

Annual Report

2022-23





Acknowledgment of country

Greater Dandenong City Council acknowledges and pays respects to the Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation, as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters in and around Greater Dandenong.

We value and recognise local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures, heritage, and connection to land as a proud part of a shared identity for Greater Dandenong.

Greater Dandenong City Council pays respect to Elders past and present and recognises their importance in maintaining knowledge, traditions, and Culture in our Community.

Greater Dandenong City Council also respectfully acknowledges the Bunurong Land Council as the Registered Aboriginal Party responsible for managing the Aboriginal Cultural heritage of the land and waters where Greater Dandenong is situated.






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Our Great City

Greater Dandenong City Council provides over 100 services to improve the quality of life of all residents. The Community Vision, Council's strategic objectives and service strategies are outlined in the Council Plan 2021–25 and the Annual Budget. The delivery of services is measured by a set of service performance indicators and measures. These services include:

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES	HEALTH AND WELLBEING	YOUR HOME	SPORT AND LEISURE	ROADS AND SAFETY	COMMUNITY
<p>Youth services</p> 	<p>Disability services</p> 	<p>Planning permits</p> 	<p>Sportsgrounds</p> 	<p>Roads and footpaths</p> 	<p>Libraries</p> 
<p>Kindergartens</p> 	<p>Home maintenance</p> 	<p>Building permits</p> 	<p>Swimming pools</p> 	<p>Car parks</p> 	<p>Volunteering</p> 
<p>Maternal and child health</p> 	<p>Home and community care</p> 	<p>Pet registrations</p> 	<p>Leisure centres</p> 	<p>Street lighting</p> 	<p>Theatre and the arts</p> 
<p>Playgroups</p> 	<p>Meals on wheels</p> 	<p>Rubbish and recycling</p> 	<p>Parks and gardens</p> 	<p>School crossing supervision</p> 	<p>Grants</p> 
<p>Immunisation</p> 	<p>Food safety</p> 	<p>Graffiti removal</p> 	<p>Festivals and events</p> 	<p>Emergency management</p> 	<p>Community centres</p> 

Our Community

170,000

residents in 2022

154 birthplaces

2/3

of people are born overseas

24,000

migrants have arrived since 2014

880 asylum seekers

8% of people live with a severe or profound disability

100,000

people work within CGD

Manufacturing and **Health care and social assistance** are the city's two largest industries

