



City of
Whittlesea

**COMMUNITY PLAN
2008-2012**

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OUR MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

MISSION

Our City will deliver equity, growth and choice through responsive community leadership and quality services.

VISION

Our City will respect the natural environment while continuing to provide high quality, accessible and responsive services and encouraging a sustainable local economy.

VALUES

- Respect for the individual and all cultures in our community
- Preservation of the natural environment
- Ethical leadership
- Commitment to innovation and continuous improvement
- Provision of best value in service
- Encouraging a healthy and harmonious community

Further information

To obtain further copies of the Community Plan please call Council on 9217 2170, email communityplan@whittlesea.vic.gov.au or visit Council's website at www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au

YOUR COUNCIL

COUNCILLORS

The Council of the City of Whittlesea comprises nine Councillors. There are three wards with three Councillors representing each Ward.

The last general election of Councillors was held in November 2005 and the next election is scheduled for November 2008.

EAST WARD

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MAYOR'S INTRODUCTION

The City of Whittlesea's 2008-2012 Community Plan supports the needs and aspirations of our diverse local community. It guides Council's priorities and service delivery, and informs planning. It details how Council will create new services, programs and facilities, while also improving those already in existence. Created in conjunction with the local community, it is a blueprint for our actions from now until 2012.

Community planning is a constant and ongoing task which involves close consultation with as broad a cross section of our diverse community as possible. In a rapidly growing municipality such as ours, this planning is doubly important. Consultation, with local community members from the municipality's established, growth and rural areas, as well as Council staff, fellow Councillors and other levels of government, creates the corner stone of our Community Plans.

Each year we review these plans to ensure they accurately reflect community expectations. Every four years, a major consultation will be conducted across the municipality to develop a new four year plan. Our next major consultation will take place in 2009.

In preparing for the review of the Community Plan, invaluable contributions from around 25 community committees and reference groups have also been considered on areas including the Disability Action Plan, the Municipal Health Plan, the Sustainability Plan, the Early Years Strategy, the Multicultural Strategy and the Annual Youth Summit.

In April 2008, Council formally sought feedback on the Draft Community Plan. I hosted six Mayoral Community Forums across the municipality as well as meetings with special interest groups. Residents participated in the consultation process by attending these forums and meetings, or by making verbal and written submissions to Council. This was an valuable and insightful process with a record number of residents contributing to the review.

This Community Plan is a collaboration between Whittlesea City Council and the local community. From here we can build on the strong foundation established for our municipality through previous Community Plans. Council looks forward to working with local community members to achieve our shared goals.

Cr Elizabeth Nealy
Mayor

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY PLAN

The Community Plan is a four year plan that identifies community needs and priorities and strategies for achieving community identified outcomes.

The Community Plan is the Council Plan for the purposes of complying with Section 125 of the Local Government Act 1989. The roles and responsibilities of local governments are outlined in the Local Government Act and include the following objective:

“To promote the social, economic and environmental viability and sustainability of the municipal district;
To improve the overall quality of life of people in the local community
To ensure transparency and accountability in Council decision making.”
Part 1A – Local Government Charter

Both the Community Plan and the Summary Community Plan can be viewed on Council's website www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au.

The Community Plan provides a summary of key financial information for the City of Whittlesea.

The Community Plan is reviewed annually and changes are made as required. Outcomes and achievements are monitored and reported back to the community. Your input is sought in this process as part of the community consultation that occurs each year, but also if you have any views, comments, ideas or suggestions at other times please forward any comments to:

**Director Planning & Development
City of Whittlesea
25 Ferres Boulevard
South Morang Vic 3752**

Or by email to: communityplan@whittlesea.vic.gov.au.

HOW THE PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

In reviewing the Community Plan 2008 – 2012 a series of Mayoral Community Forums were held throughout the municipality.

Meetings with special interest groups were also arranged to discuss the Draft Community Plan. The Special Interest Groups included the Whittlesea Disability Network, the Whittlesea Multicultural Communities Council, the Indigenous Art Unit at RMIT and some youth specific groups.

Residents participated in the consultation process by attending these forums and meetings, or by making verbal, written submissions to Council. Submissions could also be made on line through Council's website.

COMMITTEES, REFERENCE GROUPS AND OTHER REPRESENTATION

From time to time Council has created reference groups, committees of management and advisory committees to provide advice and to assist in addressing specific issues of concern to the Community. These groups also play an important role in working towards the achievement of the strategies and actions set out in the 2008-2012 Community Plan. There are also a number of non-Council bodies to which Council has appointed representatives and these bodies also contribute to achievement of the Plan.

The following is a list of a range of the Council created groups as well as the groups to which Council has appointed a representative, all of which play a part in achieving the Strategies and Actions set out in the 2008-2012 Community Plan.

The list includes:

The Australia Day Committee, City of Whittlesea Audit Committee, City of Whittlesea Responsible Gaming Forum, Darebin Creek Management Committee, Epping Community Activity Centre, Meadowglen Athletics Stadium Committee of Management, Merri Creek Management Committee, Municipal Public Health Plan Committee, Riverside Community Activity Centre Committee, Sustainability Programs Advisory Committee, Thomastown Pioneer Precinct Advisory Committee, Yarra Plenty Regional Library Service Board, Whittlesea Community Activity Centre Committee of Management, Whittlesea Community Futures, Whittlesea Multicultural Communities Council, Whittlesea Reconciliation Group, Whittlesea Recreation Centre Committee of Management, Whittlesea Youth Commitment, Whittlesea Youth Network, Whittlesea Area Groups for CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) Young People, Management Group, Whittlesea Disability Network, Whittlesea Safety Committee and the Whittlesea Emergency Management Committee.

This was an valuable and insightful process with over 200 residents contributing to the review.

YOUR COMMUNITY YOUR SAY

All the consultation results from all the Mayoral Forums, special interest groups, written and verbal submissions were compiled, analysed and combined into themes.

The following key community priorities and issues arose from the consultations conducted during the 2008- 2012 Community Plan review:

The 6 most frequently raised issues (from highest to lowest) were:

- Transport
- Environment
- Facilities and Infrastructure
- Youth
- Community Services
- Sporting and Leisure Facilities

1. TRANSPORT

Transport was by far the most frequently raised issue at all consultation forums. Discussions covered all aspects of transport but need for improved and increased public and community transport was raised more times than any other issue.

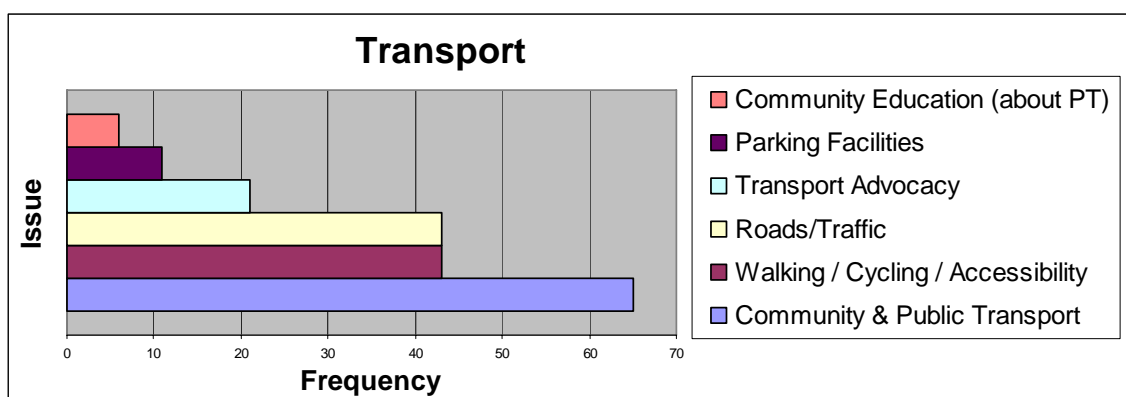
The next two equally important categories were Walking/Cycling/Accessibility and Roads/Traffic. Walking, cycling and accessibility highlighted the communities concerns around sustainability, health, wellbeing, access and mobility.

