trans (n=11)</li> <li>• 3.4 per cent self-described (one queer, two male sex)</li> <li>• 2 per cent gender fluid (n=2)</li> <li>• 2 per cent prefer not to say (n=2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16 per cent 12-17 years (n=14)</li> <li>• 11 per cent 18-24 years (n=10)</li> <li>• 15 per cent 25-34 years (13.5 averaged)</li> <li>• 29 per cent 35-49 years (25.5 averaged)</li> <li>• 13 per cent 50-59 years (n=11)</li> <li>• Eight per cent 60-69 years (n=7)</li> <li>• Six per cent 70-84 years (n=5)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 38 per cent with a disability (n=21), of these two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (two per cent) and one culturally diverse</li> <li>• 18 per cent culturally and linguistically diverse (n=10)</li> </ul>

### Key Findings

Key findings from the LGBTQIA+ community consultation are outlined below:

#### Community survey

Of LGBTQIA+ respondents:

- 75 per cent have experienced discrimination in Ballarat
- 53 per cent feel safe in Ballarat
- 60 per cent feel valued and accepted in Ballarat

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- 53 per cent feel safe in Ballarat
- 50 per cent believe Council services are inclusive
- 45 per cent believe Council information is accessible and inclusive
- 32 per cent believe that Council buildings are inclusive

Mapping tool

19 places were identified as providing safe spaces for LGBTIQ+ people, including the Ballarat Art Gallery, A Pot of Courage, Betty's Red Star Café, Mallow Pub, Yarrowee River, Barkly Square (two responses), Ballarat Rowing Club, Gov Hub Park, Ballarat Library (two responses), Observatory, Sebastopol Men's Shed, Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre, Buninyong township, Lake Esmond, and Ballarat Botanical Gardens.

General feedback

- LGBTIQ+ is not a catch-all category: LGBTIQ+ communities are diverse and intersectional. Some LGBTIQ+ people and groups are more marginalised and/or isolated e.g. youth, aged, trans people.
- The City of Ballarat should advocate for LGBTIQ+ inclusion at local, state and federal levels, underpinned by continuous engagement and consultation with LGBTIQ+ communities.
- Education & inclusivity training are essential to creating safer spaces for LGBTIQ+ people.
- LGBTIQ+ visibility and representation through public art/displays, events, photos/communications, flags/stickers and a diverse workforce are important to normalise gender diversity.
- LGBTIQ+ friendly information needs a digital and/or physical home, to connect LGBTIQ+ people with supportive services, businesses, events and each other.
- Auditing/reporting mechanisms and up-to-date data are crucial for accountability in LGBTIQ+ inclusive plans, services and infrastructure.
- The most common activities LGBTIQ+ people like to take part are Arts and Culture events (77 per cent), Pride Festivals and events (69 per cent), and small group gatherings (63 per cent).

Key Actions suggested by LGBTIQ+ people

Key actions suggested by LGBTIQ+ people in their survey responses included:

Supporting:

- Opportunities to connect with LGBTIQ+ community (86 per cent of LGBTIQ+ respondents)
- Opportunities to increase mental and physical health (85 per cent)
- Dedicated LGBTIQ+ spaces (79 per cent)
- Amenities inclusive of all genders (77 per cent)

Providing:

- Inclusivity training for all levels of Council staff (83 per cent)
- Consultation and engagement with LGBTIQ+ people (79 per cent)
- Permanent LGBTIQ+ Officer at Council (77 per cent)

Ensuring:

- Displays of flags, posters and safe space stickers (81 per cent)
- Public facing materials (websites, newsletters) are LGBTIQ+ inclusive (77 per cent)
- Support for LGBTIQ+ Days of Significance (69 per cent)
- LGBTIQ+ performers/artists at Council events (67 per cent)

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CITY OF BALLARAT  
**LGBTIQA+**  
**Inclusion Plan**  
**2022–2026**





## Our vision for inclusion

Ballarat is an inclusive city where diversity is not only accepted but welcomed and celebrated.

Our city values the contribution of all people and our spaces, places, programs, events and services are designed to be welcoming and accessible to all.

We recognise that not everyone has the same experience and we work to make sure that people receive the support they need to ensure that no one is left behind.

Our vision for an inclusive Ballarat draws directly from the City of Ballarat Community Vision – a community-driven statement which highlights inclusion as a key part of our city's thriving future.

—  
The City of Ballarat acknowledges the Traditional Owners 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 Peoples.



**Community quotes from the Inclusive Ballarat engagement process can be found throughout this plan...**

*“Inclusion is important because the diversity of our community makes it a better, more interesting and equitable place to live.”*

Community survey

*“Kids are taught that gender diversity exists, but not always taught that it’s also perfectly OK.”*

Community-led conversation

*“When I am included I feel treated with respect, safe to identify as LGBTQIA+, welcomed and recognised, involved in meaningful discussions and decisions that affect me.”*

Community survey

*“I don’t only want to be known as the ‘queer kid’.”*

Community Conversation



**“We aspire to be an inclusive city that celebrates diversity and is safe and welcoming to LGBTQIA+ people.**

**We recognise the significant contribution our LGBTQIA+ community makes to Ballarat being a vibrant community and we celebrate the diversity of our city.**

**For our city to flourish, we must truly embrace and harness diversity and ensure that our LGBTQIA+ community feels supported, connected, visible and, above all, a strong sense of belonging.**

**It is in the best interests of all of us.”**

**Cr Daniel Moloney  
Mayor, City of Ballarat**



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*“There are no losers in this.  
Everybody will benefit.”*

Community-led conversation

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## Why do we have this plan?

Local governments are required by law to protect, improve and promote the health and wellbeing of their communities. Inclusion in community, work, learning and decision making is vital to good health.

As the level of government closest to the people, local government has the greatest opportunity to lead tangible local change by challenging discrimination, and championing increasingly inclusive attitudes and practices that support and celebrate LGBTQIA+ people.

The City of Ballarat acknowledges our responsibility to lead the development of inclusive policies and plans that recognise, respect and value diversity.

We are committed to taking practical actions to support everyone who lives in the municipality to be able to participate fully in life and to feel safe, welcome, visible and included.

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*"Community safety is deeper than rainbow stickers."*

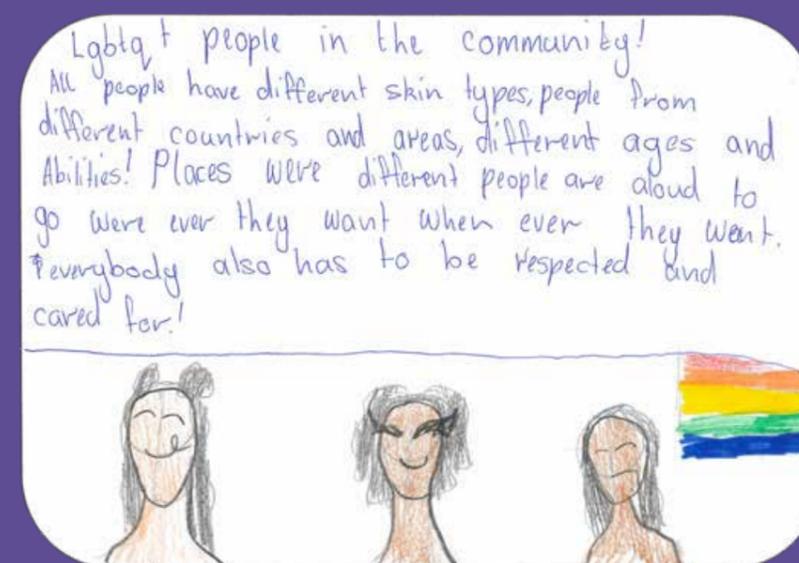
Community-led conversation

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## What is inclusion?

### Inclusion exists when:

- people can see themselves in their community.
- people feel visible and represented.
- people feel safe, included, welcome and accepted in all parts of their lives.
- diversity is celebrated and its value is recognised.
- places, spaces, programs, services and events are accessible, safe and welcoming for everyone.
- everyone can participate fully in life and reach their potential.



Mikayla, grade 5/6

*“Inclusion means removing barriers that stop people from participating or achieving their best.”*

Community survey

*“More acceptance of diverse choices, interests and styles – less staring at people who seem different.”*

Community-led conversation

*“Stepping away from assuming heteronormativity.”*

Community survey

*“We need to be a world designed for everyone.”*

Community survey

## How we talk about inclusion

The words and language we use are important in making sure we are being inclusive in our actions. Below are some terms<sup>1</sup> that are useful to understand when reading this framework.

### Asexual

A term used to describe a sexual orientation that reflects little to no sexual attraction, either within or outside relationships. People who identify as asexual can still experience romantic attraction across the sexuality continuum. While asexual people do not experience sexual attraction, this does not necessarily imply a lack of libido or sex drive.

### Bisexual/Bi

A term that refers to an individual who is sexually and/or romantically attracted to people of the same gender and people of another gender. Bisexuality does not necessarily assume that there are only two genders.

### Cisgender/Cis

A term used to describe people whose gender corresponds to what they were assigned at birth.

### Gay

A term that refers to an individual who identifies as a man and is sexually and/or romantically attracted to other people who identify as men. The term gay can also be used in relation to women who are sexually and romantically attracted to other women.

### Gender/Gender identity

A term used to describe a person's sense of whether they are a man, woman, non-binary, agender, genderqueer, genderfluid, or a combination of one or more of these definitions. Gender can be binary (either a man or a woman), or non-binary (including people who have no binary gender at all and people who have some relationship to binary gender/s).

### Intersectionality

An approach to understanding how social meanings related to the way we categorise and identify can overlap and interconnect. This creates different layers and types of discrimination or disadvantage for either an individual or group. Categories include gender, sexual orientation, sex characteristics, ethnicity, language, faith, class, socioeconomic status, ability and age.

### Intersex

An umbrella term that refers to individuals who have anatomical, chromosomal and hormonal characteristics that differ from medical and conventional understandings of male and female bodies. There are at least 40 different variations that may be apparent at different life stages or may remain unknown to the individual and their medical practitioners. Some people with an intersex variation are LGBTQ, many are heterosexual and most are cisgender.

<sup>1</sup> Australian Institute of Family Studies – LGBTIQ+ Glossary of Common Terms

**Lesbian**

A term that refers to an individual who identifies as a woman and is sexually and/or romantically attracted to other people who identify as women.

**LGBTIQA+**

An acronym that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer/questioning, asexual plus other terms that people identify with regarding their gender and/or sexuality.

**Non-binary**

An umbrella term for gender identities that sit within, outside of, across or between the spectrum of the male and female binary. A non-binary person might identify as gender fluid, trans masculine, trans feminine or could be agender (without a feeling of having any gender or having neutral feelings about gender).

**Queer**

A term used to describe a range of sexual orientations and gender identities. Although once used as a derogatory term and still considered derogatory by many older LGBTIQA+ people, the term queer is now often used as an umbrella term to describe the full range of LGBTIQA+ identities.

**Sex**

A classification that is often made at birth as either male or female based on a person's external anatomical characteristics. However, sex is not always straightforward, as some people may be born with an intersex variation, and anatomical and hormonal characteristics can change over a life span.

**Sexual orientation**

A term that refers to an individual's sexual and romantic attraction to another person. This can include, but is not limited to, heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual and asexual. There are an infinite number of ways in which someone might define their sexuality.

**Trans/transgender**

An umbrella term used to refer to people whose assigned sex at birth does not match their gender identity. Trans people may choose to live their lives with or without modifying their body, dress or legal status, and with or without medical treatment and surgery. Trans people have the same range of sexual orientations as the rest of the population.



## Why is this plan important?

Some groups in our community face greater challenges than others: in learning, working, voicing their opinions and and participating fully in life.

LGBTIQA+ people are more likely to experience discrimination, exclusion and inequality, leading to poorer health and social outcomes. Beyond individual impacts, the broader community misses out on the skills, talents and contribution that LGBTIQA+ people can share when they are part of an inclusive community.

LGBTIQA+ people may need a range of supports to make sure they have the same opportunity to participate and to address discrimination.

The City of Ballarat recognise that there is significant diversity within the LGBTIQA+ community. We also recognise that experiences vary from person to person, and that individual and group requirements are not static and can change over time and across different settings.

## Different people have different needs

We have a responsibility to help people receive the support they need to be able to participate fully in life and ensure that no one is left behind.

## Inclusion is vital to social wellbeing

According to the World Health Organisation, inclusion is vital to social wellbeing: *“Being included in the society in which one lives is vital to the material, psychosocial and political empowerment that underpins social wellbeing and equitable health.”*

## Diversity enriches and strengthens our community

Ballarat’s diverse communities bring a wealth of ideas, experiences, knowledge, creativity and world views that enrich the social, civic, economic and cultural fabric of our city. We have a thriving and growing LGBTIQA+ community in Ballarat. They are active in organising arts and cultural initiatives, providing social opportunities to connect, and establishing LGBTIQA+ organisations and networks that support LGBTIQA+ inclusion.

## Ballarat is a changing and diverse community

About 11,000 LGBTIQ+ people in Ballarat identify as LGBTIQ+. This is approximately 10 per cent of our population and almost double the Victorian average of 5.7 per cent.



**1.8%**  
of residents in Ballarat identify as Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islanders  
*2021 Census*



**11.3%**  
of residents were born overseas (89 different nationalities)  
*2021 Census*



**8.2%**  
Households that speak a language other than English at home  
*2021 Census*



**76**  
different languages spoken by Ballarat residents



**5.8%**  
are preschool aged children  
*2021 Census*



**10.3%**  
are young primary school aged children  
*2021 Census*



**17.8%**  
are young people aged 12-25 years  
*2021 Census*



**22.5%**  
are aged 17 years and under  
*2021 Census*



**24.7%**  
are aged 60+ years  
*2021 Census*



**1 in 6**  
residents live with disability  
*Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing, 2022, People with disability in Australia*



**32%**  
of residents living with disability, have profound disability  
*Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing, 2022, People with disability in Australia*



**9.6%**  
of the residents in Ballarat identify as LGBTIQ+  
*Victorian Population Health Survey*



**19.6%**  
of households earn less than \$650 per week  
*2021 Census*

*"Inclusion is important because the diversity of our community makes it a better, more interesting and equitable place to live."*

Community survey

## What are the key challenges for LGBTIQ+ people?

LGBTIQ+ people are more likely to face barriers to inclusion and experience poorer social and health outcomes than the general population.

They are more likely to experience discrimination, express lower satisfaction with life, experience high or very high psychological distress and experience greater rates of anxiety and depression.

They are more likely to experience family violence, have two or more chronic diseases, live with disability, and experience disadvantage and inequity in employment and financial and housing insecurity.

They are also more likely to experience social isolation due to barriers to participation such as not feeling safe, welcome or accepted.

**The City of Ballarat acknowledges the diversity of LGBTIQ+ communities and that individuals within the communities face specific challenges, experience greater discrimination or are more marginalised than others.**

Rates of psychological distress and discrimination are highest for trans and gender diverse people.

LGBTIQ+ culturally and linguistically diverse people face multiple forms of discrimination in the workplace and feel less comfortable to be 'out' at work.

LGBTIQ+ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People report higher rates of interpersonal violence and can face a lack of acceptance in their own cultural communities.

LGBTIQ+ people with disability report difficulties in managing multiple identities and forms of service provision.

The cumulative effects of lifelong discrimination impact on LGBTIQ+ older people. The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety recognised that older LGBTIQ+ people, along with others from diverse backgrounds, may have varied life experiences and face challenges accessing aged care services that meet their particular needs.

Younger LGBTIQ+ people report feeling unsafe or uncomfortable in educational settings such as high school, especially in rural and regional areas, and report higher levels of poor mental health and homelessness.



## What is our approach?

**"We recognise the important leadership role we play in ensuring that everyone who lives in the municipality has the opportunity to participate in all aspects of community life and fulfil their own aspirations.**

**We will take practical actions within our organisation and in the areas in our community where we have influence, to support our LGBTIQ+ communities and foster a truly inclusive Ballarat.**

**This includes providing inclusive community facilities and public spaces, delivering inclusive services and providing safe and employing people that represent our diverse community."**

**Evan King  
Chief Executive Officer,  
City of Ballarat**



City of Ballarat LGBTQIA+ Advisory Committee

The operation of the following groups demonstrates our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.

**City of Ballarat Gender Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee**

This group is chaired by the City of Ballarat Chief Executive Officer and draws on participation from across Council teams.

**It oversees the organisation’s high-level inclusion work and ensures that legislative requirements are met.**

**City of Ballarat Diversity, Access, Equity and Inclusion Reference Group**

This group was established in 2021. It is made up of staff responsible for the priority group-specific plans that sit within the Inclusion Framework.

**It works to ensure that an intersectional approach to inclusion is taken in the implementation of each plan that sits under the framework.**

**City of Ballarat LGBTQIA+ Advisory Committee**

This group was established in 2021 to provide support and advice on inclusion for LGBTQIA+ people, particularly in relation to City of Ballarat policies, strategies, services and activities. It is made up of people with lived experience, who work or volunteer with LGBTQIA+ people or who have expertise in this area.

**This group has been instrumental in the development of this plan and will play an important role in driving the implementation of the actions in it.**

**City of Ballarat Diversity, Access, Equity and Inclusion Reference Group**

This group was established in 2021. It consists primarily of staff responsible for a broad range or portfolio areas that focus on priority populations for the City of Ballarat including children and families, young people, older people, people from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds, people with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People and LGBTQIA+ people. The reference group members are responsible for plans that sit within Council’s Inclusion Framework. Representative from other relevant Council areas such as recreation, libraries and strategic planning also sit on the reference group.

**This group will work to ensure that an intersectional approach is taken in our inclusion work.**

**The City of Ballarat Inclusion Framework**

The City of Ballarat have developed an Inclusion Framework to guide our inclusion work across a range of priority groups. This involves a whole-of-organisation approach to inclusion. It also involves understanding that people often fit in to several priority groups and that we need to address all the different ways that people face discrimination and exclusion.

This plan forms part of the Inclusion Framework.

## The City of Ballarat Inclusion Framework

### Our vision for inclusion

Ballarat is an inclusive city where diversity is not only accepted but welcomed and celebrated.

Our city values the contribution of all people and our spaces, places, programs, events and services are designed to be welcoming and accessible to all.

We recognise that not everyone has the same experience and we work to make sure that people receive the support they need to ensure that no one is left behind.

### Inclusion principles

-  **Our diversity is our strength**
-  **Equity**
-  **Intersectionality**
-  **Diversity and inclusion is business as usual**
-  **Strong partnerships**
-  **Inclusive engagement**

### Areas for action



### Priority groups and plans

<b>Children and families</b> Municipal Early Years Plan 2022-2026	<b>Young people</b> Youth Strategy 2022-2026
<b>Older people</b> Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy 2022-2026	<b>Women</b> Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025
<b>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People</b> Reconciliation Action Plan 2022-2024	<b>LGBTQIA+ people</b> LGBTQIA+ Inclusion Plan 2022-2026
<b>People from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds</b> Intercultural Plan 2022-2026	<b>People with disability</b> Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022-2026

There is currently no separate plan for the financially vulnerable priority group. This group is considered in the development of each of the plans above.

## Inclusion principles

Our principles are the foundational ideas that shape to our planning and decision-making for our inclusion work.



### Our diversity is our strength

We understand that every person can make valuable contributions, and that diversity strengthens our organisation and our community.



### Equity

We understand that providing a level playing field means providing different supports to different people, based upon need.



### Intersectionality

We acknowledge that people are complex with multiple aspects to their identity. Different aspects of a person's identity can expose them to overlapping forms of discrimination and marginalisation. We will consider the multiple forms of discrimination and disadvantage that may be experienced by our priority groups.



### Diversity and inclusion is business as usual

We will work towards organisational change to ensure that diversity and inclusion are embedded in our policies, processes, programs and services.



### Strong partnerships

We will support and strengthen existing partnerships and seek to form new ones with those working to promote inclusion in the community. We acknowledge the immense amount of work already being done in this area.



### Inclusive engagement

We will engage meaningfully with our community, ensuring that our engagement processes are inclusive and that we engage directly with priority groups on issues that affect them.