40,000

families within CGD

3/4 of families have parents born overseas

62% of people own or are purchasing their own home

700

hectares of open space

197 parks

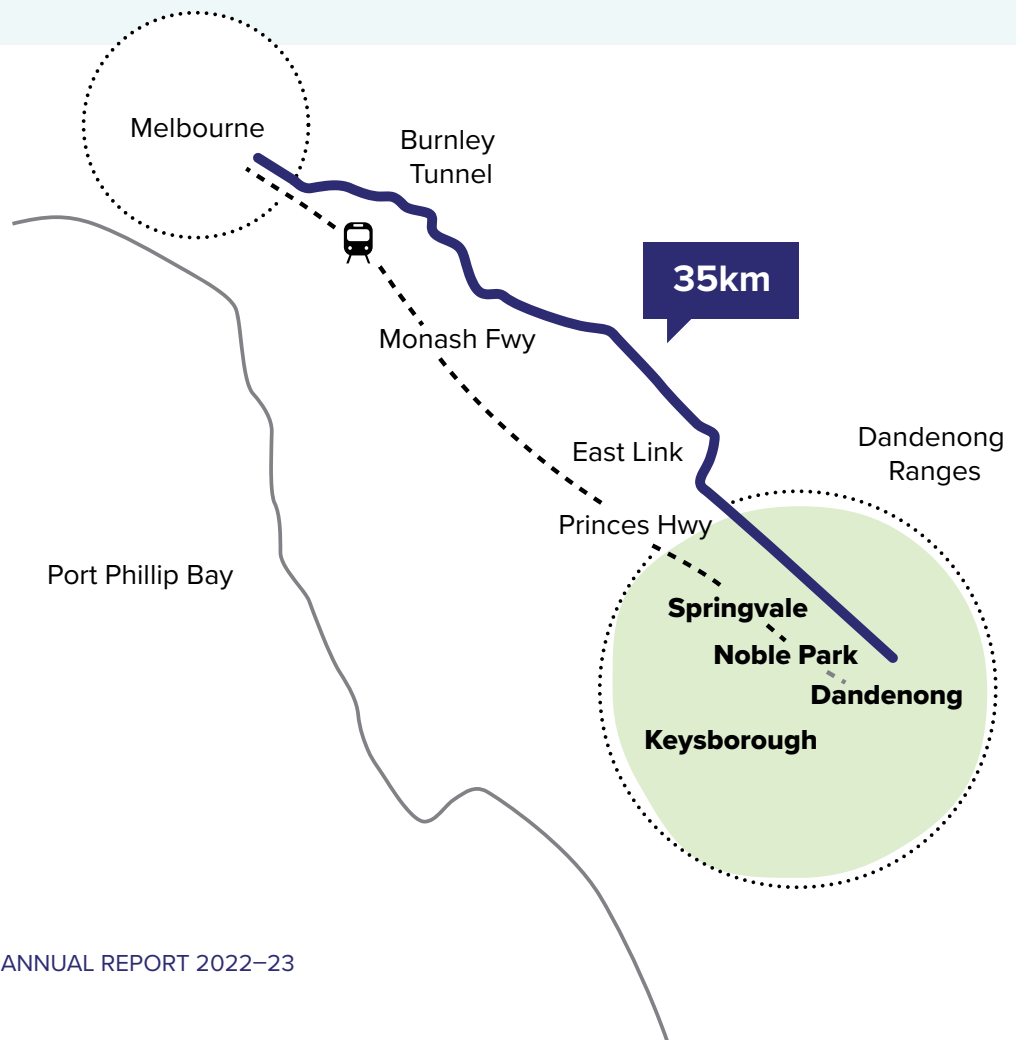
33 bushland areas

152 playgrounds

188km

of bike and shared paths

35 sports reserves





Shepley Oval, Dandehong

Community Vision

In 2021 the City of Greater Dandenong created a new community vision which expressed their aspirations and hopes for the future of the municipality. This vision was developed through extensive broad consultation including workshops, surveys, pop up installations and online activities.

As required by the *Local Government Act 2020*, a deliberative engagement process was then undertaken and the Greater Dandenong People's Panel was formed. This panel of 31 residents and business owners, representative of the community's diversity, were asked to consider the outcomes of the broad community consultation phase and background information provided by Council, to develop a new vision and principles. They spent three and a half days deliberating and reviewed all of the community engagement outcomes, heard from guest speakers from local businesses and community groups and discussed current and future challenges for our city.

The final vision created by the panel reflects the aspirations of the community and the principles outline what Council should focus on to help achieve this.

Our community's vision for 2040 is:

The City of Greater Dandenong is a home to all. It's a city where you can enjoy and embrace life through celebration and equal opportunity.

We harmonise the community by valuing multiculturalism and the individual. Our community is healthy, vibrant, innovative and creative.

Our growing city is committed to environmental sustainability. Welcome to our exciting and peaceful community.

To complement the vision, and further define what the community would like to see Greater Dandenong be in 2040, six principles were developed. These principles are:

- 1 Safe and peaceful community
- 2 Education, Training, Entrepreneurship and Employment Opportunities
- 3 Sustainable Environment
- 4 Embrace diversity and multiculturalism
- 5 Mind, Body and Spirit
- 6 Art and Culture

This vision and its accompanying principles influence Council's key strategic direction and the priorities that are set for each financial year.

The results of this project informed the planning stages of the Council Plan 2021–25, Annual Plan and other key strategic documents across Council.