Concerns regarding roads and intersections highlighted frustration with congestion. Whilst the need for signage and lighting in particular areas and concerns regarding safety for both pedestrians and drivers were also raised.

The need for Council to act as an advocate for Public Transport was clearly identified as was the need for accessible parking for those with a disability and the need to educate people on how to use the public services that are available in the City of Whittlesea.

Table 1 shows the frequency of the different Transport themes raised throughout the consultations.

Table 1



2. ENVIRONMENT

The general theme under environment contained a wide range of issues including the need to support Earth Hour, the need to Council’s ongoing role in environmental education, the beautification of suburbs to include the planting of native trees, the need for better and quicker enforcement on environmental issues and the question – what will be the Indigenous community’s input into sustainability?

The wildlife theme identified the need to protect the indigenous wildlife to ensure that development is environmentally and wildlife friendly. The aim should be to trial new approaches to living constructively with the native wildlife. Promoting wildlife rescue within the community and protecting kangaroos was also identified as important.

Supporting Biolinks to give native plants and animals corridors which allow them to survive and thrive along with encouraging biodiversity through planting and education was another theme under the environment heading.

Waste issues raised highlighted the need for more rubbish bins (and for these to be maintained) at shopping centres, train stations and in parks. The newly implemented green waste service received positive feedback. The need to encourage pet owners to pick up after their dogs was also a priority.

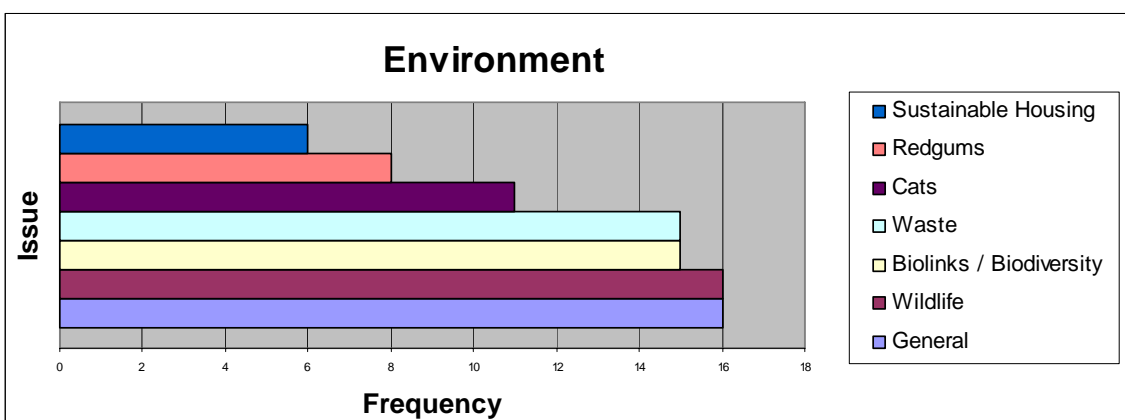
Controlling both feral and domestic cats to minimise their impact upon the environment was also a priority with a number of strategies identified for how this may be achieved.

Continued protection of the River Red Gums in the municipality “the more you keep the better”. Highlighting the need to not only maintain large mature trees but strategies should also allow for extended regeneration areas and the protection of younger trees – not just mature trees.

Sustainable Housing should be encouraged to allow for water and energy saving in the home for home owners, renters and public housing tenants.

Table 2 shows the frequency of the different Environment themes raised throughout the consultations.

Table 2



3. FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Under the heading of Facilities and Infrastructure a broad range of priorities and issues were raised. The timely provision of infrastructure in the context of the City's growth and development was a key concern.

The next most frequently raised issue under this heading was about community spaces. The need to better utilise existing spaces (such as schools and sporting facilities) was recognised. Whilst consistent requests were made for more community spaces and places for a whole range of activities where the community can come together.

The priority issue raised within the theme of disability and accessibility was the need for respite care within the City of Whittlesea. Comments recognised that respite solutions need to be flexible and provide for a range of different needs and different times of life. The need for more support for people with a disability and for the carers of people with disabilities was also highlighted.

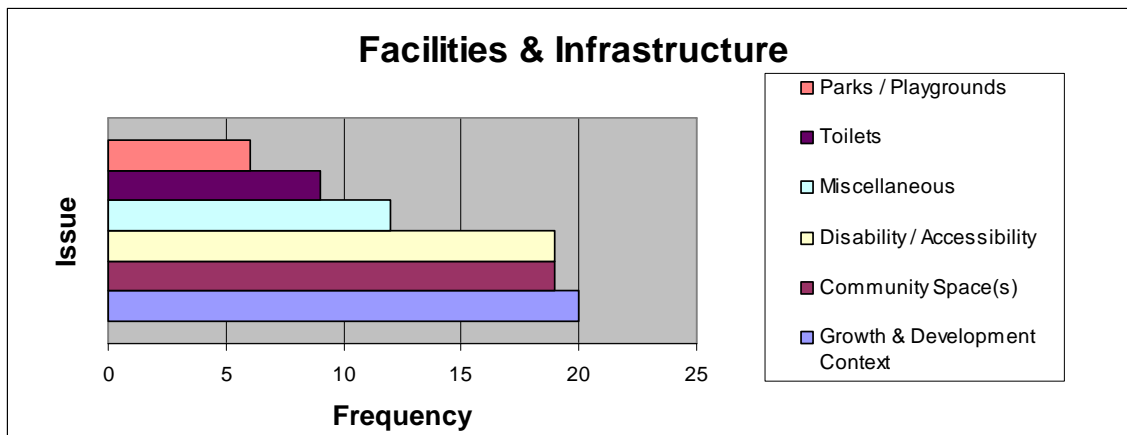
The miscellaneous category encompassed a very broad range of issues including access to health & medical facilities, public phones, libraries, public transport, petrol stations, hotel, motels and restaurants. The need for facilities to have accessible public toilets and to be linked with walking and cycling paths was also identified.

Access to public toilets in parks and playgrounds was another concern raised as was the state of public toilets – to ensure they are clean and in good condition.

The Parks and Playgrounds theme identified the need for shade in playgrounds and the need to maintain and improve existing parklands.

Table 3 shows the frequency of the different Facilities and Infrastructure themes raised throughout the consultations.

Table 3



4. YOUTH

The general youth theme includes issues around housing, skill development and education, public safety, crime and gang activity, the lack of youth specific mental health services, the difficulties faced by newly arrived and refugee youth and the need for responses that target the family not just youth.

Something to do and Somewhere to go were the next two priorities raised under the youth heading. This highlighted the need for activities, services and places and spaces for youth – in particular for those aged 12 and up.

Youth Disability priorities described the need for facilities and services for younger people and young adults with disabilities such as housing, school holiday programs, after school care.