**In addition to our overarching inclusion principles, the following principle applies to our work in LGBTQIA+ inclusion.**



### Safety

We recognise that safety is a core requirement to enable LGBTQIA+ inclusion. We will work to promote safety in all environments to ensure that LGBTQIA+ people can participate in all areas of life without fear or risk of discrimination.

## Common areas for action

Our overarching focus for the next four years will be to build organisational knowledge and capacity building to improve inclusive practice in our organisation and promote inclusion in the broader community. To achieve this, we will focus our work on seven key areas which have been developed based on feedback from our community



### 1. We will commit to building organisational knowledge and capacity

We will conduct assessments to understand areas for improvement. We will seek advice from priority groups about how to deliver improvements. We will evaluate our progress and seek to continually fine-tune and improve our practice.

### 2. We will lead and advocate

We advocate for our priority groups and the issues affecting them. We will role model inclusive practice.

### 3. We will provide a diverse and inclusive workplace

We will ensure our staff and volunteer recruitment and workplace policies promote a diverse, safe and welcoming workplace. We will build an inclusive culture and provide inclusive work sites.

### 4. We will provide welcoming and inclusive spaces

We will design and operate our facilities and public spaces to promote safety and inclusion.

### 5. We will provide welcoming and inclusive services and programs

We will work to ensure our services, programs, projects and events are inclusive and welcoming.

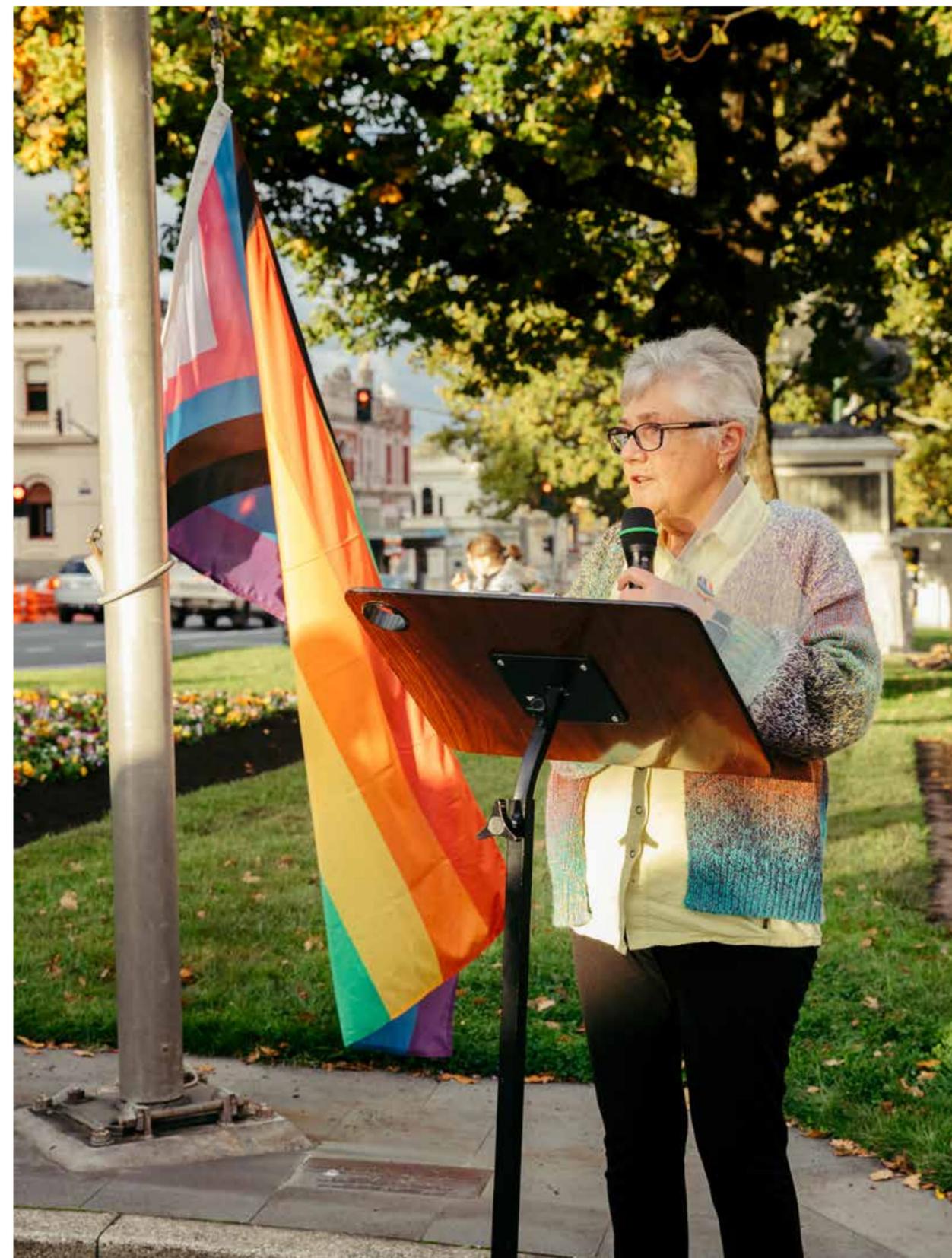
### 6. We will listen to our community

We will work to ensure our engagement practices are inclusive. We will work to ensure that all priority groups have opportunities to advise us directly on the design of inclusive processes, projects, programs and services.

### 7. We will connect our community

We will support opportunities for people to connect with others, with places and with the services they need.

Specific actions that will deliver these capability improvements are detailed in the action plan which can be found on [page 32](#).



## What our community told us

In 2022, a broad community engagement process titled '**Inclusive Ballarat**' was undertaken.

Inclusive Ballarat used a two-phased design approach that involved consultation with the broader community and targeted engagement with people from LGBTIQA+ communities and those connected to them via local networks and groups.

This plan and its two-year action plan have been informed by the key findings from Inclusive Ballarat.

A range of engagement methods and tools were used such as a community survey, community-led conversations and interactive engagement tools.

## We heard...

**75%** of LGBTIQA+ respondents have experienced discrimination in Ballarat

**55%** of LGBTIQA+ respondents feel safe in Ballarat

*"(Language used) Don't use mum and dad all the time. Say can you take that back to your grown up? Don't assume my wife is my mother, sister, friend. Ask me."*

Community survey

*"Roll out inclusion reviews of all Council facilities."*

Community survey

*"Partnering with existing queer owned and run orgs to understand community priorities and to support these through council activities."*

Community survey

*"Work around discrimination and prejudice (both implicit and explicit) is an important step, and it is important for the City of Ballarat and associated organisations to lead this."*

Community-led conversation

*“Consider intersectionality... and embedding LGBTIQA+ inclusion in all areas and not just always creating separate spaces for these conversations.”*

Community-led conversation

*“As with other marginalised groups, please consult extensively, work collaboratively and endeavour to understand the feedback and different world views.”*

Community survey

*“Normalise and promote indicators of allyship – pronouns, rainbow flags, stickers, gender neutral toilets and language.”*

Community survey

*“Staff need to be trained in how to address people – all people.”*

Community survey

*“A place is safe and welcoming when I know there are people who will call out discrimination (including staff and others).”*

Community-led conversation

## We heard...

LGBTIQA+ is not a catch-all category – LGBTIQA+ communities are diverse and intersectional and some LGBTIQA+ people and groups are more marginalised and/or isolated such as young people, older people and trans people.

Advocacy for LGBTIQA+ inclusion by the City of Ballarat must be undertaken at local, state and federal levels and be underpinned by continuous engagement and consultation with LGBTIQA+ communities.

Education and inclusivity training are essential to create safer spaces for LGBTIQA+ people.

LGBTIQA+ visibility and representation through public art and displays, events, photos, communications, flags, stickers and a diverse workforce are important to normalise gender diversity.

LGBTIQA+ friendly information needs a home base to connect LGBTIQA+ people with supportive services, businesses, events and each other.

Suitable auditing and reporting mechanisms and up-to-date data are crucial for accountability in LGBTIQA+ inclusive plans, services and infrastructure.

**Consultation findings from the Inclusive Ballarat engagement process were analysed and responses were grouped into themes that shaped the priority areas. Actions in the two-year action plan were then selected based on priority, feasibility and resourcing.”**



## What are the priorities for the 4-year plan?

### Priority areas

Informed by community engagement, research and review of Victoria's LGBTIQ+ Strategy, our LGBTIQ+ inclusion work over the coming four years will be focused on the following four priority areas.

A two-year action plan outlining actions under each priority area can be found on [page 32](#).

A second two-year action plan will be developed in 2024 and will build on the progress of this first action plan.

Priority areas	
	<p><b>Priority 1: Safety</b></p> <p>“I feel safe and accepted.”</p>
	<p><b>Priority 2: Advocacy and culture</b></p> <p>“The City of Ballarat is recognised as an advocate for LGBTIQ+ people.”</p>
	<p><b>Priority 3: Visibility</b></p> <p>“I am visible and can see myself represented in my community.”</p>
	<p><b>Priority 4: Inclusion</b></p> <p>“I am supported, consulted and connected with others.”</p>

## How will we track our progress?

We will monitor and review our progress against the actions detailed in this plan to ensure it remains relevant and responsive to our community's needs. Our progress will be reported annually to Councillors and made public.

A review of this plan will be undertaken every four years and it will be updated to reflect our improved knowledge, skills and practices. A mid-plan review will inform the development of the next two-year action plan.

## 2-year action plan

 <b>Priority 1: Safety</b> “I feel safe and accepted.”		
We will achieve this by:	We will:	When
<b>1. Building the capacity of our staff to promote LGBTIQ+ safety</b>	Audit existing inclusivity training practices and resources available	Year 1
	Develop and implement general inclusivity training for new staff as part of the onboarding process	Years 1 and 2
	Develop a model of training that provides both general and specific training as required	Year 2
<b>2. Creating LGBTIQ+ safe spaces</b>	Develop a Universal Design Policy to inform the inclusive planning and implementation of Council policies, programs, facilities and services	Year 1
	Include standards for accessible, inclusive and safe facilities in City of Ballarat’s Community Infrastructure Guidelines	Year 1
	Demonstrate City of Ballarat’s commitment to access and inclusion by publicising a statement of commitment across a range of settings (such as facilities, website, social media)	Year 2
	Assess organisational digital safety practices and monitor and respond promptly to any LGBTIQ+ discrimination on Council’s social media	Years 1 and 2
	Provide input into planned upgrades of public spaces to ensure they are LGBTIQ+ safe and inclusive	Years 1 and 2
	Remove discriminatory graffiti promptly	Years 1 and 2
	Review Council’s Public Toilet Strategy to ensure appropriate provision of facilities for all genders	Years 1 and 2
<b>3. Tracking and reporting mechanisms for unsafe behaviour</b>	Working with Victoria Police’s LGBTIQ Liaison Officer, provide information on safety incidents in the community	Years 1 and 2
	Review and then promote Council’s complaints process to ensure that it is clear that it can be used for a range of issues including those related to diversity, equity and inclusion	Year 1

 <b>Priority 2: Advocacy and culture</b> “The City of Ballarat is recognised as an advocate for LGBTIQ+ people.”		
We will achieve this by:	We will:	When
<b>1. Advocating on key issues for LGBTIQ+ communities</b>	Facilitate partnerships with existing business networks, community organisation networks and service networks to promote LGBTIQ+ inclusion	Years 1 and 2
	Be responsive and proactive regarding current LGBTIQ+ issues at state and federal levels (by providing input into submissions, applying for relevant funding, etc)	Years 1 and 2
	Participate in relevant LGBTIQ+ networks such as the LGPro Rainbow Special Interest Group and LGBTIQ+ Rural/Regional Network	Years 1 and 2
<b>2. Promoting an inclusive workplace</b>	Establish baseline data from staff regarding cultural identity, languages spoken, LGBTIQ+ identity, gender, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity and disability to understand the diversity of the organisation	Year 1
	Review Council’s human resources and workplace policies to ensure they are inclusive	Years 1 and 2
	Audit Council workplaces to ensure they are LGBTIQ+ inclusive	Years 1 and 2
	Provide Pride flag option on email signature	Year 1
	Review Council’s Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy	Year 1
	Seek opportunities to showcase diversity in Council staffing	Years 1 and 2
	Establish an internal LGBTIQ+ working group for staff to learn about and provide input into LGBTIQ+ inclusion	Year 1
Recognise City of Ballarat-led initiatives that have demonstrated excellence in embedding access and inclusion for LGBTIQ+ people to promote positive reinforcement	Years 1 and 2	

 <b>Priority 3: Visibility</b> “I am visible and can see myself represented in my community.”		
We will achieve this by:	We will:	When
<b>1. Ensuring LGBTQIA+ people are visible and represented in Council spaces</b>	Create a calendar of inclusion-related days of significance and resources to promote a whole-of-organisation approach to marking the day	Years 1 and 2
	Develop and implement guidelines to ensure that information provided by the City of Ballarat is inclusive and accessible	Year 1
	Develop a library of images representing our diverse community for use in Council publications and communications	Year 1
	Explore current facility audit tools and ways to incorporate more inclusive assessments	Year 1
	Review accessibility and inclusivity of City of Ballarat facilities, such as the libraries, Ballarat Aquatic and Lifestyle Centre and the Art Gallery.	Years 1 and 2
	Feature LGBTQIA+ welcoming signage in Council buildings and facilities	Year 2
	<b>2. Ensuring LGBTQIA+ people are visible and represented in public spaces</b>	Host Council celebrations of selected LGBTQIA+ Days of Significance
Support community to celebrate LGBTQIA+ days of significance by publicising avenues to book flag raisings, Lake Wendouree fountain lightings and Town Hall clock lightings		Years 1 and 2
Ensure LGBTQIA+ representation in cultural or other days of significance		Years 1 and 2
Increase the visibility of LGBTQIA+ reading resources, with an emphasis on intersectionality and diversity		Years 1 and 2
Investigate opportunities to attract events to Ballarat that highlight and promote inclusivity		Years 1 and 2
Support the installation of a temporary art display for Pride month 2024		Years 1 and 2
In line with the Municipal Early years Plan, identify opportunities for publications, public art and other initiatives for child audiences that celebrate diverse children and families		Years 1 and 2

 <b>Priority 4: Inclusion</b> “I am supported, consulted and connected with others.”		
We will achieve this by:	We will:	When
<b>1. Supporting LGBTQIA+ people to connect and participate</b>	Review grant programs for opportunities to be more inclusive	Year 1
	Promote Council grant programs to LGBTQIA+ organisations	Year 1
	Develop Inclusive Event Guidelines to ensure Council events are inclusive	Year 1
	Develop Inclusive Event Guidelines for community event organisers	Year 2
	Create an LGBTQIA+ section on the Ballarat myCommunity Community Directory website	Year 1
	Investigate opportunities to promote targeted support for LGBTQIA+ groups that are more likely to be marginalised and isolated (such as older people, parents of trans and gender diverse children, etc.)	Years 1 and 2
	Create LGBTQIA+ inclusive programming in Council services	Years 1 and 2
	Trial LGBTQIA+ swim and gym nights at the Ballarat Aquatic & Lifestyle Centre	Year 1
	<b>2. Ensuring that LGBTQIA+ people are informed and consulted</b>	Continue to support the LGBTQIA+ Advisory Committee
Develop and implement guidelines for improving the inclusivity and accessibility of information provided by Council		Year 1
In line with the Municipal Early Years Plan, ensure that online information for families, children and young people is LGBTQIA+ inclusive		Years 1 and 2
Develop and implement guidelines to ensure City of Ballarat engagement practices are accessible and inclusive		Year 1
Identify and implement accessibility improvements to the City of Ballarat website		Years 1 and 2
Develop an organisational Language Services Policy		Years 1 and 2

## Appendices

### Where this fits within the wider policy context

Commonwealth and Victorian legislation and guidelines are in place to ensure that human rights are upheld and to safeguard against discrimination and promote rights and equality for LGBTIQ+ people.



#### Commonwealth

- Age Discrimination Act 2004
- Australian Government Guidelines on the Recognition of Sex and Gender
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Marriage Amendment Act 2017
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (amended 2013)



#### Victoria

- Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (amended 2011)



## Acknowledgements

This plan is informed by detailed research and policy analysis together with community engagement to ensure that it reflects the needs and aspirations of the diverse communities living in Ballarat.

### The City of Ballarat sincerely thanks everyone who contributed to this plan.

We would like to acknowledge the input of the community and the following groups and organisations in the development of this plan:

- Ballarat High School Pride Group
- City of Ballarat LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee
- Rainbow Coffee Group
- Speak
- Victorian Pride Lobby
- Woodmans Hill Secondary College Pride Group

This plan aligns with:

- Pride in our Future: Victoria's LGBTIQ+ Strategy 2022-2032 and related Rainbow Ready Roadmaps

This plan also acknowledges and draws from the following:

- Federation University's FedPride Strategy 2021-2024
- Rainbow Health Australia's Rainbow Tick Standards
- The Victorian Local Government Association's Rainbow Resource
- The Victorian Pride Lobby initiatives

### Sources

- Australian Institute of Family Studies, LGBTIQ+ glossary of common terms
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- Lyons et al, 2019, Recent versus lifetime experiences of discrimination and the mental and physical health of older lesbian women and gay men,
- Victorian Agency for Health and Information, 2017, The health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer population in Victoria – Findings from the Victorian Population Health Survey
- LaTrobe University, 2021, Writing Themselves in 4 Report

- To receive this document in another format, phone 5320 5500, using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or email the Community Participation Team: [communityengagement@ballarat.vic.gov.au](mailto:communityengagement@ballarat.vic.gov.au).
- This document can also be found in other formats on our website [www.ballarat.vic.gov.au](http://www.ballarat.vic.gov.au).



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August 2022

### 8.3. DRAFT INCLUSION FRAMEWORK 2022 - 2026

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

#### PURPOSE

1. To provide the draft Inclusion Framework 2022 – 2026 (Framework) for Councillor consideration and to seek approval to place the Framework on public exhibition for community feedback.

#### BACKGROUND

2. The City of Ballarat has resourced a range of inclusion-related portfolio areas including child, family and youth services, ageing well, disability access and inclusion, LGBTIQ+ inclusion, gender equity, intercultural services and reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.
3. Recognising that over the course of life people fit in to several of these groups, it is important that the City of Ballarat take a coordinated approach to ensuring that our organisation and community are inclusive.
4. The Inclusion Framework 2022 – 2026 provides a structure for each of these areas to progress in a coordinated and aligned manner and encourages consideration of the impacts that possessing a number of these characteristics and identities can have on a person's experience.
5. The Inclusion Framework 2022 –2026 will be reviewed in four years.

#### KEY MATTERS

##### Community Engagement

6. The Inclusive Ballarat consultation engagement process was open from early April until early May 2022. This engagement process was designed to inform the following plans:
  - Inclusion Framework
  - Disability Access and Inclusion Plan
  - LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Plan
  - Ageing Well Strategy
  - Reconciliation Action Plan
  - Intercultural Plan
7. The engagement process was a two-phased engagement which attempted to engage the general community (particularly regarding general inclusion sentiment) and to target the specific groups impacted by the plans listed above. A range of methods were

employed including a survey, community-led conversations, a mapping tool, a community poll and interactive activities.

8. Eight hundred and eighty-six (886) people provided input to the Inclusive Ballarat engagement process with the online survey and community-led conversations proving to be the most popular avenues for engagement.
9. Key findings relevant to the Inclusion Framework 2022 – 2026 are summarised in the 'Engagement Summary' document attached to this Report.
10. Acknowledging that the engagement process sought to hear from people who are more likely to be excluded or discriminated against, it is not surprising that engagement results showed that there is some work to do in promoting an inclusive organisation and community.
11. The table below shows the level of agreement with a range of inclusion-related statements. There were 233 responses to the statements regarding the Ballarat area and 231 responses to the statements regarding Council facilities and services.