Strategic Objectives

Council's strategic objectives form the Council Plan 2021–25 and reflect the hopes and aspirations of the community as expressed in the community vision and accompanying principles:

- A socially connected, safe and healthy city
- A city that respects and celebrates diversity, our history and the arts
- A city of accessible, vibrant centres and neighbourhoods
- A green city committed to a sustainable future
- A city that supports entrepreneurship, quality education and employment outcomes
- A Council that demonstrates leadership and a commitment to investing in the community



Year in Review

Message from our Mayor and CEO

Greater Dandenong City Council is proud to engage and work closely with our culturally diverse community to ensure our city is a great place to live, work, visit and play. Together we have much to celebrate from the past 12 months, including the completion of several major projects and the beginning of many new innovative initiatives.

Continued infrastructure investment

Ongoing investment in quality community, sport and recreation infrastructure is essential to providing accessible spaces which enhance the health and wellbeing of our residents. The following projects will provide fantastic new spaces for our community to utilise into the future:

- State-of-the-art gym at the Noble Park Aquatic Centre (NPAC) – The new \$6.9 million project was supported by a \$3.3 million grant from the Victorian Government
- Keysborough South Community Hub project – The \$22 million contract was awarded and the first sod turned in preparation for construction at the site situated at the corner of Chapel and Villiers Roads.
- Springvale Boulevard – In October 2022, the revitalised boulevard was officially opened creating a signature gateway entrance to Springvale.

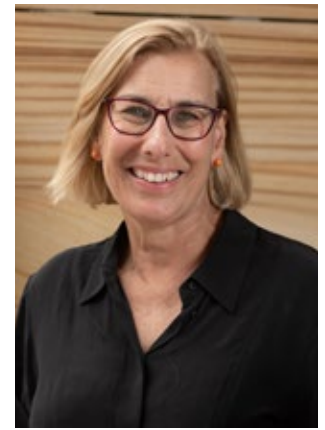
Successfully managing our financial challenges

Council invested \$49 million in capital works and community infrastructure in 2022–23 creating vibrant and accessible spaces for our residents and visitors to enjoy. A further \$26 million was spent on maintaining parks, roads, footpaths, and drains and the protection of existing assets.

Greater Dandenong City Council continues to face the same challenges as the entire Local Government sector with rising costs, ageing assets and limited alternative revenue streams. Council's operating surplus this year was \$33 million. While our financial position remains strong, our ongoing challenge is balancing our continued investment in capital improvements while also funding ongoing asset renewal to maintain our current service standards.



Mayor, Cr Eden Foster



CEO, Jacqui Weatherill

Proud of our green future

Annually Council focuses on sustainability initiatives which help to improve Council's response to climate change and educate the community regarding waste disposal:

- Our Homecycle program ran several times across the year with a total of 28,900kg of waste material recovered and the Keep It Clean campaign was launched which aims to combat illegal dumping and street littering while further promoting Council's free hard rubbish collection service.
- The tree canopy coverage of our city was boosted with the planting of 2,744 trees in public places and we hosted our 10th annual Sustainability Festival, considered the most successful to date with more than 3,000 people in attendance at the Dandenong Market.

Enabling better outcomes for our community

We continued to advocate to State and Federal Governments to address key issues facing our Greater Dandenong community including homelessness, poverty, gambling and social and affordable housing:

- The Anti-Poverty Strategy 2022–25 was launched in October 2022
- The Back Your Neighbour advocacy campaign to the Federal Government, in collaboration with 39 other Councils and other peak bodies throughout Australia, resulted in the conversion of Temporary Protection Visas to permanent visas.
- Funding was awarded to Council to enhance active transport infrastructure as part of level crossing design works, and arterial road project upgrades including the extension of Thompson and Westall Roads.

Commitment to arts, culture and events

Council worked in collaboration with artists throughout the city to install engaging public artworks and significant murals to represent our cultural heritage. A large-scale artwork titled Peace and Harmony for Ukraine was also created by Council in partnership with the Association of Ukrainians in Victoria Noble Park branch and the Noble Park Revitalisation Board to honour the tragic conflict overseas.