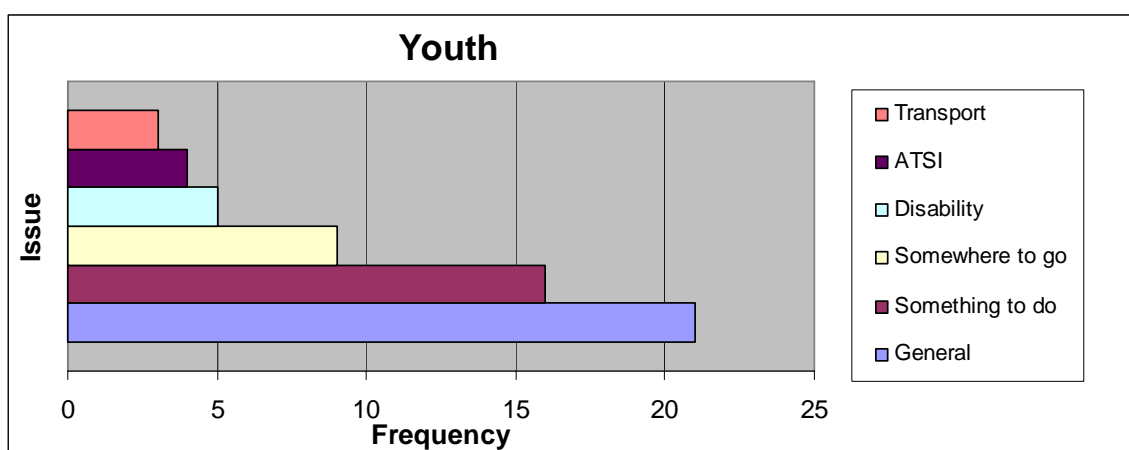
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) issues raised included both the need for specific youth services and places to cater for ATSI youth. But it was also seen as important that non-ATSI youth be able to learn about and celebrate ATSI culture with the ATSI community.

Transport was often cited as a barrier to participation that specifically affected young people.

There was a correlation between what the youth specific groups highlighted and what the general consultations highlighted in relation to youth. The key theme to emerge from the youth special interest groups was the need for places and spaces for youth to go and be with their peers. Safety was also a concern expressed in the youth specific forum. The need to ensure safety when using services – especially at night was a priority. Additionally transport was also highlighted as a critical issue – the lack of it and the confusing nature of the bus service were identified.

Table 4 shows the frequency of the different Youth themes raised throughout the consultations.

Table 4



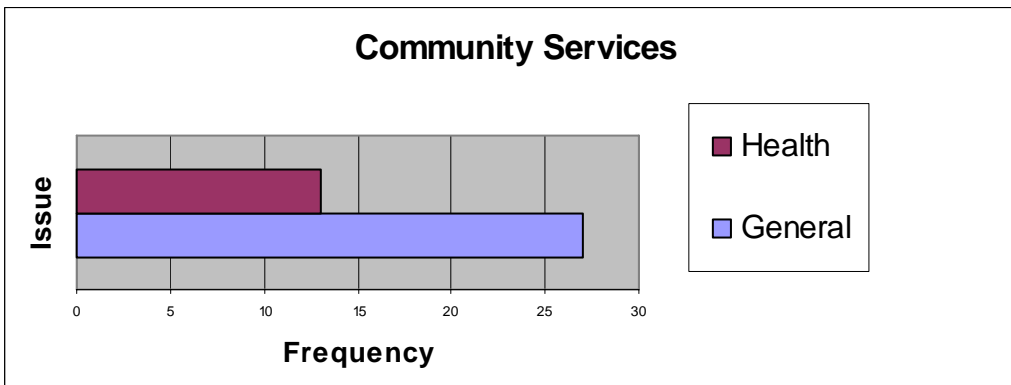
5. COMMUNITY SERVICES

In general a range of services were called for to be implemented or increased. They included services for senior citizens, the growing population and for refugees and new arrivals. Encouraging volunteers and support for community groups was also identified. This theme also noted that Council was a trusted provider of services.

Community Health issues included the need for health and medical services, access to bulk billing GP's, and access to a local Medicare and Medibank office was also a prominent issue. Health services included mental health, age specific health services (for the young and the old) the need for a respite facility and disability specific services.

Table 5 shows the frequency of the different Community Services themes raised throughout the consultations.

Table 5



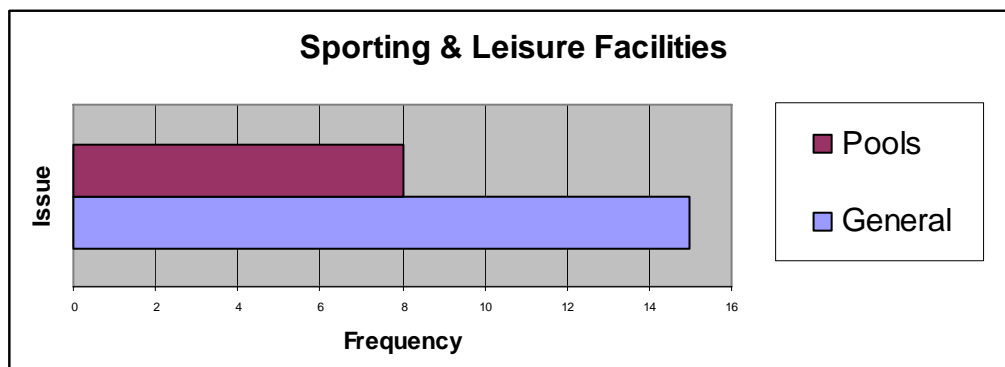
6. SPORTING AND LEISURE FACILITIES

The need for an increased range of sporting and leisure facilities were raised, in particular in the new areas, to allow all community members to participate. The management and maintenance of sporting grounds given the drought was also a community priority. Other issues included the need for leisure services to be accessibly priced for seniors and the need for sporting facility users to be mindful of the disturbance they may cause to residents who live nearby.

Issues regarding pools raised mainly regarded the upcoming closure of the Thomastown Recreation and Aquatic Centre (TRAC) and the gaps in services caused during its renovation and the call for a 50 meter pool – both at Thomastown and Mill Park.

Table 6 shows the frequency of the different Sporting and Leisure Facilities themes raised throughout the consultations.