Statement	Proportion of survey respondents that 'agree' or 'somewhat agree' with the statement
<b>Ballarat is an inclusive city</b>	57%
<b>I feel accepted and valued in Ballarat</b>	58%
<b>I feel safe in Ballarat</b>	58%
<b>I don't feel welcome in Ballarat</b>	21%
<b>I have experienced discrimination in Ballarat</b>	50%
<b>Council services are inclusive</b>	50%
<b>Council sport and recreation facilities are inclusive</b>	43%
<b>Council is an inclusive workplace</b>	21% (42% did not know)
<b>Council information is accessible and inclusive</b>	48%
<b>Council buildings are inclusive</b>	43%

12. When respondents were asked how they feel when they are included, they frequently commented that they felt valued and respected. A sense of safety was often raised, along with feeling supported and cared for. Common responses were:
- Respected and valued
  - Safe, supported and cared for
  - That I belong
  - That I am seen, heard and my needs are considered
  - That I can be actively involved and contribute to my community
13. When asked what inclusion means, respondents overwhelmingly commented that it means that all people have the opportunity to contribute and participate. Common responses were:
- Everyone has the opportunity to contribute and participate
  - That I am accepted as I am
  - That I can have a say and that I am listened to
  - That I am respected and valued
  - That I feel safe
14. When respondents were asked why inclusion is important, the most common response was about the positive societal impacts of an inclusive community. Following the same train of thought, many people made comments referencing the positive impacts on individuals when they are included. Common responses were:
- It creates a more cohesive, vibrant and safer community
  - It makes people feel valued and is important for good health
  - There are serious individual and community consequences when people are excluded
  - All people have the right to feel safe, welcome and accepted in their community

### **Inclusion Framework 2022 –2026 Structure**

15. The Inclusion Framework 2022 –2026 is comprised of five elements:
- Inclusion vision statement
  - Principles
  - Common areas for action
  - Priority groups
  - Specific plans for priority groups
16. The Inclusion vision statement is drawn directly from the Community Vision, which was developed through a deliberative engagement process with a representative community panel in 2021:
- “Ballarat is an inclusive city where diversity is not only accepted but welcomed and celebrated. Our city values the contribution of all people and our spaces, places, programs, events, and services are designed to be welcoming and accessible to all. We recognise that not everyone has the same experience, and we work to make sure that people receive the support they need to ensure that no one is left behind.”*
17. The principles are the foundational ideas that shape planning and decision-making for Council’s inclusion work. These reflect the Inclusive Ballarat engagement findings. They are:

-  **Our diversity is our strength**
-  **Equity**
-  **Intersectionality**
-  **Diversity and inclusion  
= business as usual**
-  **Strong partnerships**
-  **Inclusive engagement**

18. There are seven common areas for action across our inclusion-related portfolios. As the first Inclusion Framework, the City of Ballarat recognises that much of the work at this first stage will be in understanding our current state, learning, and building our capacity to understand and promote inclusion. This is shown as central in the Framework's areas for action, as shown below:



19. The priority groups are drawn from Council's comprehensive 10-year Health and Wellbeing Plan and include:

- Children and families
- Young people
- Older people
- Women
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People
- LGBTIQ+ people
- People from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds
- People with disabilities
- Financially vulnerable people

20. Individual plans for priority groups have been developed that outline the practical actions Council will take over the next several years to work towards the inclusion vision statement. The intersections between the different groups have been considered in the development of these plans. These plans include:

- Municipal Early Years Plan 2022-2026
- Youth Strategy 2022-2026
- Ageing Well Strategy
- Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025
- Reconciliation Action Plan 2022-2024
- Intercultural Plan 2022-2026
- Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022-2026
- LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Plan 2022-2026

There is currently no separate plan for the financially vulnerable priority group. This group is considered in the development of each of the plans above.

## OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

### 21. That Council:

**21.1 Approve the public exhibition of the draft Inclusion Framework 2022 –2026 for a period of four weeks from 26 August to 23 September 2022.**

## ATTACHMENTS

1. Template Governance Review (1) [8.3.1 - 2 pages]
2. Engagement summary Inclusion Framework [8.3.2 - 3 pages]
3. COB Inclusion Framework 2022–2026 [8.3.3 - 20 pages]

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**ALIGNMENT WITH COUNCIL VISION, COUNCIL PLAN, STRATEGIES AND POLICIES**

1. This Framework provides a roadmap for how we will implement the inclusion-related components of the Community Vision. The inclusion vision statement of the Inclusion Framework 2022 - 2026 is drawn directly from the Community Vision.
2. This Framework aligns our inclusion work with other work being undertaken in the health and wellbeing space with the priority groups outlined in the 10-year Health and Wellbeing Plan.
3. This Framework and the plans within outline the actions that will work towards meeting goals 2 and 6 of the Council Plan:
  - a. Goal 2: A healthy, connected and inclusive community
  - b. Goal 6: A Council that provides leadership and advocates for its community
4. This Framework brings together eight strategic plans that were previously unlinked to ensure that Council's inclusion work is undertaken in a cohesive way that considers intersectionality.

**COMMUNITY IMPACT**

5. This Framework will impact most Ballarat residents given that across the life course, most people will fit in to one or more of the priority groups. Furthermore, promoting an inclusive organisation and community promotes community connection and a sense of belonging.

**CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

6. There are no climate emergency or environmental sustainability implications identified.

**ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

7. There are no economic sustainability implications identified.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8. There are no financial implications identified as each of the plans contained within the Framework were pre-existing and resourced.

**LEGAL AND RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

9. There are no legal and risk considerations identified.

**HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS**

10. 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**

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11. A significant community engagement campaign was undertaken to inform the Inclusion Framework and several of the plans within. Each plan included in the Inclusion Framework has been informed by community engagement and has been or will be subject to a period of public exhibition prior to endorsement.
12. A 'Community Engagement Summary' is attached to this Council Report.

**GENDER EQUALITY ACT 2020**

13. There are gender equality implications identified for the subject of this report.

Specifically, it was recommended that the Inclusion Framework:

- o Include women as a priority group
- o Include LGBTIQ+ people as a priority group and to consider gender beyond the man and woman binary.
- o Be developed in a way that promotes the consideration of intersectionality.
- o Includes the following key principles:
  - Equity – understanding that people require different supports to achieve an even playing field
  - Intersectionality – that the possession of multiple characteristics and identities can compound discrimination and exclusion
  - Strong partnerships – with existing groups and services to strengthen a community approach to inclusion
  - Inclusive engagement – ensuring we are consistently listening to those who are most affected by decisions or actions, and those who face exclusion and/or discrimination. We must also consider how to effectively engage with people who are more likely to experience discrimination and exclusion as part of our everyday engagement practice.
- o Recognise key sources of discrimination such as negative community attitudes, reduced access to decision making opportunities, inaccessible information and communication methods, difficult employment or pathways to employment, and public events and activities that are not accessible and/ or inclusive

**CONFLICTS OF INTEREST THAT HAVE ARISEN IN PREPARATION OF THE REPORT**

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

**PROCUREMENT COLLABORATION**

**(For Contracts Only)**

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## Inclusive Ballarat engagement summary

The Inclusive Ballarat consultation engagement process was open from early April until early May 2022. This engagement process was designed to inform the following plans:

- Inclusion Framework
- Disability Access and Inclusion Plan
- LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Plan
- Ageing Well Strategy
- Reconciliation Action Plan
- Intercultural Plan

The engagement process was a two-phased engagement which attempted to engage the general community (particularly regarding general inclusion sentiment) and to target the specific groups for which the plans listed above apply. Therefore, there are a greater proportion of respondents from each of those target groups that would normally be seen for an engagement process targeted at the general community.

A range of methods were employed including a survey, community-led conversations, a mapping tool, a community poll and interactive activities. Engagement methods were chosen to allow inputs from people in written word, spoken word, through drawings, identifying places on a map and in a range of languages.

Consultation findings were analysed using a combination of quantitative analysis and qualitative thematic analysis, grouping responses into overarching themes that shaped priorities.

### Demographics

Eight hundred and eighty-six (886) people provided input to the Inclusive Ballarat engagement process with the online survey and community-led conversations proving to be the most popular avenues for engagement (Table 1).

Table 1: Engagement by method

Inclusive Ballarat tools	Number of people providing input
Surveys*	256
Conversation Kits	269
Interactive boards	74
Town planning activity*	25
Mapping tool	17
Activity sheets*	29
Written submissions	1
Quick poll	70
First Nations school group consultation	15
Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Postcards	19
Internal RAP workshops	30
Internal RAP survey	102
<b>Total number of people providing input</b>	<b>886</b>
*Town planning activity and activity sheets were both completed by a class of 21 school students. This number has only been counted once in the final sum. One survey was submitted on behalf of 20 people.	

Demographic information is only available for the online survey, which accounts for approximately 29 per cent of respondents. This is a trade-off between gathering full demographic data and the provision of a range of methods requiring different levels of input to encourage the broadest possible engagement across the community.

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Two-hundred and thirty-six survey respondents that provided demographic information as summarised in Table 2:

Table 2: Demographic characteristics of survey respondents

Characteristic	Proportion of survey respondents
<b>Gender</b>	58.9% woman 27.5% man 7.2% non-binary 2.5% self-described 4.2% prefer not to answer
<b>Age group</b>	12-17 years: 0.8% 18-24 years: 3.8% 25-34 years: 9.3% 35-49 years: 34.6% 50-59 years: 19.4% 60-69 years: 17.7% 70-84 years: 11.4% 85+ years: 0.4% Prefer not to answer: 2.5%
<b>Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person</b>	4.6%
<b>Person with disability</b>	25.3%
<b>LGBTIQ+ person</b>	24.5%
<b>Cultural background other than Australian</b>	25%
<b>Parent to a child/children aged 17 years or less</b>	30.4%

### Key Findings

Presented here are the general inclusion results from the Inclusive Ballarat engagement. Summaries have also been prepared in relation to feedback relevant to the:

- Disability Access and Inclusion Plan
- Reconciliation Action Plan
- LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Plan
- Intercultural Plan

Survey respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with a range of statements. Results are summarised in the table below:

Table 3: Survey respondent agreement with inclusion statements

Statement	Proportion of survey respondents that 'agree' or 'somewhat agree' with the statement
<b>Ballarat is an inclusive city</b>	57%
<b>I feel accepted and valued in Ballarat</b>	58%
<b>I feel safe in Ballarat</b>	58%
<b>I don't feel welcome in Ballarat</b>	21%
<b>I have experienced discrimination in Ballarat</b>	50%
<b>Council services are inclusive</b>	50%
<b>Council sport and recreation facilities are inclusive</b>	43%
<b>Council is an inclusive workplace</b>	21% (42% did not know)
<b>Council information is accessible and inclusive</b>	48%
<b>Council buildings are inclusive</b>	43%

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People were asked several questions about inclusion. The key responses are outlined below:

**When I am included, I feel...**

- Respected and valued
- Safe, supported and cared for
- That I belong
- That I am seen, heard and my needs are considered
- That I can be actively involved and contribute to my community

---

*"When I am included, I feel that I am being heard and I am making a difference."*

Community survey response

---

When people were asked how they felt when they were included, they frequently commented that they felt valued and respected. A sense of safety was often raised, along with feeling supported and cared for. They felt that they belonged in the Ballarat community. Many people commented about feeling as though they had been seen and heard, with their needs considered, when they were included. Comments were also made about feeling like they could contribute to the community when they were included.

**Inclusion means...**

- Everyone has the opportunity to contribute and participate
- That I am accepted as I am
- That I can have a say and that I am listened to
- That I am respected and valued
- That I feel safe

---

*"Inclusion means a safe space where I can be who I am without fear, I feel valued and can contribute to the best of my abilities to make everyone feel welcome and feel the same."*

Community survey response

---

When asked what inclusion means to them, respondents overwhelmingly commented that it means that all people have the opportunity to contribute and participate. For a lot of people, inclusion means being accepted as they are and that they can voice their ideas and opinions. Feeling respected, valued and safe were also common responses.

**Inclusion is important because...**

- It creates a more cohesive, vibrant and safer community
- It makes people feel valued and is important for good health
- There are serious individual and community consequences when people are excluded
- All people have the right to feel safe, welcome and accepted in their community

---

*"Inclusion is important because it strengthens the community by giving as many people as possible opportunities to be involved in society and in decision making. It helps foster social responsibility, confidence and wellbeing."*

Community survey response

---

When asked why inclusion was important, the most common response was about the positive societal impacts of an inclusive community. Following the same train of thought, many people made comments referencing the positive impacts on individuals when they are included. The negative impacts on individuals and the broader community (such as mental health impacts) were also cited as reasons why inclusion is important.

## OFFICIAL



CITY OF BALLARAT  
**Inclusion Framework  
2022–2026**





—  
 The City of Ballarat acknowledges the Traditional Owners 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 Peoples.  
 —



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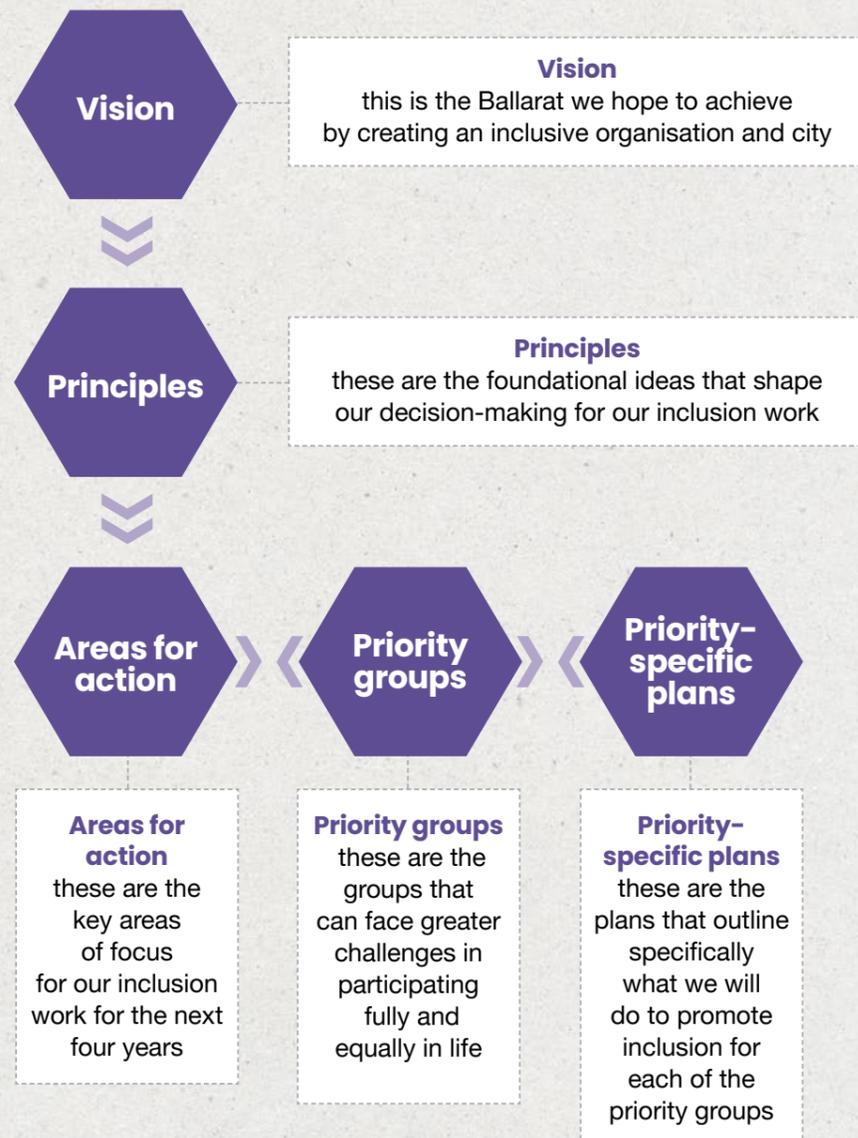
*“There are no losers in this.  
 Everybody will benefit.”*

Community-led conversation

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## Elements of this framework

This framework outlines how the City of Ballarat will work to promote inclusion. There are five different elements in this framework:



## Our vision for inclusion

Ballarat is an inclusive city where diversity is not only accepted but welcomed and celebrated.

Our city values the contribution of all people and our spaces, places, programs, events and services are designed to be welcoming and accessible to all.

We recognise that not everyone has the same experience and we work to make sure that people receive the support they need to ensure that no one is left behind.

Our vision for an inclusive Ballarat draws directly from the City of Ballarat Community Vision – a community-driven statement which highlights inclusion as a key part of our city’s thriving future.



Community quotes and illustrations from the Inclusive Ballarat engagement process can be found throughout this plan...

*“Inclusion is important because the diversity of our community makes it a better, more interesting and equitable place to live.”*

Community survey

*“Inclusion means being seen, heard, and able to feel safe enough to contribute to conversations and community.”*

Community survey

*“People can be included, but not necessarily accepted. This is not true inclusion.”*

Community-led conversation

*“Inclusion means feeling part of the community and not an 'add on' or 'burden'. It should be common practice.”*

Community survey

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*“We recognise diversity as a strength. It enriches our community and makes us better.*

*We will invest in inclusion and equity for groups within our community that presently face greater challenges, discrimination, exclusion or disadvantage than others. For the benefit and wellbeing of all.”*

**Cr Daniel Moloney**  
**Mayor, City of Ballarat**

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## **Why do we have this framework?**

Local governments are required by law to protect, improve and promote the health and wellbeing of their communities. Inclusion in community, work, learning and decision making is vital to good health.

This framework provides the roadmap for how the City of Ballarat will work to achieve our vision for inclusion. It provides a clear structure for our work with and for priority groups and describes the coordinated approach we will take across our organisation.

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**The Framework commits us to do better in removing the barriers to access and inclusion and making sure the voices and aspirations of our diverse communities are reflected within our organisation: in our policies, plans, services and programs and in the decision-making that affects our city and community.**

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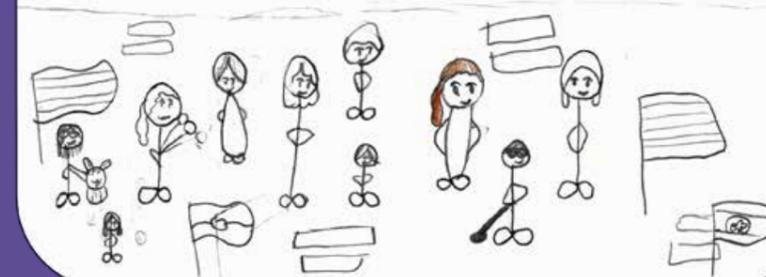


## What is inclusion?

### Inclusion exists when:

- people can see themselves in their community and beyond.
- people feel visible and represented.
- people feel safe, included, welcome and accepted in all parts of their lives.
- diversity is celebrated and its value is recognised.
- places, spaces, programs, services and events are accessible, safe and welcoming for everyone.
- everyone has the opportunity to participate fully in life and reach their potential.

A inclusive Ballarat would include everyone being treated fairly and everyone having a say. As well as everyone being treated with respect.



Jas K, grade 5/6

## How we talk about inclusion

The words and language we use are important in making sure we are being inclusive in our actions. Below are some terms that are useful to understand when reading this framework.

### Inclusion

When people from diverse backgrounds and life circumstances feel valued and respected and are given the support, resources, opportunities they need to learn, work, have a voice and participate fully in life.

### Diversity

The differences between people in factors such as age, caring responsibilities, cultural backgrounds, disability, gender, Indigenous background, sexual orientation and socioeconomic background.

### Equality

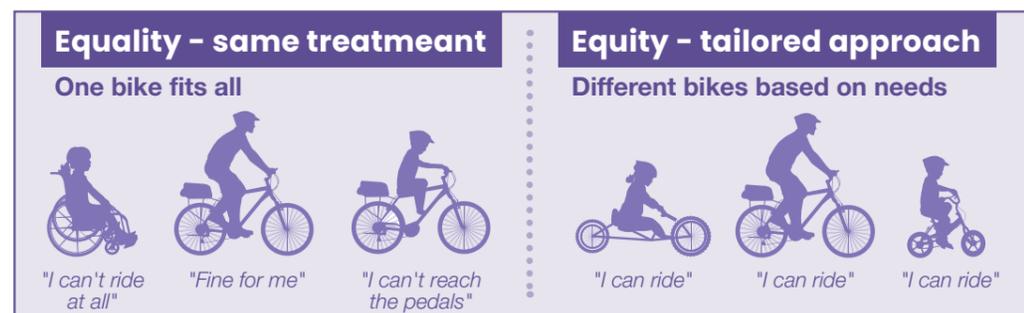
When people are given equal amounts of support based on the assumption that everyone starts with the same levels of resources, opportunities and power. Without first addressing existing imbalances, this approach will result in different outcomes for different people or groups.