We continued to celebrate and honour the cultural traditions of our residents who come from all over the world by hosting several culturally significant festivals and community celebrations throughout the year. Our key festivals and events attracted 81,507 people, including Springvale Snow Fest, Noble Park Community Fun Day, Little Day Out, Christmas Carols in the Park, New Year's Eve, Open Air Movies, and Keysborough's Big Picnic.

A community memorial celebration was held in tribute to Greater Dandenong Living Treasure Merle Mitchell AM in November 2022. Merle was duly recognised for her passionate community activism and her many achievements as a member of the Spirit of Enterprise. The Exhibition Hall inside the Springvale Community Hub is now known as the Mitchell Hall and Council has installed an interpretative sign as part of the Spirit Enterprise Trail project to further honour Merle's legacy.

Council won the First Nations Community Partnership Initiative Award for the Waa and Bulln Bulln Corroboree (Springvale ceremonial fire pit) at the LGPro Awards for Excellence and continues to recognise the strong connection First Nations people have to the land and waters of this nation through embedding reconciliation across Council, including in policy, business and community structures as outlined in the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2021–23.

In November 2022 John Bennie PSM retired as Greater Dandenong City Council's Chief Executive Officer after 16 years of service. We would like to thank John for his tireless commitment to the community of Greater Dandenong and the staff of Greater Dandenong City Council. His leadership has been instrumental in the many successes within our municipality and he leaves a fantastic legacy.

It has been an exciting year and we proudly present this 2022–23 Annual Report to our community. We would also like to thank all Councillors, the Executive Management Team and staff at Greater Dandenong City Council for their dedicated and passionate work.

Together over the past 12 months we have continued to enhance the growth of our great city and achieved many beneficial outcomes for our vibrant and unique community.



**Mayor,
Cr Eden Foster**



**CEO,
Jacqui Weatherill**



Springvale Snowfest



Caption Waa and Bulln Bulln Corroboree firepit

Message from our Junior Mayor

Hi, my name is Tasneem, I am in Grade 6 and school captain at Keysborough Gardens Primary School. I am delighted to be the 2023 Junior Mayor of the City of Greater Dandenong, an admirable, diverse, and multicultural place for everyone. We live in the city of opportunity for everyone to achieve their dreams and it means so much to me to be able to get involved and be the 'voice of a generation' representing the children as Junior Mayor.

What do you love about living in the City of Greater Dandenong?

I love being part of the local community of the City of Greater Dandenong as we are so very lucky to be involved and included in such a diverse and multicultural community for everyone. I love living here as the opportunities are endless and the Council and all of its members make living here all the more wonderful and magical every day putting a smile on everyone's face.

What does it mean to you that the Council is a child-friendly city?

Being in a child-friendly city means every child in the City of Greater Dandenong has a voice to be heard. We live in a world where we design and promote child involvement and this is a great asset in making everyone feel welcome.

What do you like about the work Council does?

I admire and acknowledge the Council's work as it makes our lives safer and enjoyable for everyone. Council is involved in so many new and amazing projects sculpting the City of Greater Dandenong, making it a better place for everyone. I admire all of the Council's work to be a more child-friendly city and inclusive including both fun and educational initiatives many people take part in.

Why did you apply to be a Junior Mayor?

Applying for Junior Mayor was something I was unsure of and nervous about but coming from the school of last year's Junior Mayor and seeing all the amazing opportunities I knew it was worth a shot and no matter the outcome you will never know if you never try. I felt so happy and fortunate to be able to be school captain but being part of the Children's Advisory Group opened a whole new door of opportunities for me. It gives a voice to you and your fellow students and schools and portal into the voice of change in the Council. I am so thankful for everyone who made the opportunity possible along the way and I highly recommend the experience for all Grade 6 students stepping out of their comfort zone and embarking on a journey for the last year of primary school.

What do you hope to be involved in during your time as Junior Mayor?

I have had the honour of participating in many educational initiatives as Junior Mayor and I would highly encourage other students to take part. I can't be more thankful for the opportunities I have taken part in already and I am overjoyed to take part in any campaigns and initiatives the Council is willing to have me in.