Table 6

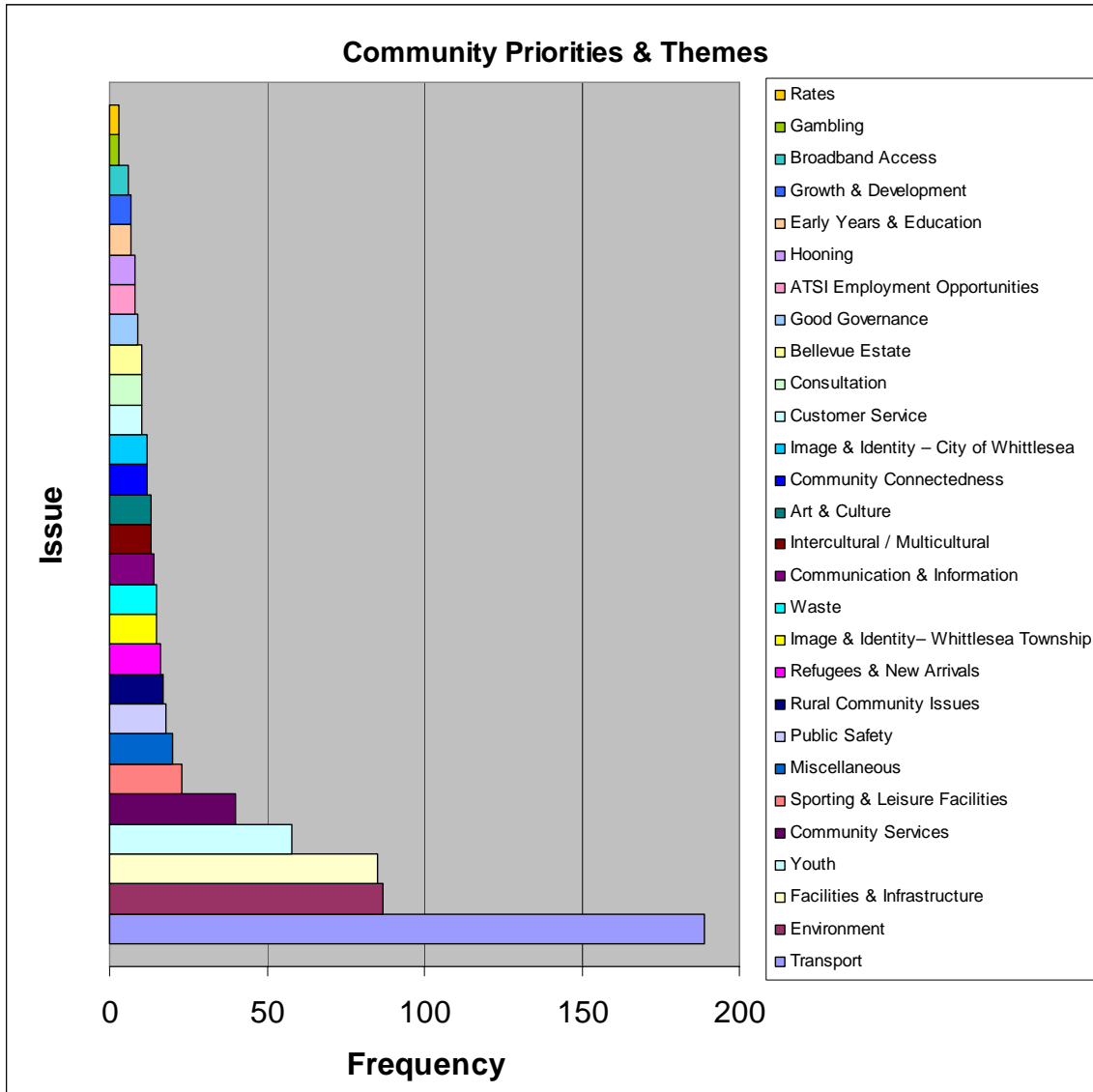


ALL ISSUES

When combined all priorities and issues raised throughout the consultations show the vast array of issues and priorities that are of importance to the community.

Table 7 shows the frequency of all the themes raised throughout the consultations.

Table 7



COMMUNITY IDEAS INTO ACTION

Once all the community priorities and issues had been analysed and placed into the above themes, a systematic review of the actions in the Draft Community Plan, in light of the issues raised by the community, was conducted. Actions were developed and included to cover the specific issues not already contained within the Draft Community Plan. However, it was found that many of the issues and priorities raised by the community were already contained within the Plan.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The Community Plan has identified five Key Strategic Objectives, each with its own set of strategies for achieving the Objectives and the associated actions. The Strategic Objectives, strategies and actions are reviewed each year.

THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES FOR 2008 – 2012 ARE:

LEADERSHIP

Council to provide valued community leadership

ENVIRONMENT

Protect and enhance the natural and built environment

COMMUNITY

Community involvement, growth and diversity

SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

Balance of diverse growth opportunities

SERVICE

Community satisfaction with council services and facilities

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE ONE - LEADERSHIP

Council to provide valued community leadership

Council is committed to provide valued community leadership through;

- Actively contributing to local and regional discussion and resolution of issues while representing and advocating for the best interests of our community and the broader local government sector;
- Cultivating a flexible and responsive workforce that effectively responds to issues of an ageing workforce, cultural diversity, skill shortages and work-life balance; and
- Creating an environment in which opportunities for economic and cultural expression are optimised to promote our City as a City of choice for business and lifestyle.
- Recognising that everyone has the right to participate in, and contribute to, our community and acting in a way that is compatible with the civil and political rights protected by the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

STRATEGY 1.1

Demonstrate accountable and responsible City management.

ACTIONS

In order to achieve this Council will –

- Review its decision-making processes to ensure it gives proper consideration to protect human rights when making decisions and ensure that all persons have equal rights in the provision of, and access to, Council services and facilities.
- Review Council's Codes of Conduct for Councillors and Staff to include reference to Council's obligations under the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.
- Consider the recommendations made in the Victorian Ombudsman's Report on Conflict of Interest when reviewing the Code of Conduct and Ethics for Staff and when conducting the statutory review of Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors in 2009.
- Implement a Workforce Planning Strategy including a Staff Recruitment, Retention and Mentoring Program, and continue to promote the City of Whittlesea as an Employer of Choice.
- Plan for the conduct of the November 2008 Council elections.
- Conduct a Councillor Induction Program.
- Publish an Annual Report that includes independently audited financial statements.
- Maintain an internal audit program and an Audit Committee with independent membership.

- Implement initiatives from the Asset Management Strategy.
- Review and update the Long Term Financial Plan.
- Adopt sound Financial Management and Risk Management practices.
- Implement the Information Management Project.
- Develop a Quadruple Bottom Line reporting framework.

STRATEGY 1.2

Advocate on behalf of the community.

ACTIONS

In order to achieve this Council will –

- Maintain strong relationships with other levels of government including local Members of Parliament.
- Advocate to State and Federal Governments for service improvements that will benefit our community.
- Implement actions in Council's Advocacy Strategy as outlined in the 2007 Advocacy Kit – 'Partnerships for Priorities: Growing the City of Whittlesea Together' through lobbying for identified service gaps and improved regional infrastructure and involving the community in advocacy actions.
- Maintain active membership and leadership of key sector groups including the Municipal Association of Victoria, Victorian Local Governance Association, Interface Councils Group, Metropolitan Transport Forum and the National Growth Areas Alliance.
- Work with local government sector peak bodies to ensure they advocate effectively for our City and the broader local government sector.
- Proactively advise local Members of Parliament of local issues and seek their active support to advocate on behalf of our community.

STRATEGY 1.3

Provide leadership in integrated planning for the community.

ACTIONS

In order to achieve this Council will –

- Develop an integrated urban renewal plan for Lalor and Thomastown.
- Review the Municipal Strategic Statement.
- Review the Strategic Plan for the Delivery of Human Services in our City.

- Develop the Intelligent Cities Strategy.
- Develop an integrated Housing Diversity Plan.
- Implement the Youthplan2030 (YP2030).
- Develop a Positive Aging Strategy
- Review Council's Local Conservation Strategy in 2008
- Review Council's Municipal Early Years Plan
- Implement the Integrated Cultural Plan 2006 - 2010

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE TWO - ENVIRONMENT

Protect and enhance the natural and built environment

Council is committed to protect and enhance the natural and built environment and places of cultural and indigenous significance through;

- Working progressively to achieve more sustainable outcomes by integrating social, economic, cultural and environmental considerations into decision-making processes;
- Using, conserving and enhancing the community's resources so that ecological processes are maintained and the total quality of life, is improved; and
- Working to facilitate an understanding that everyone has a role to play in achieving more sustainable outcomes for the community.

STRATEGY 2.1

Upgrade and maintain the City's image and appearance.

ACTIONS

In order to achieve this Council will –

- Provide and where appropriate upgrade passive and active open space taking advantage of natural and cultural features.
- Continue to implement the recommendations and directions of the Street Tree Masterplan to provide attractive and sustainable streetscapes and amenities.
- Continue to place an emphasis on litter and graffiti removal in urban and rural areas.
- Improve the appearance of industrial areas.
- Develop and review Council policies and strategies to protect areas of environmental, archaeological, heritage and cultural significance.
- Introduce measures to protect heritage sites and seek to incorporate heritage sites during the development process.
- Develop a Neighbourhood Parks Improvement Strategy.