### Equity

When the distribution of support, resources and opportunities is based on the recognition that different people or groups start with different levels of resources, opportunities and power, face different barriers, and have different needs, life experiences and access to decision-making. This approach acknowledges that these imbalances should be addressed and that different people or groups may require different considerations to ensure that outcomes are equitable for all.

### Intersectionality

An approach to understanding how different parts of a person's identity can overlap, exposing them to compounding forms of discrimination and marginalisation. Some of these intersecting identities include gender, ability, Indigenous background, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language, faith, socioeconomic status, or age.



## Why is this framework important?

Some groups in our community face greater challenges than others: in learning, working, voicing their opinions and participating fully in life.

They are more likely to experience discrimination and exclusion, leading to poorer individual health and social outcomes. Beyond individual impacts, the broader community misses out on the skills, talents and contributions that people can share when they are part of an inclusive community.

**Inequity occurs when equal treatment for different groups doesn't result in the same outcomes or opportunities. We need to take a different approach to address barriers to inclusion for these groups to make sure everyone has the same opportunity for community involvement.**

The City of Ballarat recognises that there is significant diversity within priority groups as well as cross-over between groups. We also recognise that experiences vary from person to person, and that individual and group requirements are not static and can change over time and across different settings.

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### Different people have different needs

We have a responsibility to help people receive the support they need to be able to participate fully in life and ensure that no one is left behind.

### Inclusion is vital to social wellbeing

According to the World Health Organisation, inclusion is vital to social wellbeing: *“Being included in the society in which one lives is vital to the material, psychosocial and political empowerment that underpins social wellbeing and equitable health.”*

### Diversity enriches and strengthens our community

Ballarat’s diverse communities bring a wealth of ideas, experiences, knowledge, creativity and world views that enrich the social, civic, economic and cultural fabric of our city. Everyone has valuable ideas and perspectives, and a wide range of skills, talents and abilities to share.

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*“We need to be a world designed for everyone.”*

Interactive message board

*“Inclusion means not only making places accessible for those with additional or diverse needs but making it part of the norm.”*

Community survey

*“Inclusion is important because it strengthens the community by giving as many people as possible opportunities to be involved in society and in decision making. It helps foster social responsibility, confidence and wellbeing.”*

Community survey

*“Be your own unique self.”*

School consultation – Year 5/6 student

## Ballarat is a changing and diverse community

Ballarat’s population is becoming more diverse, and we can expect this trend to continue as our population grows and changes. In the five years to 2021, our population grew by more than 12,000 people. In 2006, 8.6 per cent of Ballarat residents were born overseas. In 2021, this had grown to almost 12 per cent. Approximately 10 per cent of Ballarat residents identify as LGBTIQA+ which is significantly greater than the Victorian average of 5.7 per cent. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People make up 1.8 per cent of the population compared to an average of one per cent across Victoria. One in six residents live with disability, equating to approximately 19,000 people. Ballarat has a lower proportion of people in their 30s and 40s (compared with the Victorian average) but a greater proportion of young people aged 10-20 years and people aged 65 and older.



**1.8%**  
of residents in Ballarat identify as Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islanders  
*2021 Census*



**11.3%**  
of residents were born overseas (89 different nationalities)  
*2021 Census*



**8.2%**  
Households that speak a language other than English at home  
*2021 Census*



**76**  
different languages spoken by Ballarat residents



**5.8%**  
are preschool aged children  
*2021 Census*



**10.3%**  
are young primary school aged children  
*2021 Census*



**17.8%**  
are young people aged 12-25 years  
*2021 Census*



**22.5%**  
are aged 17 years and under  
*2021 Census*



**24.7%**  
are aged 60+ years  
*2021 Census*



**1 in 6**  
residents live with disability  
*Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing, 2022, People with disability in Australia*



**32%**  
of residents living with disability, have profound disability  
*Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing, 2022, People with disability in Australia*



**9.6%**  
of the residents in Ballarat identify as LGBTIQA+  
*Victorian Population Health Survey*



**19.6%**  
of households earn less than \$650 per week  
*2021 Census*



## Priority groups

There are some groups in the community that face discrimination and can have fewer resources and opportunities to participate in all areas of life.

To achieve greater social and health equity, some members of these groups need extra support. This support can look different from group to group and within groups.

The City of Ballarat has identified nine priority groups and these are outlined on the following pages.

To meet the distinct needs of each priority group we have developed a plan for each which includes the practical actions we will take over the next four years to achieve our vision for inclusion. The intersections between the different groups have been considered in the development of these plans.

### Children and families

Children aged 12 years or younger make up 16 per cent of Ballarat's population, which is similar to the Victorian average. A healthy start in life is a key factor for ongoing wellbeing. Investing in the early years is recognised as a key contributor to better outcomes in family strengthening, education, health, justice and other areas.

Starting a family is a major life transition. For many families in Ballarat this brings new challenges such as isolation, the potential for mental health issues and increased barriers to employment and study which can lead to reduced income and housing insecurity. Food insecurity and limited housing affordability and accessibility are anecdotally impacting local families. The rate of family violence in Ballarat increased by a third during COVID-19, and children are witness to about 36 per cent of reported family violence incidents. Almost eight per cent of children aged up to 14 years live with disability. The Australian Early Development Census provides a snapshot of children's development over five domains. Results show that Ballarat children are more vulnerable than the average Victorian child in the physical, emotional and language domains, and that a greater proportion of children are vulnerable in two or more domains.

### Young people

Young people aged 12 to 25 years make up 18 per cent of Ballarat's population. This is slightly higher than the Victorian average, potentially reflecting that Ballarat has two universities. Young people move through a range of critical life transition periods and significant life experiences within a short period of time.

Young people face a multitude of personal, community and societal challenges. Key personal challenges include coping with stress, mental and physical health, body image, bullying, social connections and forming respectful relationships. More than nine per cent of people aged 15-24 years live with disability. Within the broader Ballarat community major issues include bullying, poor mental health, alcohol and other drugs and a sense of personal safety. Young people are also concerned about the lack of action by government on climate change and the environment, the impacts of COVID-19 on education and future prospects, and issues of equity and discrimination in the community.

### Older people

Twenty-five per cent of Ballarat's population are aged 60 years or older, compared with the Victorian average of 22.4 per cent. The population is ageing - in 2001 only 18 per cent of the population was aged 60 years or older. Everyone has different experiences of ageing and different aspirations and hopes for how they live their life.

Challenges for people as they age may include increasing financial and physical vulnerability and insecurity around income, health and housing. Fifty per cent of people aged over 65 years live with disability. A significant risk to ageing well is the loss of meaningful relationships and social networks that leads to social isolation and loneliness. Ageism is becoming increasingly recognised as a significant issue and an inhibitor to ageing well. Healthy ageing is about creating environments and opportunities that enable people to be able to do what they value throughout their lives. It extends across the lifespan and is relevant to everyone.



**Financially vulnerable people**

Almost 20 per cent of households in Ballarat earn less than \$650 per week, higher than the Victorian average of 16.4 per cent. Financial wellbeing is essential for ongoing positive health and social outcomes.

Financial vulnerability reduces options in relation to healthy food access, education and employment prospects, transport and housing and impacts participation in society. Financial vulnerability is not experienced equally across the municipality. There are particular areas of the city where people experience greater disadvantage. Sebastopol-Redan and Wendouree are the most socio-economically disadvantaged areas in Ballarat and two of the more disadvantaged areas in Australia. In 2016, 32 per cent of households in Wendouree and Sebastopol-Redan earned less than \$650 per week. Thirteen per cent of households in Ballarat experience housing stress. This increases to 19 per cent in Sebastopol-Redan and 16 per cent in Wendouree.

**Women**

Gender inequities in business, government, sport and recreation, home and caring duties, and media and communications limit women’s access to resources and power.

Major employment and income inequities faced by women include the gender pay gap, lower representation and fewer opportunities in leadership roles, reduced superannuation and inflexible working conditions. Caring roles and responsibilities can lead to fewer working hours, increased load at home, insecure work and financial vulnerability throughout life. Gender inequity is a leading driver

of family violence with 1 in 6 women experiencing violence from a partner. Family violence is also a key cause of homelessness for women and children. In Ballarat, women make up 58 per cent of people accessing specialist homelessness services. The impact of gender inequity can be amplified in women who experience other forms of discrimination such as racism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and ableism.

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People make up 1.4 per cent of the population in Ballarat compared to an average of 1.8 per cent in regional Victoria.

The impact of colonisation, intergenerational trauma and racism have resulted in poorer health and social outcomes for First Nations People including lower average levels of education, employment, income and housing quality compared to the rest of the Australian population. Poorer outcomes are experienced in maternal and child health, child safety, self-reported health, chronic disease, levels of psychological distress, self-harm and life expectancy alongside over-representation in the justice system.

**LGBTIQA+ people**

Approximately 10 per cent of the population of Ballarat (more than 11,000 people) are LGBTIQA+ compared with the state average of 5.7 per cent.

LGBTIQA+ people are more likely to experience discrimination, express lower satisfaction with life, experience high or very high psychological distress and experience greater rates of anxiety and depression. They are more likely to



experience family violence and have two or more chronic diseases. They are also more likely to live with disability. As a diverse group of people, there are sub-groups of the community that experience greater discrimination and challenges to participating fully in life including older people, young people, non-binary and transgender people.

**People from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds**

Ballarat is becoming more culturally diverse. People of 89 different nationalities have made Ballarat their home. Eleven per cent of the population was born overseas, significantly lower than the Victorian average of 30 per cent. Since 2011 almost 70 per cent of migrants living in Ballarat have come to Australia through a skilled migration program. Around 500 residents do not speak English well or at all.

People who were born in another country, speak a language other than English or practise a faith different to the majority of the community often face greater health and social challenges. Discrimination and intolerance can reduce their ability to participate in the community and employment and can provide a barrier to accessing health and social services. Many culturally and religiously diverse residents struggle to find meaningful employment, with previous qualifications, education or training not always recognised. Those who speak no English or English as an additional language face challenges to accessing services, employment and social connection opportunities.

**People with disability**

With 1 in 6 people living with disability, there are around 19,000 people with disability in Ballarat, including more than

6,200 people with severe or profound disability. Disability is a very broad term that covers a range of physical, emotional, intellectual, sensory and neurological conditions. People with disability are a diverse group and, subsequently, individual needs are diverse.

Most people will be affected by disability to varying degrees at some stage in their life on a temporary, transient or permanent basis. People with disability are more likely to experience poorer physical health and mental health, with one in three reporting high or very high levels of psychological distress and many reporting problems gaining timely access to appropriate services. A third of people with disability reported avoiding interactions with family or friends, businesses, work, transport and public spaces in the previous 12 months due to disability. Opportunities to participate in sport, recreation, events and community groups can be limited unless specific interventions are provided to increase accessibility and inclusion. Other factors which can negatively impact the health and wellbeing of people with disability include inappropriate or insecure housing, lower rates of workforce participation, lower levels of education, poor public transport access, cost of public transport, and lack of pathway connections. People with disability are more likely to experience sexual or physical violence, intimate partner violence, emotional abuse or sexual harassment at some point in their lives. Almost half of people with disability have experienced physical violence, and people with disability under the age of 15 years are twice as likely to have experienced abuse. Women with particular disability types can be at even higher risk of violence.



**What is our approach?**

**“We recognise the important leadership role we play in ensuring that everyone who lives in the municipality has the opportunity to participate in all aspects of community life and fulfil their own aspirations.**

**The City of Ballarat’s commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion is demonstrated by our whole-of-organisation approach backed by leadership support.**

**We will take practical actions within our organisation and in the areas in our community where we have influence, to support everyone as we work to foster a truly inclusive Ballarat.**

**This includes providing community facilities and public spaces, delivering services that meet the needs of everyone and employing people who represent our diverse community within our organisation.”**

**Evan King  
Chief Executive Officer,  
City of Ballarat**

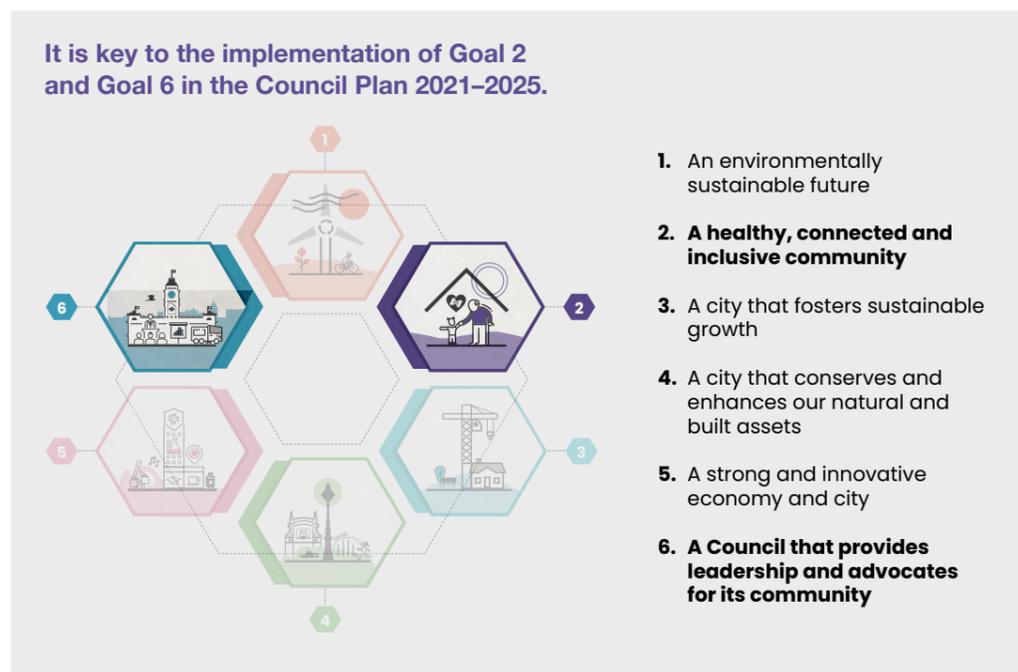
## Where this fits with key City of Ballarat strategic plans

### The Inclusion Framework delivers on our community’s vision for an inclusive Ballarat

This framework provides the roadmap for how we will deliver on our Community Vision 2021–2031 – a community-driven statement that came out of the extensive ‘Ballarat: Our Future’ community engagement process undertaken in 2021 that resulted in almost 2,000 responses from the community and the crafting of priorities by a deliberative community panel:

**Ballarat, Victoria’s heritage city: leading the way as a sustainable, innovative and inclusive community.**

It sets out how we will implement the principles and provide support for the priority groups identified in the **Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2031**.



## City of Ballarat’s Role

Council plays three key roles in the promotion of inclusion in Ballarat:



### > Provider

We provide services, programs and infrastructure. We are the workplace provider for approximately 1,100 staff.



### > Partner

We partner with key stakeholders and community groups to deliver initiatives.



### > Advocate

We advocate to other levels of government and decision-makers to deliver initiatives.

The following groups work to ensure leadership support and a whole of-organisation approach to equity, diversity and inclusion at the City of Ballarat:

### City of Ballarat Gender Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

This group is chaired by the City of Ballarat Chief Executive Officer and draws on participation from across Council teams.

**It oversees the organisation’s high-level inclusion work and ensures that legislative requirements are met.**

### City of Ballarat Diversity, Access, Equity and Inclusion Reference Group

This group was established in 2021. It is made up of staff responsible for the priority group-specific plans that sit within the Inclusion Framework.

**It works to ensure that an intersectional approach to inclusion is taken in the implementation of each plan that sits under the framework.**

*“Work around discrimination and prejudice (both implicit and explicit) is an important step, and it is important for the City of Ballarat and associated organisations to lead this.”*

Community-led conversation



## The City of Ballarat Inclusion Framework

### Our vision for inclusion

Ballarat is an inclusive city where diversity is not only accepted but welcomed and celebrated.

Our city values the contribution of all people and our spaces, places, programs, events and services are designed to be welcoming and accessible to all.

We recognise that not everyone has the same experience and we work to make sure that people receive the support they need to ensure that no one is left behind.

### Inclusion principles

-  **Our diversity is our strength**
-  **Equity**
-  **Intersectionality**
-  **Diversity and inclusion is business as usual**
-  **Strong partnerships**
-  **Inclusive engagement**

### Areas for action



### Priority groups and plans

<b>Children and families</b> Municipal Early Years Plan 2022-2026	<b>Young people</b> Youth Strategy 2022-2026
<b>Older people</b> Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy 2022-2026	<b>Women</b> Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025
<b>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People</b> Reconciliation Action Plan 2022-2024	<b>LGBTIQA+ people</b> LGBTIQA+ Inclusion Plan 2022-2026
<b>People from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds</b> Intercultural Plan 2022-2026	<b>People with disability</b> Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022-2026

There is currently no separate plan for the financially vulnerable priority group. This group is considered in the development of each of the plans above.

## Where this fits within the wider policy context

Commonwealth and Victorian legislation are in place to ensure that human rights are upheld and to safeguard against discrimination and promote rights and equality for all people.



### Commonwealth

- Age Discrimination Act 2004
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1994



### Victoria

- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
- Disability Act 2006
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- Gender Equality Act 2020
- Multicultural Victoria Act 2011
- Racial and Religious Intolerance Act 2001
- Victorian Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005
- Local Government Act 2020



## Inclusion principles

Our principles are the foundational ideas that shape to our planning and decision-making for our inclusion work.



### Our diversity is our strength

We understand that every person can make valuable contributions, and that diversity strengthens our organisation and our community.



### Equity

We understand that providing a level playing field means providing different supports to different people, based upon need.



### Intersectionality

We acknowledge that people are complex with multiple aspects to their identity. Different aspects of a person's identity can expose them to overlapping forms of discrimination and marginalisation. We will consider the multiple forms of discrimination and disadvantage that may be experienced by our priority groups.



### Diversity and inclusion is business as usual

We will work towards organisational change to ensure that diversity and inclusion are embedded in our policies, processes, programs and services.



### Strong partnerships

We will support and strengthen existing partnerships and seek to form new ones with those working to promote inclusion in the community. We acknowledge the immense amount of work already being done in this area.



### Inclusive engagement

We will engage meaningfully with our community, ensuring that our engagement processes are inclusive and that we engage directly with priority groups on issues that affect them.

## Common areas for action

Our overarching focus for the next four years will be to build organisational knowledge and capacity building to improve inclusive practice in our organisation and promote inclusion in the broader community. To achieve this, we will focus our work on seven key areas which have been developed based on feedback from our community



### 1. We will commit to building organisational knowledge and capacity

We will conduct assessments to understand areas for improvement. We will seek advice from priority groups about how to deliver improvements. We will evaluate our progress and seek to continually fine-tune and improve our practice.

### 2. We will lead and advocate

We advocate for our priority groups and the issues affecting them. We will role model inclusive practice.

### 3. We will provide a diverse and inclusive workplace

We will ensure our staff and volunteer recruitment and workplace policies promote a diverse, safe and welcoming workplace. We will build an inclusive culture and provide inclusive work sites.

### 4. We will provide welcoming and inclusive spaces

We will design and operate our facilities and public spaces to promote safety and inclusion.

### 5. We will provide welcoming and inclusive services and programs

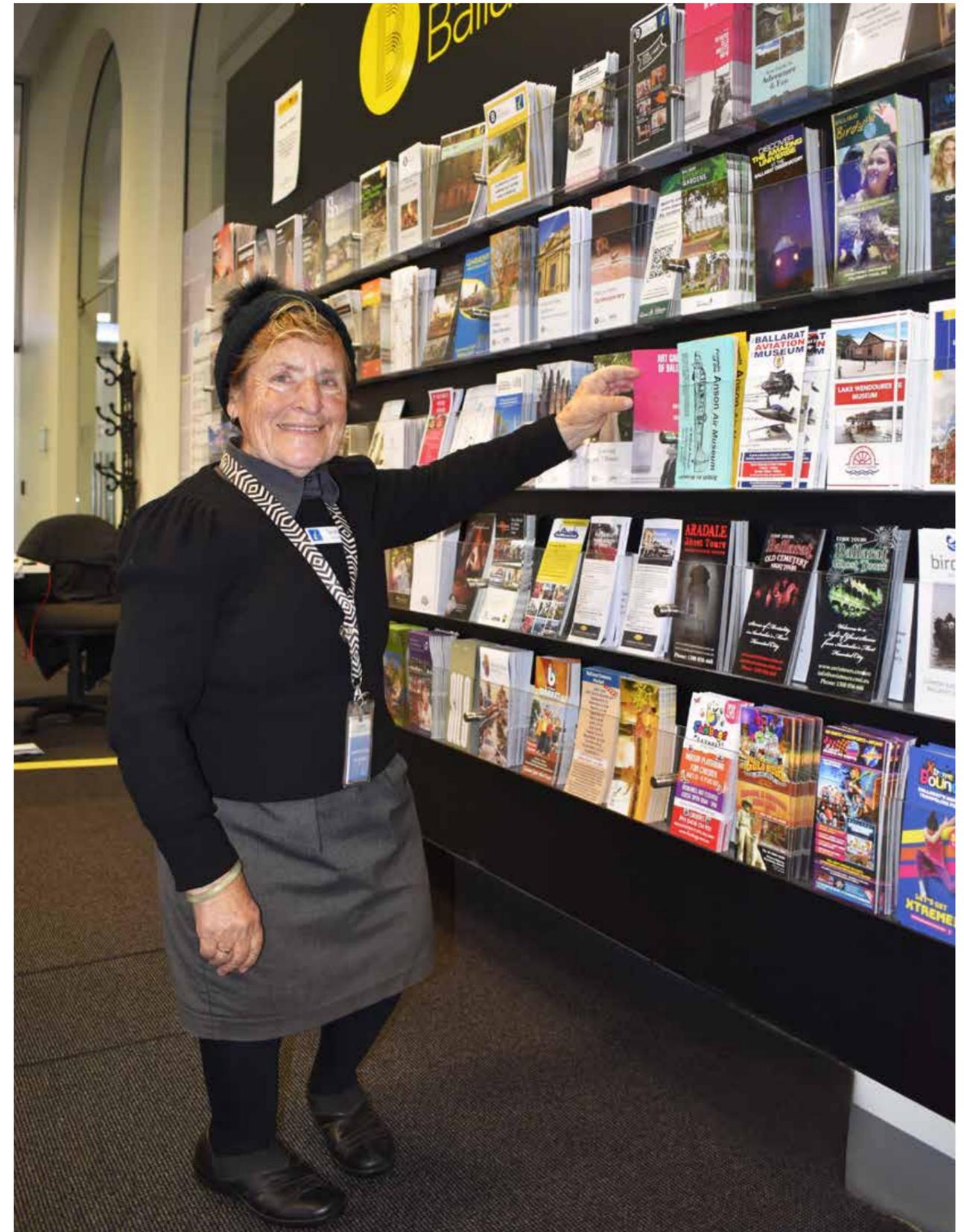
We will work to ensure our services, programs, projects and events are inclusive and welcoming.

### 6. We will listen to our community

We will work to ensure our engagement practices are inclusive. We will work to ensure that all priority groups have opportunities to advise us directly on the design of inclusive processes, projects, programs and services.

### 7. We will connect our community

We will support opportunities for people to connect with others, with places and with the services they need.



## What our community told us

In 2022, a broad collaborative community engagement process titled **'Inclusive Ballarat'** was undertaken.

Inclusive Ballarat used a two-phased design approach that involved consultation with the broader community and targeted engagement with priority groups via local networks and groups. A range of engagement methods and tools were used such as a community survey, community-led conversations and interactive engagement tools.

This Inclusion Framework and the various plans that sit within it have been informed by the key findings from Inclusive Ballarat.

> More than 880 responses were received through the Inclusive Ballarat engagement process.



Rhys, grade 5/6

## We heard...

*"Inclusion means that I am seen and I belong. And I see leaders and decision makers that are actually like me – not just words and statements!"*

Community survey

*"Inclusion means creating a safe space for all people from all walks of life with no judgement."*

Community survey

*"I'm a novelty [in Ballarat] and that's exhausting. Make me 'normal' by using people with disability in your marketing."*

Community-led conversation

*"Inclusion means making everybody feel welcome, culturally safe, able to express ideas and opinions without judgement, creating spaces and events which are accessible to all."*

Community survey

*"Inclusion means awareness and understanding and celebration of all forms of human diversity."*

Community survey

*"Inclusion means allowing people to feel comfortable just as they are, with no preconceived ideas about what they need or how they need to be."*

Community survey

## How will we track our progress?

We will monitor and review our progress against the actions detailed in the various action plans that sit within this framework to ensure it remains relevant and responsive to our community’s needs. Our progress will be reported annually to Councillors and made public.

A review of this framework will be undertaken every four years and it will be updated to reflect our improved knowledge, skills and practices.



Tayla, grade 5/6

## Acknowledgements

This framework is informed by detailed research and policy analysis together with community engagement to ensure that it reflects the needs and aspirations of the diverse communities living in Ballarat.

**The City of Ballarat sincerely thanks everyone who contributed to this Inclusion Framework.**

We would like to acknowledge the input of the community and the many groups and organisations in the development of this framework including:

- City of Ballarat Disability Advisory Committee
- Bigger Hearts Dementia Alliance – Carer Support Group
- Ballarat Mental Health Collective
- Ballarat Working Together Group
- Central Highlands Regional Advisory Group
- Ballarat High School Pride Group
- City of Ballarat LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee
- Rainbow Coffee Group
- Speak
- Victorian Pride Lobby
- Woodmans Hill Secondary College Pride Group
- Grade 5/6B Ballarat North Primary School
- Youth Advisory Board
- Woodman’s Hill First Nations Group
- City of Ballarat Intercultural Advisory Committee
- Filipino Australian Sports Club of Ballarat
- Ballarat Indian Association
- Gurudwara Ballarat
- Ballarat Malayalee Association
- Filipino Australian Association of Australia
- Ballarat African Association
- Ballarat Regional Settlement and Advocacy Committee (BRSAC)
- City of Ballarat’s Intercultural Ambassadors
- Koorie Engagement Action Group

- Ballarat Friends of Ainaro Advisory Committee
- Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council
- Ballarat Community Health
- Ballarat Interfaith Network
- Centre for Multicultural Youth

### Sources

- Australian Bureau of Statistics – Census 2016
- Australian Bureau of Statistics – Census 2021
- Australian Bureau of Statistics – Experiences of violence and personal safety of people with disability 2018
- Australian Government Guidelines on the Recognition of Sex and Gender
- Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing – People with Disability in Australia 2020
- Crime Statistics Agency 2020-21
- Forecast.id Ballarat
- Generation NOW Youth Survey – City of Ballarat
- Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)
- Pride in our Future: Victoria’s LGBTIQ+ Strategy 2022–2032
- Private Lives 3 - The health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ people in Australia 2020
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic)
- The health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer population in Victoria – Findings from the Victorian Population Health Survey 2017
- World Health Organisation – Closing the gap in a generation: health equity through action on the social determinants of health

- To receive this document in another format, phone 5320 5500, using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or email the Community Participation Team: [communityengagement@ballarat.vic.gov.au](mailto:communityengagement@ballarat.vic.gov.au).
- This document can also be found in other formats on our website [www.ballarat.vic.gov.au](http://www.ballarat.vic.gov.au).



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☎ 03 5320 5500 🌐 [ballarat.vic.gov.au](http://ballarat.vic.gov.au)

August 2022

#### 8.4. DRAFT DISABILITY ACCESS & INCLUSION PLAN 2022 - 2026

**Division:** Community Wellbeing  
**Director:** Matthew Wilson  
**Author/Position:** Bernadette Duffy - Community Inclusion Officer

#### PURPOSE

1. To provide the draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022 – 2026 for Councillor consideration and to seek approval to place the Plan on public exhibition for community feedback.

#### BACKGROUND

2. The Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022 - 2026 (DAIP) is a legislative requirement in accordance with section 38 of the *Disability Act 2006*.
3. The DAIP must be prepared for the purpose of:
  - a) reducing barriers to persons with a disability accessing goods, services and facilities.
  - b) reducing barriers to persons with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment.
  - c) promoting inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability.
  - d) achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against persons with a disability.
4. This is the City of Ballarat's fifth DAIP with the last plan concluding this year.
5. This is a four-year plan with an initial two-year action plan.
6. This Plan forms part of the draft Inclusion Framework, Council's whole-of-organisation approach to inclusion.

#### KEY MATTERS

##### Community engagement

7. The Disability Advisory Committee has been instrumental in guiding the engagement process and development of the Plan.
8. The Inclusive Ballarat engagement process took place between early April and early May 2022, with 886 people providing input across a range of engagement tools.
9. This data (along with engagement with City of Ballarat staff) has informed the development of the following documents:

- Inclusion Framework
- Reconciliation Action Plan
- Intercultural Plan
- LGBTIQA+ Inclusion Plan
- Disability Access and Inclusion Plan
- Ageing Well Strategy

10. Community survey responses from people with disability identify that there are areas for improvement:

- Just over two thirds of respondents have experienced discrimination in Ballarat
- Less than half agreed that Council services are inclusive, that Council information is accessible or that Council buildings are inclusive or easy to access
- Around a quarter of respondents agreed that they can access car parks that meet their needs
- Around a quarter of respondents believe that it's easy to attend and participate in public events

11. Other key themes identified from the Inclusive Ballarat engagement results include:

- Disability is diverse
- Ongoing engagement with people with disability will deliver better outcomes
- Some places are accessible, but many could be improved
- There is a role for Council to make improvements while also advocating for changes in other settings (e.g. public transport).

Further information is in the Engagement Summary attached to this Report.

### **Key components of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022 - 2026**

12. The Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022 –2026 is comprised of three key components:

- Principles
- Priorities
- Two-year action plan

13. The link between the Plan and the Inclusion Framework 2022 – 2026 is detailed explicitly in the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022 - 2026. This Plan incorporates the key principles underpinning the Inclusion Framework:

- a) Our diversity is our strength
- b) Equity
- c) Intersectionality
- d) Diversity and inclusion = business as usual
- e) Strong partnerships
- f) Inclusive engagement

14. A further three key principles are specific to the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022 - 2026:

- a) Co-design with people with disability
- b) Accessible communication and universal design
- c) Striving for best practice.

15. The DAIP has five key priority areas that reflect community engagement findings and the Inclusion Framework's common areas for action:

- Leadership: "The City of Ballarat is making access and inclusion a priority."
- Engagement: "I can influence decisions that affect me."
- Information and communication: "I can find the information I need and can see myself represented in my community."
- Employment: "I can work or volunteer with the City of Ballarat."
- Community participation: "I can participate in activities and connect with others in my community."

16. The two-year action plan outlines objectives and actions under each of these priority areas:

Priority area	We will achieve this by...
Leadership "The City of Ballarat is making access and inclusion a priority."	Building the capacity of our staff to support disability inclusion Embedding access and inclusion as business as usual Recognising and celebrating initiatives that support access and inclusion
Engagement "I can influence decisions that affect me"	Engaging people with disability in our planning and decision-making processes
Information and communication "I can find the information I need and can see myself represented in my community"	Improving the quality and accessibility of information we provide Improving our communication
Employment "I can work or volunteer with the City of Ballarat"	Building our knowledge about and promoting staff diversity Creating an increasingly accessible and inclusive workplace Exploring new work and volunteer opportunities for people with disability
Community participation "I can participate in activities and connect with others in my community"	Making City of Ballarat events accessible and inclusive Supporting others to consider and embed access and inclusion in their local events Making our facilities accessible and inclusive Making our community spaces accessible and inclusive Recognising and celebrating people with disability Advocating for improvements to access and inclusion for people with disability

## OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

### 17. That Council:

- 17.1 Approve the public exhibition of the draft Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022-2026 on public exhibition for a period of four weeks from 26 August to 23 September 2022.**

## ATTACHMENTS

1. Template Governance Review (1) [8.4.1 - 3 pages]
2. Consultation Summary People with Disability [8.4.2 - 3 pages]
3. Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022–2026 [8.4.3 - 20 pages]

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**ALIGNMENT WITH COUNCIL VISION, COUNCIL PLAN, STRATEGIES AND POLICIES**

1. This Plan builds on the work of previous Disability Access and Inclusion Plans.
2. Numerous Council plans were reviewed in the development of this Plan. This plan was specifically drafted in collaboration with the following:
  - Inclusion Framework 2022 – 2026 (Draft)
  - Reconciliation Action Plan 2022 – 2026 (Draft)
  - Intercultural Plan 2022 – 2026 (Draft)
  - Ageing Well Strategy 2022 – 2026 (Draft)
3. Other key alignments include:
  - Council Vision 2030
  - Council Plan 2021 – 2025
  - Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021 – 2031
  - Community Infrastructure Plan 2021 – 2036
  - Municipal Early Years Plan 2022 – 2026
  - Community Engagement Framework
  - Libraries and Learning Strategy
  - Gender Equality Action Plan 2021 – 2025
  - Active Ballarat Strategy 2020
  - Ballarat Integrated Transport Action Plan 2020
  - Ballarat Creative City Strategy 2019
  - Ballarat Event Strategy 2018 – 2028
  - Active Women and Girls' Strategy 2018
  - Playspace Planning Framework 2017

**COMMUNITY IMPACT**

4. Approximately 1 in 6 people in Ballarat have a disability which equates to approximately 22,000 people. Ballarat also has higher rates of chronic health conditions than the state average.
5. In addition, universal design is good and inclusive design does not only provide improvements for people with disability. It can also support other priority populations, for example parents with prams, older people, people who are injured or ill, children, people with low literacy or where English is an additional language.

**CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

6. There are no climate emergency or environmental sustainability implications identified.

**ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

7. There are no economic sustainability implications identified.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

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8. Any projects identified from the implementation of the action plan that fall outside of recurrent budget will be subject to a business case approval process.

**LEGAL AND RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

9. There are no immediate risks that have been identified.

**HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS**

10. 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**

11. The Inclusive Ballarat engagement process took place between early April and early May 2022, with 886 people providing input across a range of different engagement tools.
12. Inclusion of people with disability was further supported by the development of an Easy English Book and facilitated community conversations.
13. Engagement with City of Ballarat staff and Disability Advisory Committee members was instrumental in developing the two-year action plan.

**GENDER EQUALITY ACT 2020**

14. There are gender equality implications identified for the subject of this report.

Specifically, it is recommended that the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan:

- o Includes the following specific key principles:
    - co-design with people with disability
    - accessible communication and universal design
  - o Recognises key sources of discrimination such as negative community attitudes, reduced access to decision making opportunities, inaccessible information and communication methods, difficult employment or pathways to employment, and public events and activities that are not accessible and/ or inclusive.
  - o Includes the development of a Universal Design Policy to guide future practice at the City of Ballarat, along with staff training and associated guidelines relating to engagement, information provision, events and community buildings.
  - o Incorporates broader community engagement to build trust and awareness of any changes to the local context, or impacts on particular genders or communities
- 

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- o Is produced in formats that are more accessible for people with disability, but also meets broader accessibility requirements where possible.

In addition, it is recommended that the implementation of the action plan:

- o Applies a gender lens that recognises the importance of safety including cultural safety, physical safety and social safety barriers to accessibility, and considers times, physical space, communication methods, available transport options, comfort, visibility of diversity etc. for more inclusive programming
- o Is operationalised using an intersectional lens to understand and seek to improve inclusion more broadly
- o Occurs in collaboration with members of the Diversity Access Equity and Inclusion Reference Group whenever possible.

**CONFLICTS OF INTEREST THAT HAVE ARISEN IN PREPARATION OF THE REPORT**

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

**PROCUREMENT COLLABORATION**

**(For Contracts Only)**

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## Community Consultation Summary – People with Disability

## Background

The Inclusive Ballarat consultation engagement process was open from early April until early May 2022. This engagement process was designed to inform the Inclusion Framework and five other plans including the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.

## Engagement

The engagement process sought input from Ballarat residents through a range of engagement tools including a survey, community conversations, mapping tool, community poll and interactive activities. It specifically attempted to both engage the general community and to target specific groups, including people with disability, their families and carers. For this reason, it is important to note that people with disability are overrepresented in the survey data at more than 1 in 4 respondents, compared with an expected representation of approximately 1 in 6 people with disability across Ballarat.

Engagement findings were analysed using a combination of quantitative analysis and qualitative thematic analysis, grouping responses into overarching themes that shaped priorities.

## Demographics

Overall, 886 people provided input to the Inclusive Ballarat engagement process. Demographic information was only collected for those who responded to the survey and some of those who recorded these details for community conversations. This is a trade-off between gathering full demographic data and the provision of a range of methods requiring different levels of input to encourage the broadest possible engagement across the community.

## Community survey

The Community Survey included a number of sections related to inclusion for different groups. These sections included:

- General inclusion questions
- Promotion of reconciliation and better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People
- Inclusion for LGBTIQ+ people
- Inclusion for older people
- Inclusion for people from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds
- Inclusion for people with disability

People were able to choose which sections they wanted to respond to and which questions within those sections they were interested in.

Community survey respondents with disability:

- 60 community survey respondents identified as having a disability. Other characteristics of this group included:

Type of disability	Chronic health condition 47% Physical/ mobility 43% Psychosocial 37% Deaf or hard of hearing 22% Sight 6% Intellectual 6%
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity	10 per cent identified as Aboriginal
LGBTIQ+ identity	20 per cent identified as non-binary 37 per cent identified as LGBTIQ+
Family	31 per cent also had a family member with disability

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Community survey respondents with a link to a person with a disability:

- 145 community survey respondents identified a link with people with disability
    - 99 strong family connections or carer roles were reported including being a family member (n=67), carer (n=25) or partner (n=7) of a person with disability
    - 118 other relationships with people with disability were listed including friendships (n=79) and work roles (n=39)
- \* Please note that more than one connection could be selected by individuals

Disability inclusion section of survey

Overall, 87 people completed the disability inclusion section of the community survey. Forty-seven per cent of those respondents identified as having a disability.

### Community Conversations

- 34 community conversation participants were involved in disability specific conversations.

*“Inclusion means not needing to hide in any way; not needing to pretend to be someone else; not needing to spend effort and energy [trying to look] like other people.”*

Community Survey response

### Key Findings

Key findings from the community survey from **respondents with disability**:

- Just over 2 in 3 (67%) have experienced discrimination in Ballarat
- 42 per cent agree or somewhat agree that Council services are inclusive
- 45 per cent agree or somewhat agree that Council information is accessible and inclusive
- 37 per cent agree that it is easy or very easy to access Council information
- 44 per cent agree or somewhat agree that Council buildings are inclusive
- 37 per cent agree that Council buildings are easy to access
- 26 per cent agree that they can access car parks that meet their needs
- 25 per cent agree that it is easy to attend and participate in public events

Key findings from broader consultation, including the community survey:

- Disability is not a catch-all category: People with disability are diverse and their needs are varied. While many people may consider accessibility in relation to mobility (such as wheelchair use), respondents encourage consideration of other requirements beyond this including recognising that for some people their disability is hidden/ invisible.

*“Understand there is a multitude of disabilities, and one size does not fit many.”*

Community Survey response

- Places identified as providing some good accessible features include the library, art gallery, Victoria Park Inclusive Play Space, Ballarat Aquatic and Lifestyle Centre along with some events (e.g., the inclusion of Auslan translation at the Begonia Festival).
- Some key barriers for people with disability are beyond the remit of City of Ballarat, including public transport and private business venues. There is an important role in advocacy for Council.