STRATEGY 2.2

Promote and facilitate sustainable land management practices.

ACTIONS

In order to achieve this Council will –

- Continue to implement the Sustainable Land Management Rate Rebate Scheme.
 - Continue to implement the Sustainable Land Management Program in collaboration with local groups.
 - Prepare a Green Wedge Management Plan.
 - Adopt sustainable management practices in Council owned bushland reserves.
-

STRATEGY 2.3

Adopt, facilitate and further develop sustainable water management strategies.

ACTIONS

In order to achieve this Council will –

- Develop a Domestic Waste Water Management Plan.
 - Implement Council's Sustainable Water Use Plan.
 - Implement Council's Stormwater Management Plan.
 - Reduce water usage in Council buildings and operations.
 - Implement the Community Water Grant projects.
 - Continue to participate in and contribute to the International Council for Local Government Environmental Initiatives Water Campaign.
 - Participate in peak body initiatives to develop and implement sustainable use of water, including the Municipal Association of Victoria Water Taskforce.
 - Implement and continue to review the Sports Ground Management Plan to provide Sporting Grounds in the context of ongoing water restrictions.
 - Collaborate with developers to achieve long-term water savings in new residential / commercial developments.
 - Continue to encourage the inclusion of water sensitive urban design principles within new developments.
-

STRATEGY 2.4

Implement and further develop greenhouse emissions reduction measures.

ACTIONS

In order to achieve this Council will –

- Implement the City's Greenhouse Abatement Strategy.
 - Promote the delivery of more sustainable, energy efficient buildings.
 - Continue to participate in and contribute to the International Council for Local Government Environmental Initiatives Cities for Climate Protection Program.
 - Participate in the annual Earth Hour event.
-

STRATEGY 2.5

Engage with the community to encourage sustainable practices throughout the municipality

ACTIONS

In order to achieve this Council will –

- Continue to provide a forum and events for community members to participate in environmental issues.
 - Maintain an awards program for residents to encourage sustainable living.
 - Review Council's Local Conservation Strategy in 2008.
 - Maintain the Sustainable Programs Advisory Committee.
 - Continue to implement the Waste Management Strategy.
 - Implement new Garden Waste Bin Service.
-

STRATEGY 2.6

Provide leadership in sustainable urban development and design.

ACTIONS

In order to achieve this Council will –

- Review the Housing Strategy to encourage development of a range of housing types.
- Ensure community facilities and buildings are designed to minimise their ecological footprint.
- Ensure local structure plans are grounded in sustainable design principles.

- Prepare implementation guidelines for the State Government Native Vegetation Management Framework.
 - Develop a Timber Re-use Policy and Guidelines.
 - Implement the Youth Equity Strategy.
-

STRATEGY 2.7

Protect and increase biodiversity.

ACTIONS

In order to achieve this Council will –

- Facilitate the protection of significant biodiversity through the land use development process.
 - Continue to improve the habitat quality and values of Council's bushland reserves.
 - Continue to implement the Red Gum Protection Policy and Guidelines.
-

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE THREE - COMMUNITY

Community involvement, growth & diversity

Council is committed to deliver services, resources, facilities and projects that;

- Are considered and planned in consultation with the community;
- Respond to community input, needs, expectations and aspirations in their development, design and delivery;
- Are tailor-made for the makeup of the changing community and reflect its diversity in the way they are provided;
- Are accessible and equitable; and
- Respect the rights and values of marginalised groups.

STRATEGY 3.1

Facilitate community participation in decision making and service planning.

ACTIONS

In order to achieve this Council will –

- In 2009, consult with residents and key stakeholders to develop and implement a four year Community Plan for 2009-2013.
- Adopt and implement a Consultation and Engagement Framework, including community consultation guidelines that include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (ATSI) people, multicultural communities and all ages in any medium chosen by the responder .
- Develop and maintain a Consultation Register to record all formal consultation opportunities, outcomes and feedback to participants.
- Seek feedback from the community on Council's overall performance.
- Involve residents in the development of our City's strategic plans, initiatives and activities.
- Continue to provide opportunities for community participation in Council's Meeting process.
- Consider the views of residents to inform Council's decision making process.
- Review the Responsible Gaming Strategy and Charter.

STRATEGY 3.2

Provide for a range of social and culturally diverse experiences

ACTIONS

In order to achieve this Council will –

- Organise, promote and / or support community celebrations, events, cultural projects and festivals.
 - Implement initiatives from the Multicultural Plan.
 - Develop a Community Events Policy.
 - Implement initiatives from the Whittlesea Reconciliation Group.
-

STRATEGY 3.3

Build community identity, connection and pride.

ACTIONS

In order to achieve this Council will –

- Support initiatives that strengthen the identity of our City.
 - Develop and implement neighbourhood based plans for existing and future areas.
 - Implement initiatives from the Youthplan2030 (YP2030).
 - Provide financial support to local community based organisations through grants programs.
 - Work with community groups to increase their networks, skills and broader community involvement.
-

STRATEGY 3.4

Build partnerships with key stakeholders

ACTIONS

In order to achieve this Council will –

- Continue to support Whittlesea Community Futures in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders.
- Continue to implement the Whittlesea Township Community Building Initiative (CBI).
- Provide community forums, workshops, and other opportunities to obtain community opinion and ideas to inform Council decision making.
- Continue to work with major service delivery agencies to obtain a presence in the municipality.

- Continue to implement a sponsorship program in partnership with key private sector and private agencies.
 - Actively support the Northern Transport Links - Transport Connections Project.
-

STRATEGY 3.5

Encourage and develop the arts in the City.

ACTIONS

In order to achieve this Council will –

- Deliver public art that reflects the indigenous history of the area, the diversity in the community and the character of specific neighbourhoods in our City.
 - Encourage the continued installation of public art projects in new developments.
 - Implement the Cultural Plan.
 - Implement the Cultural Collections Strategy 2008 - 2012.
-

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE FOUR - SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

Balance of diverse growth opportunities

Council is committed to deliver a balance of diverse growth opportunities through;

- Establishment of more sustainable patterns of new development within the growth areas and the redevelopment of the existing urban and rural areas;
- Providing and advocating for well serviced identifiable communities with access to a range of transport options and local services and facilities; and
- Promoting growth in employment opportunities across all sectors and encouraging diversified employment options.

STRATEGY 4.1

Encourage the growth of diverse employment opportunities.

ACTIONS

In order to achieve this Council will –

- Promote the geographical, growth related and labour force benefits of our City to new and emerging business sectors.
- Implement the planning framework for the Melbourne Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Markets relocation project in consultation with Major Projects Victoria.
- Incorporate provision for land to be developed for employment purposes in all structure plans.
- Complete the Epping Transit City Project, including the Epping Central Project and implement the project outcomes.
- Develop opportunities and provide support for regional food and produce showcases.
- Progressively improve the attractiveness of commercial and industrial areas through urban design, public art and streetscape works.
- Promote the establishment of new mixed use activity centres such as the MAB University Hill development.
- Implement the Cooper Street Employment Area Development Plan and the associated Design and Use Guidelines.
- Investigate opportunities to rezone land for employment purposes.
- Develop our City's cultural identity and vibrant street life to attract tourists, customers, investors and employment.

STRATEGY 4.2

Encourage local skill development and local employment opportunities for residents.