*“I can’t use public transport, it’s shocking, too hard to get to, no seat at bus stop. Buses hard to get on and off.”*

Community Survey response

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- Suggested improvements Council could make to facilities and services include having sensory friendly environments, accessible information, additional seating, signage, accessible toilets and assistance dog relief areas
- Footpaths and parking are two areas of public space that currently present significant barriers for people with disability, with need for the consideration of the accessibility of the whole journey.  
*“Look at safe pathways to venues from accessible parking or public transport hubs. Wide, flat paths for pedestrians and users of mobility aids need to be part of the planning.”*  
Community Survey response
- People with disability want to attend events but fear that accessibility hasn’t been considered, or don’t know what accessibility features have been included.
- The Council website is particularly problematic for people with disability, and there is an expressed need to have information in various formats, and not only online.  
*“Make things easier to find out about. Currently get lost on your website trying to find things.”*  
Community Survey response
- Engagement with people with disability needs to be ongoing, accessible and provide opportunities for collaboration
- Inclusivity training for staff is needed to reduce barriers for people with disability  
*“I honestly think that inclusion and diversity training and education for staff and the wider community are fundamental to creating longer term change.”*  
Community Survey response
- Most people are unsure whether there are good employment and volunteering options at the City of Ballarat

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CITY OF BALLARAT  
**Disability Access  
and Inclusion Plan  
2022–2026**





## Our vision for inclusion

Ballarat is an inclusive city where diversity is not only accepted but welcomed and celebrated.

Our city values the contribution of all people and our spaces, places, programs, events and services are designed to be welcoming and accessible to all.

We recognise that not everyone has the same experience and we work to make sure that people receive the support they need to ensure that no one is left behind.

Our vision for an inclusive Ballarat draws directly from the City of Ballarat Community Vision – a community-driven statement which highlights inclusion as a key part of our city’s thriving future.

—  
The City of Ballarat acknowledges the Traditional Owners 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 Peoples.



**Community quotes from the Inclusive Ballarat engagement process can be found throughout this plan...**

*“Disability is wide ranging but does not define a person.”*

Community survey

*“Inclusion means feeling part of the community and not an 'add on' or 'burden'. It should be common practice.”*

Community survey

*“By embedding inclusion from the beginning it can be embodied, part of the DNA of how we do things. This is when we will know that it is inclusive.”*

Community-led conversation

*“Not all disability is wheels.”*

Community-led conversation



“ The City of Ballarat recognises the valuable contribution that people with disability make to our community and we celebrate the diversity of our city.

This plan delivers on our community’s vision for a more inclusive Ballarat.

It commits us to do better in removing the barriers to access and inclusion and making sure the voices and aspirations of people with disability are reflected within our organisation.

This includes in our policies, plans, services and programs, and in the decision-making that affects our city and community.”

**Cr Daniel Moloney**  
**Mayor, City of Ballarat**



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*“There are no losers in this.  
Everybody will benefit.”*

Community-led conversation

## Why do we have this plan?

Local governments are required by law to protect, improve and promote the health and wellbeing of their communities. Inclusion in community, work, learning and decision making is vital to good health.

As the level of government closest to the people, local government has the greatest opportunity to lead tangible local change. We can do this by challenging discrimination, and championing inclusive attitudes and practices that support and celebrate people with disability.

The City of Ballarat acknowledges our responsibility to lead the development of inclusive policies, plans, programs and services that recognise, respect and value diversity.

We are committed to taking practical actions to support everyone in the municipality to be able to participate fully in life and to feel welcome, visible, included, accepted and heard.

This plan is a requirement of section 38 of the *Victorian Disability Act 2006*.

## What is inclusion?

### Inclusion exists when:

- people can see themselves in their community.
- people feel visible and represented.
- people feel safe, included, welcome and accepted in all parts of their lives.
- diversity is celebrated and its value is recognised.
- places, spaces, programs, services and events are accessible, safe and welcoming for everyone.
- everyone can participate fully in life and reach their potential.

*“We live in a world designed for able bodied people – we need to be a world designed for everyone.”*

Interactive message board

*“Inclusion means not only making places accessible for those with additional or diverse needs but making it part of the norm.”*

Community survey

*“Make changes so that... any member of this community can walk (or roll) through your door.”*

Interactive message board

## How we talk about disability and inclusion

The words and language we use are important in making sure we are being inclusive in our actions.

**Disability is a very broad term. It has evolved over time and people may have different understandings of this term. In this plan it is used to describe the range of physical, cognitive, sensory, psychosocial and other disabilities people experience, including chronic illness.**

### Social Model of Disability

This plan uses the definition of disability from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This definition recognises that it is the interaction between people with disability and inaccessible communities and environments that prevents full and equal community participation. This is often called the Social Model of Disability which views disability as stemming from communities, services and spaces that are not accessible or inclusive. In this way, it is society that places limits or barriers on people, rather than their disability.

### Person-first language

In this plan we use language that puts the person before their disability such as ‘person with disability’. While some people with disability prefer to use person-first language, others prefer to use identity-first language such as ‘disabled person’. This is because a person’s disability may be a key part of their identity and a way that they form a connection with the disability community. We recognise and respect all people with disability, including those

who may not identify as a ‘person with disability’ but who experience barriers to access and inclusion.

Below are some other terms that are useful to understand when reading this plan.

#### Ableism

Discrimination or prejudice towards people with disability.

#### Accessibility

The practice of making information, activities or environments easy to understand and navigate, meaningful, and usable for as many people as possible.

#### Advocacy

Giving active support to an idea or cause.

#### Changing places

Adult changing facilities specifically designed for people who are unable to use the standard accessible toilets. These facilities include an adult-sized changing table, hoist, peninsula toilet and more circulation space.

**Disability**

The range of physical, cognitive, sensory, psychosocial and other disabilities people experience, including chronic illness.

Disability can be temporary or permanent, something acquired or something that was present from birth.

**Discrimination**

The unfair or prejudicial treatment of people and groups based on characteristics such as ability, race, gender, age or sexual orientation.

**Diversity**

The differences between people in factors such as age, caring responsibilities, cultural backgrounds, disability, gender, Indigenous background, sexual orientation and socioeconomic background.

**Inclusion**

When people feel valued and respected, and have the resources, opportunities and capabilities they need to learn, work, have a voice and participate fully in life.

**Intersectionality**

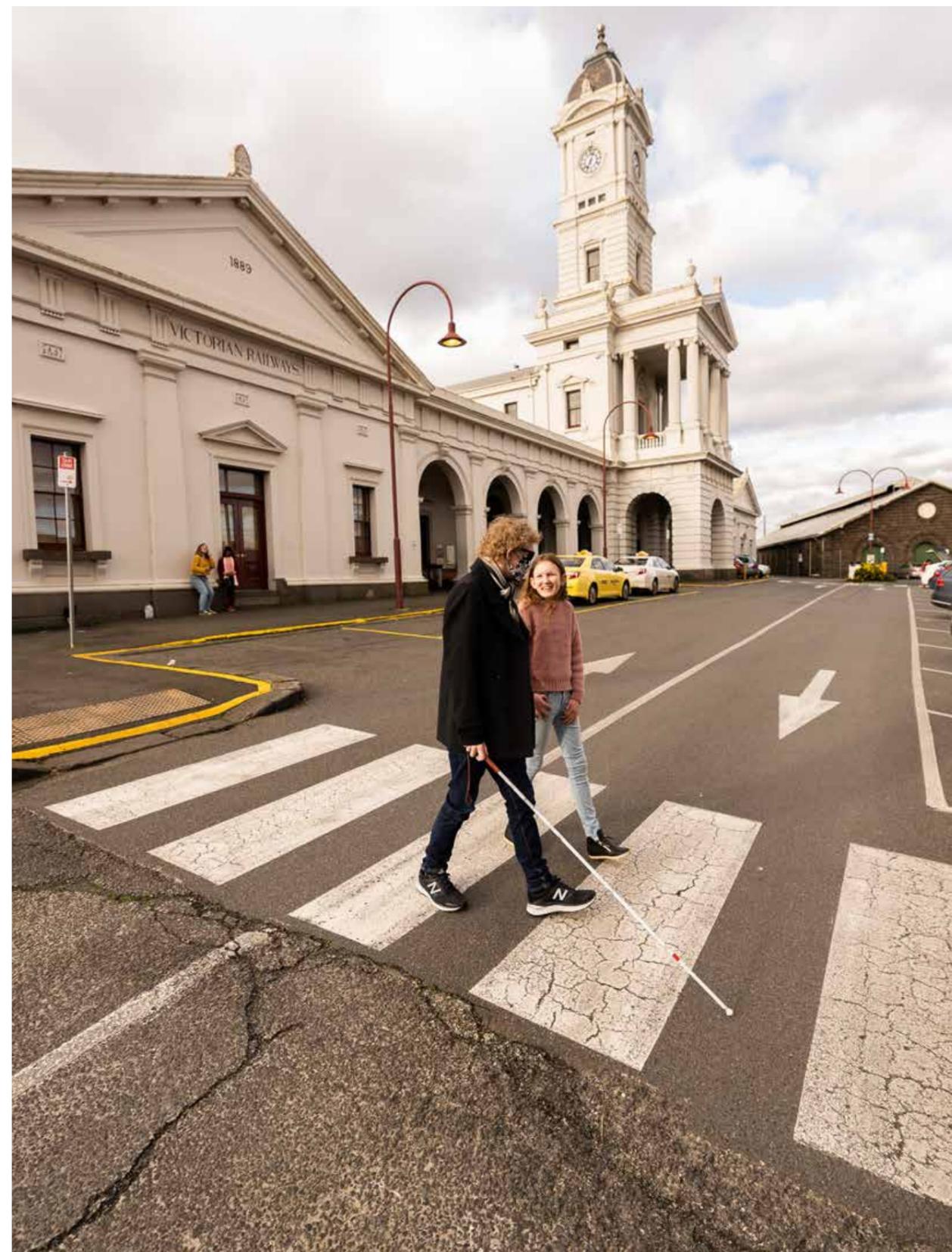
An approach to understanding how different parts of a person’s identity can overlap, exposing them to compounding forms of discrimination and marginalisation. Some of these intersecting identities include gender, ability, Indigenous background, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language, faith, socioeconomic status, or age.

**Participation**

When people join in with others and become involved. This may include having some decision making or planning control over an event or activity or joining in an activity that was planned by others.

**Universal Design**

Designing and creating programs, services, tools and facilities that are useable, without modification, by the widest range of people possible. It involves considering the situation and the people who will use what is being created to design inclusive solutions. Universal Design is not a product, it is the process of good design, which focuses on the needs of people.



## Why is this plan important?

Some groups in our community face greater challenges: in learning, working, voicing their opinions and participating fully in life.

People with disability are more likely to experience discrimination and exclusion, leading to poorer individual health and social outcomes. Beyond individual impacts, the broader community misses out on the skills, talents and contributions that people can share when they are part of an inclusive community.

People with disability may need a range of supports or adaptations to make sure they have the same opportunity to participate.

The City of Ballarat recognises that there is significant diversity among people with disability. We also recognise that experiences vary from person to person, and that individual and group requirements are not static and can change over time and across different settings.

## Different people have different needs

We have a responsibility to help people receive the support they need to be able to participate fully in life and ensure that no one is left behind.

## Inclusion is vital to social wellbeing

According to the World Health Organisation, inclusion is vital to social wellbeing: *“Being included in the society in which one lives is vital to the material, psychosocial and political empowerment that underpins social wellbeing and equitable health.”*

## Diversity enriches and strengthens our community

Ballarat’s diverse communities bring a wealth of ideas, experiences, knowledge, creativity and world views that enrich the social, civic, economic and cultural fabric of our city. People with disability have valuable ideas and perspectives, and a wide range of skills, talents and abilities to share.

## Ballarat is a changing and diverse community

With 1-in-6 people living with disability, there are around 19,000 people with disability in Ballarat. More than 6,000 people with severe or profound disability live in Ballarat.



**1 in 6**

residents live with disability, around one third with a profound or severe disability

AIHW 2022



**1 in 100**

Victorians report having autism, but many people live without diagnosis so rates are expected to be higher

State of Victoria 2019



Just under **2 in 5**

have one or more long term health conditions

ABS 2022



**24%**

of Aboriginal people have a disability, which is twice the rate of the general population

ABS 2019



**38%**

of LGBTQ+ people identify as having a disability or long-term health condition

Victorian Government 2022



Almost **1 in 2 people**

aged 65 years and over have a disability

ABS 2019

### Of people with disability:



For **1 in 4 people**

their main form of disability is mental or behavioural

AIHW 2022



Almost **1 in 3 people**

over 15 years of age avoided situations because of their disability, rising to 2 in 3 people with psychosocial disability

AIHW 2022



Less than **half are employed**

compared with 80% of people without disability

ABS 2019

*“Inclusion is important because the diversity of our community makes it a better, more interesting and equitable place to live.”*

Community survey

## What are the key challenges for people with disability?

People with disability are more likely to face barriers to inclusion and experience poorer mental and physical health outcomes than the general population.

They are more likely to experience sexual or physical violence, intimate partner violence, emotional abuse or sexual harassment at some point in their lives.

They are more likely to experience inappropriate or insecure housing, lower rates of workforce participation, lower levels of education and reduced access to public transport.

Opportunities to participate in sport, recreation, events and community groups can be limited or be perceived to be limited unless specific interventions are provided to increase accessibility and inclusion.

Supporting people with disability to be safe, included and valued benefits the whole community.

**Outcomes for people with disability are not equitable:**

- 1 in 3 people with disability reported high or very high levels of psychological distress.\*
- People with disability experience social isolation at twice the rate of people without disability.\*
- Almost half of people with disability have experienced physical violence since the age of 15. People with disability under the age of 15 are twice as likely to have experienced abuse than people without disability. Women with particular disability types can be at even higher risk of violence.\*
- About 4 in 9 people with disability aged 15 – 64 years reported avoiding interactions with family, friends, businesses, work, transport or public spaces in the previous 12 months due to their disability.\*
- Many people with disability report problems gaining timely access to appropriate services, which is also more difficult in regional and remote areas.^

- Despite the vast majority of people with disability not needing any additional support from their employer (88%) or time off (82%), people with disability are twice as likely to be unemployed as those without disability and are more likely to be underemployed.\*
- For people with autism, rates of unemployment are three times that of other people with disability and more than half have never held a paid job despite their skills, qualifications and interest in being employed.\*\*
- Some individuals are at higher risk of ableism, including people who have invisible disabilities who often feel judged by others.

**People with disability and their needs are diverse. The City of Ballarat acknowledges that some individuals with disability face specific challenges, experience greater discrimination and are at risk of being more marginalised due to other factors such as sexism, ageism, racism and homophobia.**

\*AIHW, 2022, \*\*Amaze, 2019, ^The Social Deck 2019.



## What is our approach?

“We recognise the important leadership role we play in ensuring that everyone who lives in the municipality has the opportunity to participate in all aspects of community life and fulfil their own aspirations.

The City of Ballarat’s commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion is demonstrated by our whole-of-organisation approach backed by leadership support.

We will take practical actions within our organisation and in the areas in our community where we have influence to support people with disability as we work to foster a truly inclusive Ballarat.

This includes providing accessible community facilities and public spaces, delivering services that meet the needs of people with disability and employing people with disability in our organisation.”

Evan King  
Chief Executive Officer,  
City of Ballarat

The operation of the following groups demonstrates our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.

### City of Ballarat Gender Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

This group is chaired by the City of Ballarat Chief Executive Officer and draws on participation from across Council teams.

It oversees the organisation's high-level inclusion work and ensures that legislative requirements are met.

### City of Ballarat Diversity, Access, Equity and Inclusion Reference Group

This group was established in 2021. It consists primarily of staff responsible for a broad range or portfolio areas that focus on priority populations for the City of Ballarat including children and families, young people, older people, people from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds, people with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People and LGBTIQ+ people. The reference group members are responsible for plans that sit within Council's Inclusion Framework. Representatives from other relevant Council areas such as recreation, libraries and strategic planning also sit on the reference group.

It works to ensure that an intersectional approach to inclusion is taken in the implementation of each plan that sits under the framework.

### City of Ballarat Disability Advisory Committee

This group was established in 2004 to provide support and advice on inclusion for people with disability, particularly in relation to City of Ballarat policies, strategies, services and activities. It consists of people with lived experience, who work or volunteer with people with disability or who have expertise in this area.

This group has been instrumental in the implementation of the City of Ballarat Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2017–2021 and the development of this new plan. The Disability Advisory Committee will play an important role in driving the implementation of the actions in this plan.

## The City of Ballarat Inclusion Framework

The City of Ballarat have developed an Inclusion Framework to guide our inclusion work across a range of priority groups. This involves a whole-of-organisation approach to inclusion. It also involves understanding that people often fit in to several priority groups and that we need to address all the different ways that people face discrimination and exclusion.

This plan forms part of the Inclusion Framework.

## The City of Ballarat Inclusion Framework

### Our vision for inclusion

Ballarat is an inclusive city where diversity is not only accepted but welcomed and celebrated.

Our city values the contribution of all people and our spaces, places, programs, events and services are designed to be welcoming and accessible to all.

We recognise that not everyone has the same experience and we work to make sure that people receive the support they need to ensure that no one is left behind.

### Inclusion principles

-  **Our diversity is our strength**
-  **Equity**
-  **Intersectionality**
-  **Diversity and inclusion is business as usual**
-  **Strong partnerships**
-  **Inclusive engagement**

### Areas for action



### Priority groups and plans

<b>Children and families</b> Municipal Early Years Plan 2022-2026	<b>Young people</b> Youth Strategy 2022-2026
<b>Older people</b> Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy 2022-2026	<b>Women</b> Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025
<b>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People</b> Reconciliation Action Plan 2022-2024	<b>LGBTIQ+ people</b> LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Plan 2022-2026
<b>People from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds</b> Intercultural Plan 2022-2026	<b>People with disability</b> Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2022-2026

There is currently no separate plan for the financially vulnerable priority group. This group is considered in the development of each of the plans above.

## Inclusion principles

Our principles are the foundational ideas that shape to our planning and decision-making for our inclusion work.



### Our diversity is our strength

We understand that every person can make valuable contributions, and that diversity strengthens our organisation and our community.



### Equity

We understand that providing a level playing field means providing different supports to different people, based upon need.



### Intersectionality

We acknowledge that people are complex with multiple aspects to their identity. Different aspects of a person's identity can expose them to overlapping forms of discrimination and marginalisation. We will consider the multiple forms of discrimination and disadvantage that may be experienced by our priority groups.



### Diversity and inclusion is business as usual

We will work towards organisational change to ensure that diversity and inclusion are embedded in our policies, processes, programs and services.



### Strong partnerships

We will support and strengthen existing partnerships and seek to form new ones with those working to promote inclusion in the community. We acknowledge the immense amount of work already being done in this area.



### Inclusive engagement

We will engage meaningfully with our community, ensuring that our engagement processes are inclusive and that we engage directly with priority groups on issues that affect them.

In addition to our overarching inclusion principles, the following principles apply to our work in disability access and inclusion.

### Co-design with people with disability

We recognise the importance of placing expertise and lived experiences of people with disability at the centre of decision-making and action. We will engage in authentic and genuine partnerships and power-sharing with people with disability.

### Accessible communication and universal design

We recognise that characteristics such as gender, ability, Aboriginality, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language, faith, socioeconomic status, or age can be a barrier to access and inclusion. We will create processes designed to provide

opportunities for as many people as possible to access information and receive and give feedback. We will also ensure policies, facilities, programs and services are accessible to as many people as possible.

### Striving for best practice

We recognise that best practice requires more than addressing compliance. We will review actions regularly, proactively explore initiatives elsewhere and, where the evidence base is emerging, be brave and innovative.



## Common areas for action

Our overarching focus for the next four years will be to build organisational knowledge and capacity building to improve inclusive practice in our organisation and promote inclusion in the broader community. To achieve this, we will focus our work on seven key areas which have been developed based on feedback from our community



### 1. We will commit to building organisational knowledge and capacity

We will conduct assessments to understand areas for improvement. We will seek advice from priority groups about how to deliver improvements. We will evaluate our progress and seek to continually fine-tune and improve our practice.

### 2. We will lead and advocate

We advocate for our priority groups and the issues affecting them. We will role model inclusive practice.

### 3. We will provide a diverse and inclusive workplace

We will ensure our staff and volunteer recruitment and workplace policies promote a diverse, safe and welcoming workplace. We will build an inclusive culture and provide inclusive work sites.

### 4. We will provide welcoming and inclusive spaces

We will design and operate our facilities and public spaces to promote safety and inclusion.

### 5. We will provide welcoming and inclusive services and programs

We will work to ensure our services, programs, projects and events are inclusive and welcoming.

### 6. We will listen to our community

We will work to ensure our engagement practices are inclusive. We will work to ensure that all priority groups have opportunities to advise us directly on the design of inclusive processes, projects, programs and services.

### 7. We will connect our community

We will support opportunities for people to connect with others, with places and with the services they need.

Specific actions that will deliver these capability improvements are detailed in the action plan which can be found on page 31.



## What our community told us

In 2022, a broad community engagement process titled **'Inclusive Ballarat'** was undertaken.

Inclusive Ballarat used a two-phased design approach that involved consultation with the broader community and targeted engagement with people with disability and those connected to them via local networks and groups.

This plan and its two-year action plan have been informed by the key findings from Inclusive Ballarat.

A range of engagement methods and tools were used such as a community survey, community-led conversations and interactive engagement tools.

## We heard...

### The experiences of people with disability are diverse.

By acknowledging disability as part of the diversity of human experience, we will improve community attitudes and help to embed access and inclusion as business as usual. The need for engagement with people with disability to inform decision making was strongly emphasised by the community to assist with understanding the breadth of experiences.

### Most people don't know if the City of Ballarat is a good place for people with disability to work or volunteer.

People raised concerns about the accessibility of buildings, the breadth of options available and expressed a lack of knowledge about pathways to employment.

### Physical access to facilities is a major concern.

The main concerns raised related to the accessibility of suitable parking, buildings, public toilets, waste disposal and footpaths. Respondents encouraged consideration of the whole journey from home to venue when assessing accessibility.

**Consultation findings from the Inclusive Ballarat engagement process were analysed and responses were grouped into themes that shaped the priority areas of this plan. Actions in the two-year action plan were then selected based on priority, feasibility and resourcing.**

### Many people find accessing City of Ballarat information difficult.

Many survey respondents with disability stated that accessing City of Ballarat information was difficult. The following were raised as areas for improvement: website, promotion of events, broadening of information sources and formats and the representation of diversity.

### Staff awareness and capacity to understand and respond to different needs was highlighted as an area for improvement.

A focus on customer-facing staff as well as those involved in making decisions related to City of Ballarat facilities, programs and services is required to ensure that people with disability can fully participate.

*“Consult with disability advocates and members of the general community with a disability. Listen to real life experience.”*

Community survey

*[Accessibility] information on websites and signage shows - “I’ve thought about you.”*

Community-led conversation

*“Stuff needs to be better for people who need wheelchairs and stuff. My grandma sometimes takes me places but... [we can only go] places it's easy to walk and not lots of steps... if your parents or my grandma are taking you, it's important.”*

Youth Survey

*“Designing for accessible spaces will serve all community members; if a space is designed to be accessible for a range of disabilities it will also be accessible for older people and families with young children. It should be embedded as universal design. Please consider all types of disability, not just physical access needs.”*

Community survey

## What are the priorities for the 4-year plan?

### Priority areas

Informed by community engagement, research and review of the state disability plan, our disability access and inclusion work over the coming four years will be focused on the following five priority areas.

A two-year action plan outlining actions under each priority area can be found on page 31.

A second two-year action plan will be developed in 2024 and will build on the progress of this first action plan.

Priority areas	
	<p><b>Priority 1: Leadership</b></p> <p>“The City of Ballarat is making access and inclusion a priority.”</p>
	<p><b>Priority 2: Engagement</b></p> <p>“I can influence decisions that affect me.”</p>
	<p><b>Priority 3: Information and communication</b></p> <p>“I can find the information I need and can see myself represented in my community.”</p>
	<p><b>Priority 4: Employment</b></p> <p>“I can work or volunteer with the City of Ballarat.”</p>
	<p><b>Priority 5: Community participation</b></p> <p>“I can participate in activities and connect with others in my community.”</p>

## How will we track our progress?

We will monitor and review our progress against the actions detailed in this plan to ensure it remains relevant and responsive to our community’s needs. Our progress will be reported annually to Councillors and made public.

A review of this plan will be undertaken every four years and it will be updated to reflect our improved knowledge, skills and practices. A mid-plan review will inform the development of the next two-year action plan.

## 2-year action plan

	<b>Priority 1: Leadership</b> “The City of Ballarat is making access and inclusion a priority.”	
<b>We will achieve this by:</b>	<b>We will:</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>1. Building the capacity of our staff to support disability inclusion</b>	Audit existing inclusivity training practices and resources available	Year 1
	Develop and implement general inclusivity training for new staff as part of the onboarding process	Year 1
	Develop a model of training that provides both general and specific training as required	Year 2
	Purchase demographic analysis services to better understand the diversity of our community	Years 1 and 2
<b>2. Embedding access and inclusion as business as usual</b>	Develop a Universal Design Policy to inform the inclusive planning and implementation of Council policies, programs, facilities and services	Year 1
	Support the procurement of goods from social enterprises by purchasing a membership to Social Traders	Year 1
	Support the development of social enterprises in Ballarat and support their listing in the Social Traders directory	Year 1
	Seek additional opportunities to embed access and inclusion as early as possible in planning and decision-making processes	Years 1 and 2
	Create a calendar of inclusion-related days of significance with resources to promote a whole-of-organisation approach to marking the days	Years 1 and 2
	Demonstrate City of Ballarat’s commitment to access and inclusion by publicising a statement of commitment across a range of settings (such as facilities, website, social media)	Year 2
<b>3. Recognising and celebrating initiatives that support access and inclusion</b>	Seek to have a new category for access and inclusion added to the Federation University Commerce Ballarat Business Awards	Year 1
	Recognise City of Ballarat-led initiatives that have demonstrated excellence in embedding access and inclusion for people with disability	Years 1 and 2

 <b>Priority 2: Engagement</b> “I can influence decisions that affect me.”		
We will achieve this by:	We will:	When
<b>1. Engaging people with disability in our planning and decision-making processes</b>	Develop and implement guidelines to ensure City of Ballarat engagement practices are accessible and inclusive	Year 1
	Conduct a disability inclusion audit from the perspective of children and young people	Year 1
	Explore and implement further opportunities for people with disability to influence decision-making	Years 1 and 2
	Review and then promote Council’s complaints process to ensure that it is clear that it can be used for a range of issues including those related to diversity, equity and inclusion	Year 1

 <b>Priority 3: Information and communication</b> “I can find the information I need and can see myself represented in my community.”		
We will achieve this by:	We will:	When
<b>1. Improving the quality and accessibility of information we provide</b>	Develop and implement guidelines to ensure that information provided by the City of Ballarat is inclusive and accessible	Year 1
	Develop a library of images representing our diverse community for use in City of Ballarat publications and communications	Year 1
	Identify and implement accessibility improvements to the City of Ballarat website	Years 1 and 2
	Provide links to local information that is relevant to people with disability, on the accessibility webpage on the City of Ballarat website	Years 1 and 2
<b>2. Improving our communication</b>	Audit communication channels used by the City of Ballarat to identify new and improved information-sharing opportunities	Year 1
	Broaden connections with local stakeholders and community groups to improve information sharing with people with disability	Year 1
	Develop an organisational Language Services Policy	Years 1 and 2

 <b>Priority 4: Employment</b> “I can work or volunteer with the City of Ballarat.”		
We will achieve this by:	We will:	When
<b>1. Building our knowledge about and promoting staff diversity</b>	Establish baseline data from staff regarding cultural identity, languages spoken, LGBTIQ+ identity, gender, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity and disability to understand the diversity of the organisation	Year 1
	Seek opportunities to showcase the diversity in City of Ballarat staffing	Years 1 and 2
<b>2. Creating an increasingly accessible and inclusive workplace</b>	Review City of Ballarat’s Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy	Year 1
	Review City of Ballarat’s human resources and workplace policies to ensure they are inclusive	Years 1 and 2
	Engage with current staff and volunteers to better understand the workplace experiences of people with disability, and provide ongoing feedback opportunities	Years 1 and 2
<b>3. Exploring new work and volunteer opportunities for people with disability</b>	Review recruitment and onboarding processes for work placement, employment and volunteer roles at the City of Ballarat to identify areas for improvement	Year 1
	Plan and deliver an accessible holiday program for children at the Art Gallery of Ballarat facilitated by an artist with disability	Year 1
	Explore the potential for expanding volunteer and work placement opportunities across the organisation, including for people with disability outside of school or university settings	Years 1 and 2
	Identify and promote supported pathways to employment for people with disability at City of Ballarat	Years 1 and 2

 <b>Priority 5: Community participation</b> <b>“I can participate in and connect with others in my community.”</b>		
<b>We will achieve this by:</b>	<b>We will:</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>1. Making City of Ballarat events accessible and inclusive</b>	Develop and implement guidelines to ensure that City of Ballarat-led events are accessible and inclusive	Year 1
	Provide a link to accessibility information on the front page of websites that promote City of Ballarat-led events	Years 1 and 2
	Promote accessibility information for City of Ballarat major events using multiple formats and communication tools	Years 1 and 2
<b>2. Supporting others to consider and embed access and inclusion in their activities</b>	Request information about event accessibility on the City of Ballarat event application form	Year 1
	Request information about event accessibility on funding applications through the Tourism Events Grant Program and Strategic Partnerships Program	Year 1
	Review grant programs for further opportunities to be more inclusive	Years 1 and 2
<b>3. Making our facilities accessible and inclusive</b>	Include standards for accessible, inclusive and safe facilities in City of Ballarat’s Community Infrastructure Guidelines	Year 1
	Incorporate accessibility information within the development of the central booking system for Council room and facility hiring	Year 1
	Explore current facility audit tools and ways to incorporate more inclusive assessments	Year 1
	Review City of Ballarat’s Public Toilet Strategy to ensure appropriate provision of accessible facilities	Years 1 and 2
	Review accessibility and inclusivity of City of Ballarat facilities, such as the libraries, Ballarat Aquatic and Lifestyle Centre and the Art Gallery	Years 1 and 2
	Develop resources that promote accessibility features at City of Ballarat facilities such as the Ballarat Aquatic and Lifestyle Centre, libraries, the Eureka Centre and Her Majesty’s Theatre	Years 1 and 2

<b>We will achieve this by:</b>	<b>We will:</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>4. Making our community spaces accessible and inclusive</b>	Seek a suitable location for an assistance dog relief station in the CBD	Year 1
	Construct the Sensory Friendly Zone at the Victoria Park Inclusive Play Space	Years 1 and 2
	Provide input into planned upgrades of public spaces to ensure they are accessible, safe and inclusive	Years 1 and 2
	Review accessible parking provision	Years 1 and 2
<b>5. Recognising and celebrating people with disability</b>	Develop a Footpath Strategy to provide guidance on the scope of footpath work required and the prioritisation of works	Year 2
	Promote the work of the Disability Advisory Committee	Years 1 and 2
<b>6. Advocating for improvements to access and inclusion for people with disability</b>	Support a public event to celebrate International Day of People with Disability	Years 1 and 2
	Advocate for local improvements for areas beyond the remit of local government including for more accessible public transport and health services	Years 1 and 2
	Facilitate partnerships with existing business networks, community organisation networks and service networks to promote accessibility and inclusion	Years 1 and 2

## Appendices

### Where this fits within the wider policy context

This plan responds to and meets requirements of a range of Victorian, Federal and International legislation or policy.

The plan is a requirement of section 38 of the *Victorian Disability Act 2006*.

International conventions and Commonwealth and Victorian legislation and guidelines are in place to ensure that human rights are upheld, to safeguard against discrimination and to promote rights and equality for people with disability.



#### United Nations

- *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*



#### Commonwealth

- *Access to Premises Standards 2010*
- *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992*



#### Victoria

- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*
- *Gender Equality Act 2020*
- *Local Government Act 2020*

**This plan will be registered with the Australian Human Rights Commission.**

This plan also aligns with the national and state plans which provide guidance on actions to improve the lives of people with disability.

## Acknowledgements

**The City of Ballarat sincerely thanks everyone who contributed to this plan.**

We would like to acknowledge the input of the community and the following groups and organisations in the development of this plan:

- City of Ballarat Disability Advisory Committee
- Bigger Hearts Dementia Alliance – Carer Support Group
- Ballarat Mental Health Collective
- Ballarat Working Together Group
- Central Highlands Regional Advisory Group

This plan aligns with the following national and state plans:

- Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031
- Inclusive Victoria: State Disability Plan 2022–2026
- Victorian Autism Plan

#### Sources

- Australian Bureau of Statistics 2022, Ballarat Census All Persons Quickstats
- Australian Bureau of Statistics 2019, Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings
- The Social Deck, 2019, Right to opportunity: Consultation report to help shape the next national disability strategy
- Amaze, 2019, Autism Fast Facts: Employment - Community Attitudes and Behaviours Towards Autism
- Amaze, 2019, Experiences of Autistic People and their Families
- State of Victoria 2019, Victorian Autism Plan
- Victorian Government 2022, Current outcomes for LGBTIQ+ Communities

- To receive this document in another format, phone 5320 5500, using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or email the Community Participation Team: [communityengagement@ballarat.vic.gov.au](mailto:communityengagement@ballarat.vic.gov.au).
- This document can also be found in other formats on our website [www.ballarat.vic.gov.au](http://www.ballarat.vic.gov.au).



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August 2022

## 8.5. DRAFT AGEING WELL IN BALLARAT STRATEGY

**Division:** Community Wellbeing  
**Director:** Matthew Wilson  
**Author/Position:** Cathy Bushell – Ageing Well Officer

### PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this report to present the draft Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy 2022-2026 and the associated Action Plan and to seek approval for the documents to be released to the community for feedback

### BACKGROUND

2. The Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy 2022-2026 has been developed with consideration of best practice in Australia and internationally, the evolving Commonwealth Government aged care reform agenda as well as the Victorian Government focus on creating age friendly communities. It has also been developed with a strong focus on our residents and their feedback.

3. **Community consultation**

The community consultation process for this Ageing Well Strategy started in 2018 with the *Growing Older Well in Ballarat* consultation. Data from this consultation process as well as the *Ballarat: Our Future* consultation undertaken in 2021 was analysed and collated into themes based around the eight WHO age-friendly domains.

Further community consultation was undertaken with specific Ageing Well questions being included as part of the Inclusive Ballarat consultation in April & May 2022.

The *Future Direction for our Ageing Community: Community Voice* consultation process is currently underway (June-July 2022). One area of focus in this consultation is to hear from our service users about what is important to them to age well in Ballarat and their view of the role of City of Ballarat in supporting residents to age well.

Consistent themes and priorities have emerged from engaging with our residents since 2018 and continue to be reflected in our current and continuing conversations with the community. A summary of the community engagement outcomes is provided at [Attachment 1](#).

The Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy 2022-2026 has also been developed with assistance and oversight from a Project Reference Group. The group was established to oversee and help guide the development of the strategy and to provide advice on key issues based on view and feedback from their groups/members.

Members were invited to join the group through a targeted Expression of Interest process to ensure the strategy reflects a wide range of views from across our community including population groups that had not been well-represented in previous

consultation processes. The Project Reference Group met three times between February and May 2022.

A comprehensive internal consultation process with relevant teams in City of Ballarat was also undertaken across April 2022 which helped inform the action plan and provided an opportunity to develop a shared understanding of age friendly approaches, encourage a whole of council approach and to discuss possible areas of action.

## KEY MATTERS

### 4. Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy: Focus Areas and Goals

The Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy presents a vision for our future for Ballarat to be an age-friendly community where people feel valued, connected, included, and respected and feel confident to participate fully in life however they choose.

The strategy includes eight areas of focus based on the WHO age friendly domains. An additional Focus Area has been added which is focused on Leadership and Advocacy. Goals and key priority areas have been developed based on the community feedback, needs and aspirations.

FOCUS AREA	GOALS
<b>PLACES, SPACES AND BUILDINGS</b>	Our places, spaces and buildings are safe, inclusive, easy to navigate and encourage regular use by people of all ages and abilities.
<b>TRANSPORT</b>	Our city has accessible, affordable, inclusive, and relevant transport options that allow people to participate in community life with ease.
<b>HOUSING</b>	Our city has appropriate, affordable, inclusive, and accessible housing options to meet the needs of residents throughout their lives and enables people to age in place.
<b>SOCIAL PARTICIPATION</b>	Our city has a range of inclusive opportunities to encourage people to stay socially connected and participate in the community as they age.
<b>RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION</b>	Our ageing community feel valued, respected, and included and the community benefits from their contribution.
<b>CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT</b>	Our ageing community are empowered to share their views, are actively engaged in the community through employment, volunteering opportunities, and involvement in community groups and are encouraged to participate in council decision making processes as they choose.
<b>COMMUNICATION &amp; INFORMATION</b>	Our ageing community can easily access information and advice they need to age well, stay informed and connect with the community.
<b>COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND</b>	Ballarat has appropriate community support and health services to assist residents as they need throughout their lives.

<b>HEALTH SERVICES</b>	
<b>LEADERSHIP &amp; ADVOCACY</b>	The City of Ballarat is committed to becoming an age friendly city by leading and advocating for our community to enable positive and healthy ageing for all.

The draft strategy was endorsed by the Project Reference Group on 18 May 2022 and is provided at [Attachment 3](#).

5. **Action Plan 2022-2024**

A two-year Action Plan (2022-24) has been developed to complement the delivery of this strategy and will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant and to help prioritise the key actions to be taken in the year ahead.

Key actions for the first two years of the strategy are focused on foundational activities to establish a solid base for future work. This includes the development of an Age-Friendly Indicators Framework for Ballarat, resources to support age-friendly approaches in Ballarat, a strong focus on social participation and inclusion to reduce loneliness and social isolation, addressing community need for more reliable information sharing and communication, strengthening key partnerships, developing networks including the establishment of an Age Friendly Ambassadors program to provide stronger links in the community, and a greater focus on a whole of organisation approach to our ageing population.

The draft Action Plan 2022-2024 is provided at [Attachment 4](#).

6. **Budget**

Delivery of this plan will predominately be through recurrent budgets with a small number of actions that are subject to business cases through internal City of Ballarat processes.

7. **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Strategy and Action Plan will be monitored and reviewed each year to ensure it remains relevant and will include progress reports to Council and the community on an annual basis.

The Age Friendly Indicators Framework will also allow a baseline measurement to be undertaken and will be used as a basis to monitor changes over time as relevant activities and interventions are implemented. It will allow measurement of the impact of our strategy and actions in a consistent way.

## OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

8. **That Council:**

**8.1 Approve the public exhibition of the draft Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy 2022-2026 and associated Action Plan 2022-2024 for a period of four weeks from 26 August to 23 September 2022.**

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment 1 – Summary of Community Engagement Outcomes
- Attachment 2 - Project Reference Group Membership List
- Attachment 3 – Draft Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy 2022-2026
- Attachment 4 - Draft Action Plan 2022-2024
- Attachment 5 – Governance Review

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**ALIGNMENT WITH COUNCIL VISION, COUNCIL PLAN, STRATEGIES AND POLICIES**

1. The Ageing Well in Ballarat strategy is closely aligned with City of Ballarat's Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021- 2031 including shared principles of equity, inclusion, accessibility, participation and collaboration. It also reflects the City of Ballarat's commitment to a healthy, connected and inclusive community as articulated in the Council Plan 2021 – 2025.
2. The Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy 2022-2026 is closely linked to other current and evolving plans and strategies across the City of Ballarat which share priorities and action areas including, but not limited to, the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan, the LGBTIQ+ Inclusion plan, the Intercultural City Plan, the Municipal Early Years Plan, the Youth Strategy, Libraries and Learning Strategy, Community Infrastructure Plan, the Ballarat Integrated Transport Plan and the Housing Strategy.