ACTIONS

In order to achieve this Council will –

- Identify and facilitate the provision of training to local businesses.
 - Support enterprises and activities that assist young people to gain employment.
 - Support the Hume/Whittlesea Local Learning and Employment Network Project.
 - Support the Whittlesea Youth Commitment.
 - Encourage educational institutions to form partnerships with business for research and development opportunities.
 - Provide opportunities for traineeships and University, TAFE, apprentice and work experience placements within Council's workforce.
 - Continue to increase the percentage of local goods purchased and local labour employed by Council.
 - Collaborate with other Councils to provide regional opportunities for marginalised groups such as early school leavers, ATSI people, transport disadvantaged people and multicultural communities.
 - Implement Council's Volunteer Policy and provide volunteer opportunities to newly arrived migrants.
-

STRATEGY 4.3

Encourage local tourism opportunities.

ACTIONS

In order to achieve this Council will –

- Implement Council's Tourism and Marketing Strategy.
 - Participate on a regional basis in tourism activities.
 - Investigate establishment of the Mernda to Whittlesea Township bike trail.
 - Continue to support the Whittlesea and Plenty Valley Tourism Association.
 - Implement the Plenty Valley Heritage Trail.
-

STRATEGY 4.4

Implement the City's growth area plans to achieve well serviced new communities.

ACTIONS

In order to achieve this Council will –

- Apply traditional neighbourhood design principles when designing new subdivisions.
 - Finalise Council's Subdivision Design Guidelines.
 - Collaborate with local business to deliver and invigorate activity centres through economic and cultural initiatives.
 - Incorporate a range of lot sizes and housing types to meet the needs of the community.
 - Plan for new communities that are inclusive for all ages.
-

STRATEGY 4.5

Encourage the provision of public transport and non car based travel modes throughout the city.

ACTIONS

In order to achieve this Council will –

- Ensure that all new developments support provision of public transport, walking and cycling.
 - Establish supportive higher density residential and employment areas in proximity to key transport modes / routes.
 - Actively lobby for the timely provision of transport services including heavy rail, light rail, buses and community transport.
 - Implement the recommendations of the Strategic Transport Infrastructure Study.
 - Actively pursue opportunities that arise from the State Government's Meeting Our Transport Challenges Statement.
-

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE FIVE - SERVICE

Community satisfaction with council services and facilities

Council is committed to achieve high community satisfaction with its services and facilities through;

- Working towards a robust service system and associated infrastructure, resourced from all levels of government;
- Providing and advocating for affordable, accessible, local and culturally relevant services and facilities for the whole community and taking particular account of indicators of disadvantage and risk;
- Ensuring residents are aware of services and facilities and are readily able to find information about them;
- Seeking regular input from service users and the broader community on what services and infrastructure are needed and how they should be designed, delivered and managed;
- At least annually monitoring the satisfaction of service and facility users; and
- Continually exploring new ways of providing services and infrastructure to best meet local needs.

STRATEGY 5.1

Provide accessible, equitable and relevant services and facilities.

ACTIONS

In order to achieve this Council will –

- Develop and implement a revised Disability Action Plan.
- Continue to implement the Playground Improvement Plan.
- Develop and implement actions in the 2008-10 Municipal Public Health Plan.
- Implement the Footpath Trading Code.
- Implement actions from the Municipal Early Years Plan.
- Implement actions from the Multicultural Plan.
- Implement Youthplan2030 (YP2030).
- Prepare and Implement a Recreation Strategy.
- Pursue implementation of the Broadband Policy.
- Review Council's Food Safety Management Policy and Procedures.
- Continue to plan for and deliver community facilities across the municipality.
- Provide accessible cultural opportunities through the Cultural Plan.

STRATEGY 5.2

Maximise quality and value in service delivery.

ACTIONS

In order to achieve this Council will –

- Prepare a comprehensive service level review.
 - Identify new methods of service delivery.
 - Collaborate with volunteers in the delivery of services.
 - Deliver cost effective services through strategic partnerships with government, the community and the private sector.
-

STRATEGY 5.3

Promote a high level of community awareness of council services and facilities.

ACTIONS

In order to achieve this Council will –

- Promote Council services, facilities and services and provide access to information for all community members.
- Publish a regular community newsletter and regular newspaper column.
- Maintain multi-lingual sections to Council's websites – both audio and print.
- Actively promote Council's free multi-lingual telephone service.
- Develop audio visual material targeting people from Non English Speaking Backgrounds promoting Council services.
- Review the Multimedia Strategy.
- Train staff as Language Aides to assist Non English Speaking Background residents in communicating with Council.
- Actively promote community consultation and feedback opportunities in an accessible and inclusive manner.
- Review and update Council's website to improve the promotion and accessibility of information and encourage two way communication.
- Continue to consult with the community on their preferred method of receiving information and engaging with Council and utilise communication avenues that are identified.

STRATEGIC RESOURCE PLAN

The City of Whittlesea is projecting a positive operating result and a strong balance sheet for each year of the 2008-2012 Community Plan. The strong financial position established over a number of years is a reflection of sound financial management, rigorous cost control and the commitment to financial sustainability.

Historically Council has generated a mix of small operating surplus/deficits and has used borrowings to fund only income-generating infrastructure projects or one-off significant expense burdens.

Borrowings remain a funding option for Council considering its moderate level of loan liability and the continuing growth in the rates base to meet ongoing debt servicing costs.

The City's overall financial position is strong, however its budgetary position is impacted by a number of external influencing factors. Statutory fees and charges set by the State Government have been subject to minimal or no change for several years and have not kept pace with CPI. Combined with cost increases for waste management, the Municipal Fire Levy, public lighting and maintenance, insurances, transport costs and the additional cost of Council elections in November 2008, the impact on the operating budget is significant.

Overlaying all of these expenditures and general operating cost is the population growth the municipality is experiencing and the associated increased service delivery and infrastructure requirements. The forecast growth in the population for 2008-2009 is 3.2% and thereafter increasing by 3% annually.

The City's strong financial position throughout 2008-2012 ensures a sustainable financial future for Council and the capacity to deliver the objectives and strategies of the Community Plan and Strategic Resource Plan. The forward financial strategy is built upon maintaining Council's existing assets by using depreciation allowances to maintain and upgrade all physical assets such as roads, drains, footpaths, parks, buildings and information technology assets. General rates are assessed to increase by 4.75% over the last three years of the Strategic Resource Plan plus a 2% factor per annum has been included for rates growth.

Generation of operating surpluses over the four years of the Community Plan provides a key source of funding for growth and new initiatives.

Council also plans to use some debt funding during the four years as part of its financial strategy. The borrowing level is planned to increase from \$22.7M to \$28.98M at the end of 2012 in a period where Council will be undertaking an extensive \$163.94M capital works program. During this four year period Council's cash position is expected to be maintained.

Council's capital works program over the period 2008/2009 to 2011/2012 averages a significant annual expenditure of approximately \$41M and includes a number of major projects such as Thomastown Recreation Aquatic Centre upgrade, sporting pavilion upgrades, new community activity centres in the growth areas, road construction and safety improvements, bicycle facilities, disability access and floodlighting of existing sports grounds.

Council investment reserves will continue to grow over the four year period by \$6.5M.

The Strategic Resource Plan 2008-2012 shows the City of Whittlesea will retain its strong balance sheet ensuring a sustainable future for Council. The strong financial position enables Council to maintain its current levels of service to the community in all areas and also provides funding for new community and organisational initiatives in line with the Community Plan.

KEY FINANCIAL INDICATORS

Indicator		Forecast 2007/08	Budget 2008/09	Strategic Resource Plan Projections		
				2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Financial performance						
Underlying result/Underlying revenue	(1:1)	0.01:1	0.00:1	0.05:1	0.02:1	0.04:1
Rate revenue/Underlying revenue	(%)	61.9	60.5	59.9	65.2	65.8
Rate revenue/Assessment	(\$)	1,249	1,359	1,459	1,561	1,672
Financial liabilities/Rate revenue	(%)	23.2	32.6	40.9	37.1	33.8
Debt servicing/Total revenue	(%)	0.5	0.8	1.1	1.1	1.1
Grants/Total revenue	(%)	8.8	9.4	8.1	8.0	7.8
Fees & charges/Total revenue	(%)	4.7	5.5	5.5	5.8	5.9
Financial position						
Non-curr. liabilities/Own-sourced rev.	(%)	18.6	26.0	31.4	32.2	30.5
Net operating c'flows/Underlying rev.	(%)	19.5	19.4	21.9	21.3	20.7
Current assets/Current liabilities	(%)	5.1	4.6	4.7	4.1	4.0
Total liabilities/Assessment	(\$)	572	757	935	951	975
Capital expenditure						
Capital works	(\$'000)	31,311	57,195	43,749	30,582	32,407
New assets	(\$'000)	16,151	33,413	28,903	17,147	16,582
Asset renewal	(\$'000)	7,650	10,086	8,532	7,765	7,674
Upgrade/expansion	(\$'000)	7,510	13,696	6,313	5,670	8,151
Capital works/Rate revenue	(%)	48.9	82.0	58.5	38.2	37.8
Asset renewals/Total depreciation	(%)	47.2	63.2	51.9	45.9	44.0
Capital spend/Total depreciation	(1:1)	0.99:1	2.29:1	1.90:1	1.98:1	1.50:1

City of Whittlesea

Budgeted Standard Income Statement For the four years ending 30 June 2012

	Forecast	Budget 2008/09 \$'000	Strategic Resource Plan		
	Actual		Projections		
	2007/08 \$'000		2009/10 \$'000	2010/11 \$'000	2011/12 \$'000
Revenue					
Rates charges	64,052	69,716	74,837	80,069	85,758
Statutory fees and fines	3,723	4,541	4,725	4,919	5,122
User fees	4,809	6,140	6,460	6,797	7,176
Contributions - cash	7,061	9,034	14,799	7,573	8,459
Grants - operating	14,874	15,645	15,309	15,745	16,429
Grants - capital	1,178	2,706	1,302	500	55
Reimbursements	1,330	523	639	620	607
Other revenue	6,117	6,785	6,630	6,400	6,483
Total revenues	103,144	115,090	124,701	122,623	130,089
Expenses					
Employee costs	32,480	38,236	39,584	41,655	44,335
Materials and services	42,843	46,751	47,829	48,248	49,665
Bad and doubtful debts	415	160	160	160	160
Depreciation and amortisation	16,200	15,950	16,429	16,921	17,428
Other expenses	8,083	9,678	10,676	10,465	10,550
Finance costs	909	1,515	2,205	1,765	2,090
Total expenses	100,930	112,290	116,883	119,214	124,227
Net gain (loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	306	225	169	244	235
Contributions - non-monetary assets	80,000	80,000	80,000	80,000	80,000
Surplus (deficit) for the period	82,520	83,025	87,987	83,653	86,097

City of Whittlesea

Budgeted Standard Balance Sheet

For the four years ending 30 June 2012

	Forecast	Budget 2008/09 \$'000	Strategic Resource Plan		
	Actual		Projections		
	2007/08 \$'000		2009/10 \$'000	2010/11 \$'000	2011/12 \$'000
Current assets					
Cash and cash equivalents	67,476	62,527	67,381	60,503	61,961
Trade and other receivables	4,068	5,200	5,471	5,772	6,104
Accrued income	1,915	2,365	3,505	2,042	2,226
Prepayments	214	234	239	241	248
Inventories	151	151	151	151	151
Total current assets	73,824	70,477	76,747	68,709	70,690
Non-current assets					
Trade and other receivables	9	-	-	-	-
Other financial assets	22	22	22	22	22
Investments in associates	1,259	1,259	1,259	1,259	1,259
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	1,349,760	1,446,057	1,537,336	1,629,862	1,715,245
Total non-current assets	1,351,050	1,447,338	1,538,617	1,631,143	1,716,526
Total assets	1,424,874	1,517,815	1,615,364	1,699,852	1,787,216
Current liabilities					
Trade and other payables	6,454	7,032	7,180	7,239	7,457
Trust funds and deposits	1,220	1,220	1,220	1,220	1,220
Provisions	5,859	6,367	6,909	7,485	8,097
Interest bearing loans and borrowings	875	744	882	715	783
Total current liabilities	14,408	15,363	16,191	16,659	17,557
Non-current liabilities					
Provisions	2,317	3,272	4,289	5,371	6,522
Interest bearing loans and borrowings	13,977	21,983	29,700	28,985	28,203
Total non-current liabilities	16,294	25,255	33,989	34,356	34,725
Total liabilities	30,702	40,618	50,180	51,015	52,282
Net assets	1,394,172	1,477,197	1,565,184	1,648,837	1,734,934
Equity					
Accumulated surplus	1,084,495	1,168,515	1,253,438	1,337,205	1,425,856
Reserves	309,677	308,682	311,746	311,632	309,078
Total equity	1,394,172	1,477,197	1,565,184	1,648,837	1,734,934

City of Whittlesea

Budgeted Standard Cash Flow Statement

For the four years ending 30 June 2012

	Forecast	Budget 2008/09	Strategic Resource Plan		
	Actual		Projections		
	2007/08		2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Cash flows from operating activities					
Rates	64,690	69,546	74,683	79,912	85,587
Grants (inclusive of GST)	17,657	20,096	18,319	17,895	18,148
Statutory fees and fines	3,720	4,296	4,670	4,861	5,061
Other receipts and charges (inclusive of GST)	16,112	18,788	25,103	20,059	19,639
Interest received	5,560	4,579	4,480	4,518	4,573
Net GST refund	4,732	5,296	4,661	5,352	4,839
Payments to employees	(31,201)	(36,773)	(38,026)	(39,997)	(42,571)
Payments to suppliers (inclusive of GST)	(60,153)	(61,912)	(64,394)	(64,708)	(66,180)
Borrowing costs	(909)	(1,515)	(2,205)	(1,765)	(2,090)
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	20,208	22,401	27,291	26,127	27,006
Cash flows from investing activities					
Proceeds from disposal of non-current assets	1,080	1,237	931	1,343	1,295
Payments for infrastructure, property, plant and equipment (inclusive of GST)	(16,034)	(36,462)	(31,224)	(33,466)	(26,128)
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities	(14,954)	(35,225)	(30,293)	(32,123)	(24,833)
Cash flows from financing activities					
Repayment of borrowings	(1,029)	(875)	(744)	(882)	(715)
Proceeds from borrowings	-	8,750	8,600	-	-
Net cash provided by (used in) financing activities	(1,029)	7,875	7,856	(882)	(715)
Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	4,225	(4,949)	4,854	(6,878)	1,458
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	63,251	67,476	62,527	67,381	60,503
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	67,476	62,527	67,381	60,503	61,961

City of Whittlesea

Budgeted Standard Capital Works Statement For the four years ending 30 June 2012

	Forecast	Budget	Strategic Resource Plan		
	Actual		Projections		
	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Capital Works Areas					
Roads	10,887	11,327	10,992	11,081	10,800
Drains	745	300	150	100	220
Open space	8,449	11,182	5,786	8,049	8,031
Buildings	7,578	30,368	24,250	8,510	9,340
IT & Plant	3,602	3,443	2,571	2,842	4,016
Feasibility studies	50	575	-	-	-
Total capital works	31,311	57,195	43,749	30,582	32,407
Represented by:					
New assets	16,151	33,413	28,903	17,147	16,582
Asset renewal	7,650	10,086	8,532	7,765	7,674
Upgrade/expansion	7,510	13,696	6,313	5,670	8,151
Total capital works	31,311	57,195	43,749	30,582	32,407