**COMMUNITY IMPACT**

3. The Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy 2022-2026 presents a vision for our future for Ballarat to be an age-friendly community where people feel valued, connected, included, and respected and feel confident to participate fully in life however they choose.
4. While the strategy is focused on our residents aged 55 years and over, an age-friendly city or community is health promoting and designed for diversity, inclusion, and cohesion, including across all ages and capacities.

**CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

5. There are no climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications in regard to this strategy

**ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

6. There are no economic sustainability implications in regard to this strategy.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

7. Delivery of this plan will predominately be through recurrent budgets with a small number of actions that are subject to business cases through internal City of Ballarat processes

**LEGAL AND RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

8. There are no identified unacceptable risks contained within this strategy currently. Into the future all risks will be considered before any additional product or activity is either purchased or planned for.

**HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS**

9. 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**

10. The community consultation process for this Ageing Well Strategy started in 2018 with the *Growing Older Well in Ballarat* consultation which included a survey and focus groups with community members and local service providers. Response rates were high and strong themes emerged around what is needed to age well in Ballarat.
11. Further community consultation was undertaken in 2022 to ensure the key themes are still relevant. Specific ageing well questions were included as part of the *Inclusive Ballarat* consultation in April & May 2022. The *Future Direction for our Ageing Community: Community Voice* consultation process is also currently underway and consistent themes are emerging about what our service users need to live and age well in Ballarat.
12. A Project Reference Group comprising representatives from local community groups and relevant community-based organisations was established to provide advice on key issues and guide the development of the strategy. In addition, a comprehensive internal consultation process with relevant teams in City of Ballarat was also undertaken in April 2022.
13. Further consultation will be invited from the public on the draft strategy for a period of four weeks.
14. Future engagement will occur through the lifetime of this strategy around the stated actions and will be take the form of deliberative engagement. The strategy is purposefully reliant on collaboration with the community, including through the establishment of Age Friendly Ambassadors program, and we are seeking to engage with key stakeholders from both community and government organisations for successful delivery of the identified actions.

**GENDER EQUALITY ACT 2020**

15. There are gender equality implications identified for the subject of this report.
  16. The Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy has been developed with consideration of the needs of people of different genders, and with a focus on addressing gender inequality and promoting gender equality where applicable.
  17. Specifically, the Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy and Action Plan includes principles and actions focussed on co-design with our older residents, the importance of universal design, age friendly design and accessible communication.
  18. The Strategy also recognises and aims to address key sources of discrimination such as ageism and negative community attitudes, reduced access to decision making opportunities, inaccessible information and communication methods, and public events and activities that are not age friendly, accessible and/ or inclusive.
  19. The Action Plan includes the development of resources to support age friendly and dementia friendly approaches as well as contribution to the development of a Universal Design Policy to guide future practice at the City of Ballarat and associated guidelines relating to engagement, information provision, events and community buildings. It also incorporates broader community engagement to build trust and awareness of any changes to the local context, or impacts on particular genders or communities
  20. The Strategy and Action Plan also focuses on developing and sharing information in formats that are more accessible for older people, including online and hard copy formats as applicable, but also meets broader accessibility requirements where possible.
  21. When implementing the Action Plan, it is important that an intersectional lens is applied to understand and seek to improve inclusion more broadly. In addition, a
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gender lens will be applied which recognises the importance of safety (including cultural safety, physical safety and social safety) and barriers to accessibility, and considers times, physical space, communication methods, available transport options, comfort, and visibility of diversity for more inclusive programming. This will occur in collaboration with members of the Diversity Access Equity and Inclusion Reference Group wherever possible.

22. This focus on gender equity and applying an intersectional lens will deliver more equitable, inclusive and accessible services, programs and policies for our ageing community members. It will also contribute to broader inclusion work including increased community participation at future events and activities, more accessible buildings and public spaces, and more accessible information to meet the diverse needs of our community members

**CONFLICTS OF INTEREST THAT HAVE ARISEN IN PREPARATION OF THE REPORT**

23. 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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**Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy 2022-2026****Summary – Community Engagement Outcomes (2018-2022)**

One of the fundamental principles of creating an age- friendly community is wide and varied input from the older residents and the involvement of key stakeholders, internal teams in council, community partners and organisations. This community consultation process started in 2018.

<p><b>Growing Older Well in Ballarat - 2018</b></p>	<p>The consultation included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A survey (hard copy and online) which was received 1138 responses;</li> <li>• Focus groups with community members (32 participants);</li> <li>• A focus group with local service providers (12 local agencies attended); and</li> <li>• An internal workshop with leaders across 8 areas of council.</li> </ul> <p>Participants: Ranged from 20 years to 90 years of age. 82% of respondents were aged between 60 years and 90 years.</p>
<p><b>Ballarat: Our Future consultation – 2021</b></p> <p><i>(Data analysed and collated into themes based around the WHO Age friendly domains)</i></p>	<p>It involved a two-stage engagement process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Participatory Engagement Process which involved surveys, kitchen table conversations, group huddles, written submissions, Facebook contributions, community conversations in the park. Around 1981 responses were received with over 4000 ideas.</li> <li>• A Community Panel made up of 50 residents from expression of interest process. Panel members took the results from the first stage of the consultation process and created tangible recommendations to council.</li> </ul> <p>Participants: Ranged from 12-17years to 85 years and over. Over half of the respondents were aged 50 years and over.</p>
<p><b>Inclusive Ballarat community engagement – April/May 2022</b></p> <p><i>Survey included specific questions relating to ageing well.</i></p>	<p>The consultation included more than 840 people providing input across 11 different engagement tools including tools such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey which included 236 respondents in total</li> <li>• Mapping spaces and places</li> <li>• Community conversations</li> <li>• Activity sheets</li> </ul> <p><u>Survey participants:</u> Ranged from 12-17years to 85 years and over with 49.1% of respondents 50 years and over (29.6% of respondents 60 years and over)</p>
<p><b>Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy - Project Reference Group (Feb- May 2022)</b></p>	<p>One of the roles of the Project Reference Group was to seek input or feedback from the population groups/community group being represented. Members provided initial feedback via a survey process and some members chose to provide copies of the survey (online or hard copy) to collect community views.</p> <p>43 survey responses were received as part of this engagement process.</p> <p><u>Participants:</u> Age ranges between 40 years and 90 years with 81% of respondents being 60 years and over.</p>

***Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy 2022-2026***

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES:**

Engagement outcomes from the community consultation processes have been analysed and collated into themes based around the World Health Organisation's age-friendly domains.

**What people love about Ballarat**

Residents love living in Ballarat and appreciate the environment in which they live. Residents told us they love our beautiful city with our historical landscapes and streetscapes as well as the beautiful parks and gardens. Areas around Lake Wendouree and the Botanical Gardens are favourite places for people to spend time.

People also love our range of sporting facilities, walks and walking tracks. Residents appreciate the climate and garden friendly environment and feel that Ballarat is a friendly city with a country feel but with the advantages of a big city. Others like that there is a train service to Melbourne making it easier to travel to the city when needed.

Good access to health services and a range of health practitioners in Ballarat was another positive that many residents reported. Residents also loved our vibrant arts community and the wide range of events, activities and festivals that run all year round in Ballarat. People also mentioned that they appreciated the range of community groups that operate across our city.

**1. OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS**

Through our community consultation, our residents shared their views on issues and suggestions for our outdoor spaces and community buildings across Ballarat.

**What our community told us:**

- Strengthening the accessibility of spaces, places and paths is important:
  - There needs to be better access to footpaths and existing footpaths need to be maintained to ensure they are safe for walking.
  - More bridges over bluestone gutters are needed and it is vital that the bridges are wide enough for wheelchairs/walkers to make it more accessible.
  - More seating or resting spots in public spaces are needed - around the city, around the lake and along walking tracks.
  - Ballarat Railway station needs to be more accessible for everyone.
  - Provide facilities such as toilets, seating, lighting so that spaces can be used and accessed – by all ages, not just older people, in a supportive and friendly way
  - More cafes that are accessible
- Consider older people in planning of outdoor spaces and buildings – ensure they are designed so they are accessible and welcoming.
- Safety is an important enabler to encourage people to get out and about in public spaces. This includes feeling safe in the community, providing open spaces that are close by, ensuring appropriate lighting, shade and shelter, and being able to navigate paths safely.
- Provide accessible public and community recreation spaces to enable people to enjoy informal leisure activities, participate in physical exercise and interact socially.

***Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy 2022-2026***

- Provide more community hubs/centres and places for community groups and members to meet and connect.
- Connect with providers to learn more about dementia friendly approaches in outdoor spaces and buildings

**2. TRANSPORT:**

Addressing issues and barriers related to transport is an important priority for our community and it has been a continuing theme from residents throughout our consultations.

**What our community told us:**

- Transport is vital to allow people to remain active and engaged in our community and maintain independence. Accessing transport for shopping, attending social outings, visiting cemeteries, and health care appointments is important.
- Transport needs to be accessible and close to home.
- Affordability is a significant issue - for some people half price taxis are still too expensive.
- In relation to public transport:
  - Distance to bus stops for people is a common problem and buses are not frequent enough in some areas.
  - Access to seating and shelter while waiting is important.
  - As the city grows, transport routes are changing and the distance to access services is growing – making it harder for people to access.
  - Catching a bus can be challenging – *‘drivers don’t wait for you to sit before they drive away’*
- Supporting people to access public and other transport was raised frequently:
  - Maintaining mobility without relying on a car is challenging and moving around Ballarat gets harder as you grow older, so public transport and other forms of transport are critical.
  - The entire city should allow older people to get around easily via electric scooters, mobility scooters, wheelchairs - smooth transition from gutters to footpaths is needed.
  - Some form of customised door to door public transport for older persons who can no longer drive or cope with traffic would be helpful.
  - Information about transport options and support on how to access these would be helpful
- Safety on roads and crossings is an important priority:
  - Street design especially at crossings, curbs and channels, and intersections could help people move around more easily.
  - Consider traffic management and better safety for pedestrians
  - Consider extending the timings of pedestrian crossings so people aren’t at risk when crossing the roads – *‘because I take a little longer these days’*
  - More ‘stop and go’ drop off points with bench seating nearby would be helpful especially near shopping precincts, supermarkets, medical centres so that

### ***Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy 2022-2026***

passengers can be dropped off safely and close to the service whilst the driver finds a parking spot.

- Parking is a regular theme:
  - The current parking system in Ballarat is not inclusive. It is difficult for people to navigate and assumes a level of technical skill.
  - More parking is needed across the city that is easier to access, especially for those with visual or mobility issues and for older people.
  - Better more convenient parking out the front of services is needed including meter free short-term places - *'for 10-15mins to post a letter or deliver a parcel'*

### **3. HOUSING**

Many people want to continue to live in their communities as they get older, that is, to age in place. Feedback highlighted that housing is an issue that is considered a high priority for our residents.

#### **What our community told us:**

- Housing/rental affordability is a significant issue in our community.
- Housing needs to be affordable, safe and keep people in their communities.
- It is important that there are a range of housing types and choices
- Well designed, accessible and more affordable housing types and stock that enable people to downsize or share housing in an affordable and connected way is needed
- Older people want to be able to remain independent and stay living in their own homes and within their communities for as long as possible.
- Assistance with home maintenance and modification, and support in and around the home is important to sustain independent living, including things like financial counselling.

### **4. SOCIAL PARTICIPATION**

A vital part of ageing well is to be active and connected to others. A high priority for our residents is to have opportunities to be active and engaged in the community and to be able to access and participate in a range of affordable and accessible events and activities.

#### **What our community told us:**

- Making friends as you get older, especially if you are new to an area, is a challenge.
- More support to join community activities for older people is needed.
- Providing and promoting a variety of opportunities for social interaction that are local, available & affordable is important including:
  - based on a range of interest including opportunities to cycle, walk, access outdoor gym equipment, exercise classes/programs, education, craft and intergenerational activities – *'a way of connecting people with like interests'*

**Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy 2022-2026**

- A greater focus on The Arts and cultural experiences – live theatre, dancing, music, galleries, festivals, events that are affordable and accessible (with more seating at exhibitions)
- Provide events and programs to promote physical and mental wellbeing and social connection through participation in low-cost or free activities.
- The social aspect of sharing a meal is important - *I'd really like somewhere to be able to meet, read the paper and have a coffee*
- It would be useful to have more information and coordination of activities available in the community and information on the range of community groups and clubs in Ballarat, particularly for new residents
- Ensure events are well planned so that they are accessible and have supports to enable and encourage older people to participate. This could include ensuring good transport to help people connect and join in activities and events or as simple as having adequate seating in the park.
- It is important to ensure information is provided in a variety of ways as it is hard for people to finding out about what is on if they don't have access to the internet
- Being able to access community meeting places is important:
  - Provide and promote places and spaces including meeting places and venues that enable older people to be present and participate, that welcomes older people and so creates connections and reduces social isolation and loneliness.
  - There are not enough suitable venues to meet or knowing where they can meet, at affordable prices and in varying sizes to cater for all groups.
  - A multicultural drop-in centre that is accessible for all ages would be good.

## **5. RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION**

Our residents want to feel valued, respected, included and recognised for their valuable services and ongoing contributions.

### **What our community told us:**

- The challenge of ageism/ageist attitudes and the respect, dignity and choice challenges that face people growing older across the community needs to be addressed.
  - People want to be listened to, heard and seen - *I feel like I am invisible, I feel not listened to when I am trying to explain my challenges.*
  - Being valued and recognised as an equal community member is important. – *'Respect is sometimes hard to find and feel'*
  - Raise awareness of the value of older people - *older people still have a lot to contribute and society do not acknowledge it (even though they know it exists)*
- There is an increasing focus on connecting across generations including:
  - intergenerational events and opportunities to build understanding, community building opportunities, skills and knowledge exchange, mentoring and wisdom sharing
  - Intergenerational thinking, planning and engaging in all areas and more opportunities to bridge the gap between older and younger generations – *'I love the idea that all ages can play Pickleball together - grandkids right through to grandparents'*

***Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy 2022-2026***

- Promoting equality and inclusion is needed across the community- including for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with disabilities, people identifying as LGBTIQ+ and people from diverse cultures and religions - *I'd like to see better access and availability of cultural food locally*
  - Promote visibility and value – explore the stories and achievements of a wide range of older people, of diverse socio economic and cultural status, via schools and community initiatives
  - Encourage cultural competency training to all retail businesses to assist with better communication
  - The increasing use of technology and the rapid rate of change in technology is a barrier for many people – *I'm concerned about being left behind technology wise'*
  - It is important to remember that many older people do not want to use technology e.g., they still prefer to use bank books for their finances.
  - Not everyone has a computer to access information online
  - It is important for older people to have one on one support to help accessing of IT services, volunteers can assist, some age groups can assist others, just need the accessible spaces to do it.
  - People need more support to find ways to use and understand technology to be connected

## **6. CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT**

Many older people want to be able to keep working, learning, and building their skills and to be involved in community decision-making processes. Our residents confirmed that opportunities to be actively involved in the community is important to them.

### **What our community told us:**

- People are looking for more opportunities to be active in their communities including in employment, volunteering and participating in community decision making.
- Residents want to see active communities where people can take an interest in their neighbourhoods, be part of planning for their community and city and participate in Council decision-making.
- Economic participation is also a priority for some:
  - Working is important for older residents to continue to have a role and be valued in economic participation and contribution – *'Provide and promote the importance of work opportunities for people of all ages and all abilities'*
- Opportunities to connect with others in a meaningful way and to contribute through a wide range of volunteering options is also important which acknowledges years of experience and skills that should be valued and can be shared in a variety of settings - hobbies, retail, skill-based tasks.
- Residents also suggested that more support for volunteers is needed.
- Residents want to see stronger community participation in Council decision-making processes and provide opportunities to engage more diverse voices in decision making and events

***Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy 2022-2026***

**7. COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION**

Access to information is another important priority for our residents. People want to stay informed so that they can make decisions about what is important to them and remain active and independent members of the community. Our older residents also reported being less likely to have regular access to a computer.

**What our community told us:**

- Information and communication are vital to staying connected, participating in life and for people to access services where and when they need them
- Information & support to navigate an increasingly complex and technical service system is currently critical and will become more so as systems move to digital channels and pathways and involved less human interface.
- Information helps people to maintain independence and make choices because we don't know what we don't know
- Building health literacy across the community helps to ensure informed choice, awareness and informed decision making.
- People want to be able to access information and advice that I can understand - *My aged care is too confusing – too hard, I need help to get the services I need.*
- People would like to see more communication for older people on social connection and wellbeing activities (including exercise classes) in the community
- It is important to ensure community contact is easy/available. Residents feel Council has a role in sharing information about services available through Council and in the community. This is especially important for new residents as well.
- Provide opportunities to share information on various aspects of staying healthy as people grow older, such as community meetings to provide knowledge of ageing issues around Ballarat and dementia friendly approaches and forums to allow people to discuss ideas.
- Not everyone has access to the internet which makes it hard to access information on services available or about the range of community groups and social activities available across the community - *It is important to understand that we are not all tech savvy*

**8. COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND HEALTH SERVICES**

Access to health services and community support systems is important to enable people to stay healthy, active and independent.

**What our community told us:**

- Residents appreciate the access to and range of health and community services available in Ballarat however some residents are concerned about the ability of existing health and community services to meet the need of the growing community, including in emergency departments and to see specialists.

***Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy 2022-2026***

- Access to available health services and continuous work to build capacity of health services to best meet the need of diverse communities of need and growing demands as population ages is vital
- Residents want to be able to access services and support so they can keep their independence and stay in their own home.
- Some residents are reluctant to access support services & assistance for various reasons
- Some residents raised concerns about access to quality food, access to shops to buy ingredients and affordable food options. Support for community food initiatives such as community gardens and community meals option are welcomed.
- More support for carers is vital - *understanding the pressures and opportunities that being a carer or having an active grandparent role can provide*
- It is important for people to have knowledge or to be able to access information on what support and service are available in the community to assist people to access health services and assistance in the home.
- Some residents find it difficult to engage outside trades to assist with issues around the house.

**9. LEADERSHIP & ADVOCACY**

Through our consultations we heard that our residents are keen for City of Ballarat to demonstrate leadership and advocate on their behalf across many aspects of living in Ballarat.

**What our community told us:**

- Well-founded collaborations and communications are important. There is an existing array of community-based organisations with an age friendly focus. It is important to highlight and link these organisations for improved participation and funding for community led responses - *Help the people who are already trying to make Ballarat more age friendly.*
- There is a need for strategic and individual advocacy for older people and the issues and events impacting their life experience.
- It is important that council is responsive to the needs of all the broad demographic groups in the local community.



### Age Friendly Ballarat – Project Reference Group Membership list

	Name	Role	Organisation/Community Group
<b>Chair</b>	Ann Pitt	Executive Manager, Ageing Well	City of Ballarat
	Cathy Bushell	Ageing Well Officer	City of Ballarat
	Jane Grimwood	Network Manager	Central Highlands Association of Neighbourhood Houses
	Teresa Azzopardi	Social Support Coordinator	Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council (BRMC)
	Yvette Golmer	Senior Project Manager - Older Australians Strategy	Vision Australia
	Melissa Fox	Community Home Support/HACC-PYP and NDIS services Manager	Ballarat & District Aboriginal Cooperative (BADAC)
	Lisa Robertson	Coordinator - Social Support, Aged & Carer Services - North West & Grampians	Uniting.Vic.Tas
	Jan Armstrong Pam Edwards	Team Leader – Housing, Access and Support Case Manager, Housing Support for the Aged	CatholicCare Victoria
	Jenni Horner Alice Hayley	Dementia Support Specialists	Dementia Australia
	Phillip Grant		University of the Third Age (U3A)
	Joyce Currie		Ballarat South Probus
	Rosalie Silvey		Country Women's Association – Ballarat District Group
	Richard Giles		Probus Club of Ballarat Central
	Michael Landry		Ballarat East Men's Shed
	Wendy Vorstenbosch		Ballarat Active Women's Network member
	Pamela Johnson		New resident, previously on Positive Ageing Advisory Committee in Nillumbik Shire