City of Whittlesea

Budgeted Statement of Investment Reserves

For the four years ending 30 June 2012

	Forecast	Budget	Strategic Resource Plan		
	Actual		Projections		
	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Statutory					
Developer contributions (community facilities)	17,515	14,037	16,498	15,193	12,938
Community infrastructure levy	867	1,160	1,410	1,660	1,910
Net gain compensation	420	570	730	870	990
Developer contributions (open space)	701	361	410	425	476
Planning permits drainage	173	275	375	475	575
Non standard street lighting	844	994	1,124	1,254	1,384
Car parking	0	18	37	56	74
Total statutory reserves	20,521	17,415	20,584	19,933	18,347
Discretionary					
Tip replacement	7,814	9,567	11,310	13,051	14,790
Unspent new works (net)	5,551	-	-	-	-
Land banking reserve	4,454	4,684	5,720	3,820	4,366
Plant replacement	2,838	3,326	3,608	4,036	4,028
Computer replacement	53	53	53	53	52
Total discretionary reserves	20,709	17,630	20,690	20,960	23,236
Total reserves	41,230	35,045	41,275	40,893	41,583

THE CITY OF WHITTLESEA - HISTORICAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

The City of Whittlesea is located 20km north of Melbourne's CBD. Covering 490 square km, it is a large municipality containing both rural and rapidly developing urban areas.

The City includes the major rural centre of Whittlesea, the rural localities of Beveridge, Donnybrook, Eden Park, Humevale, Kinglake West, Wollert, Woodstock and Yan Yean and the established or developing suburbs of Bundoora, Doreen, Epping, Lalor, Mernda, Mill Park, South Morang and Thomastown.

The Wurundjeri Willam people were the original inhabitants of this area and the traditional owners of this land. Today, the City of Whittlesea has the fourth highest Indigenous population in metropolitan Melbourne.

OUR NAME

The City of Whittlesea was named after the town of Whittlesea, in Cambridgeshire, England. Many place names (such as Bundoora, Yan Yean, Wollert, Wallan and Mernda) were inspired by Wurundjeri culture and traditions

OUR POPULATION

In 2008, the City of Whittlesea has a population of around 136,775 people.

The municipality has a higher proportion of children and a lower proportion of older residents than the Victorian average.

In 2006, 32% of families were purchasing their homes. The proportion of rented homes within the municipality is now around 17%.

Around half of households within the City of Whittlesea are couples with dependent children.

The City of Whittlesea has relatively high numbers of unemployed people. In comparison with metropolitan Melbourne generally, the municipality includes a large number of people who are likely to be considered poor.

Although the proportion of residents employed within the sector has decreased since 1998, manufacturing remains the largest sector of employment, employing around one fifth of residents in paid employment.

Around one quarter of residents in paid employment are employed within the municipality, a further third work within neighbouring municipalities and 17% work within the inner metropolitan area. Six percent of dwellings include home businesses.

DIVERSITY WITHIN THE MUNICIPALITY

The City of Whittlesea is a diverse community. With migrants from more than 50 countries, it is the third most multicultural municipality within Victoria.

Forty-eight percent of residents come from a non-English speaking background, which is double the Victorian average, and 46% normally speak a language other than English at home.

The most common languages used other than English are Italian, Macedonian, Greek, Arabic and Vietnamese. With more than 11,000 residents using the language, the municipality has the largest Macedonian community in Victoria, including one third of all Victorians of Macedonian ancestry. Of the larger communities within the municipality, there has been strong growth for people born in Viet Nam, Lebanon, India, Sri Lanka, New Zealand and the Philippines.

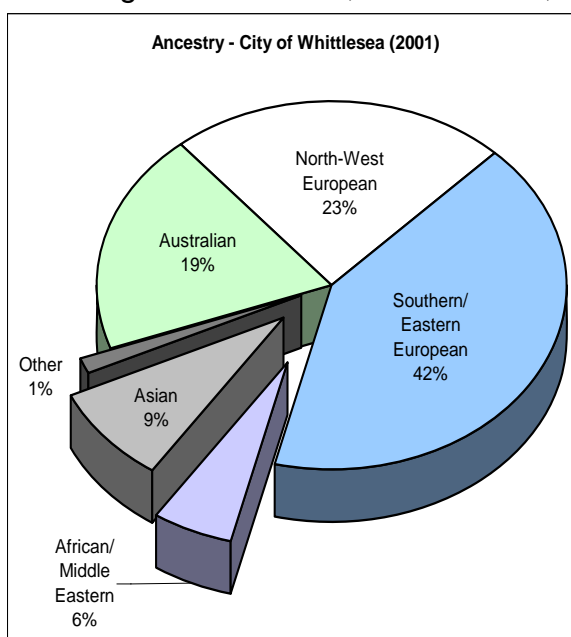


Figure 1: Ancestry

Of all substantial migrant communities within the City of Whittlesea, the fastest growing is people born in Iraq, more than 80% of whom arrived in the municipality within the last decade. A high proportion indicated upon arrival that they had poor English-language skills.

POPULATION GROWTH

The City of Whittlesea has grown steadily since World War II, with the addition of the new suburbs of Lalor and Thomastown in the 1950s and 1960s and Mill Park in the 1970s. Since 1969, when the municipality had around 29,000 residents, the population has more than quadrupled. Endorsed by the State Government as a growth area of metropolitan significance, an average of almost 1,800 new households per year are expected to be established within the municipality between 2008 and 2012. The City of Whittlesea is amongst the fastest growing areas within metropolitan Melbourne.

The City's population is expected to 240,000 by 2030. Growth will be concentrated in the developing areas of Mernda-Doreen, South Morang and Epping North. Between 2008 and 2012, population declines are expected to occur within established suburbs such as Mill Park, Lalor and Thomastown.

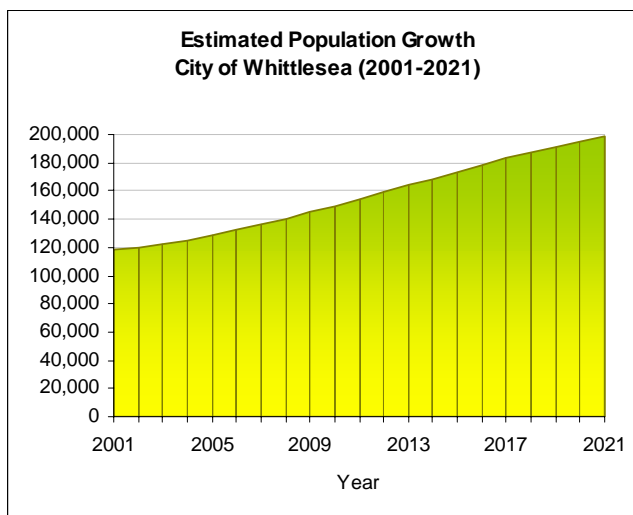


Figure 2: Population Growth

These declines are associated with ageing populations and the migration of adult children from existing households, primarily into the new growth areas of the municipality.

While more than a third of residents have been at their present address for less than five years, a substantial proportion arrive from neighbouring areas and more than half of the people moving into the new growth areas are existing residents of the municipality.

FURTHER INFORMATION?

For further information on this history and demographic profile of the City, contact Council on 9217 2170, visit our website at www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au or email info@whittlesea.vic.gov.au.