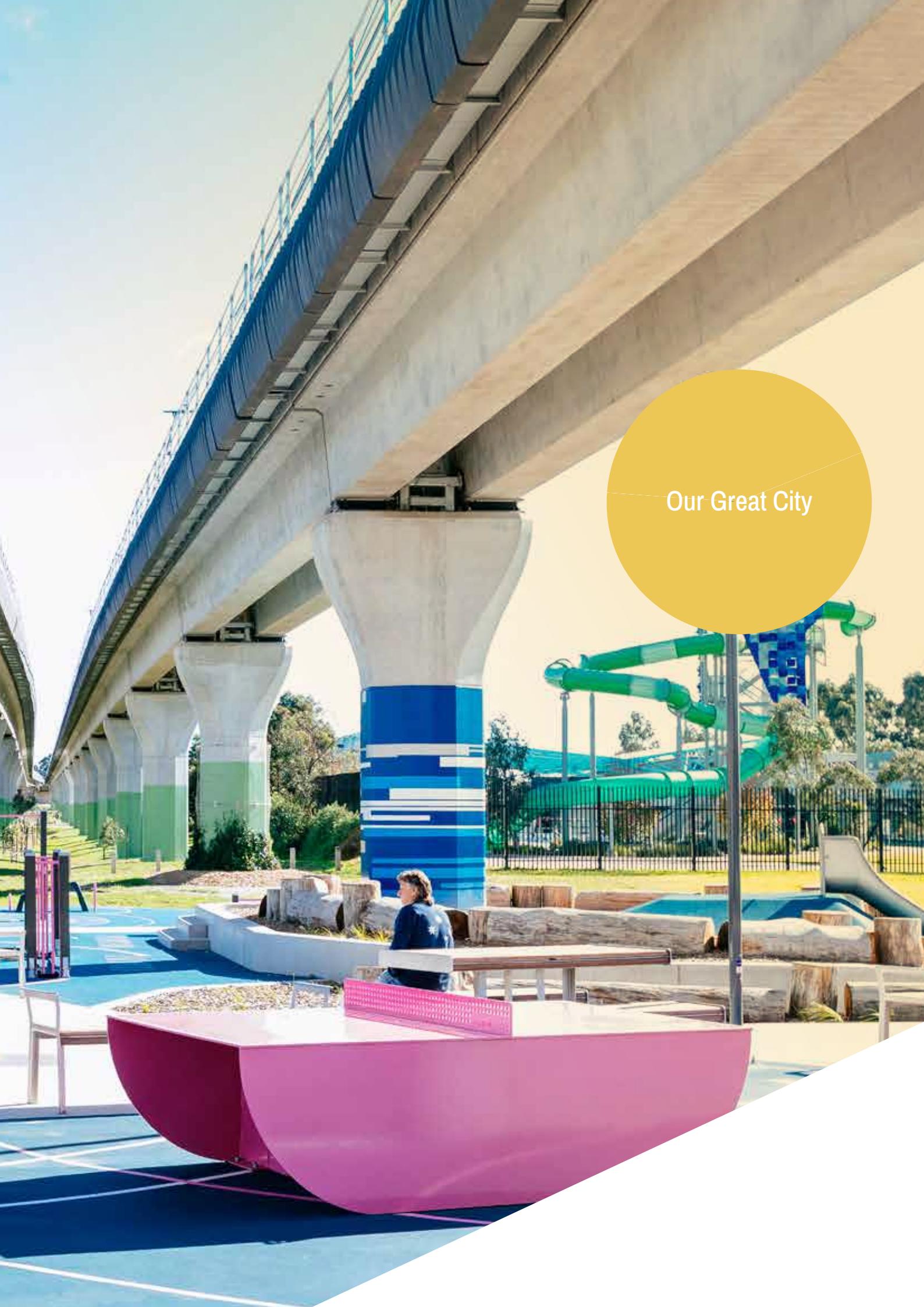




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Our Great City

# Our Great City

## People



Greater Dandenong is the **most culturally diverse locality in Australia** and has an estimated population of 169,000 people with a forecast of 197,000 people by 2029.

The most widely spoken languages are **Vietnamese, Khmer, Punjabi, Mandarin, Cantonese and Greek.**

Over **two thirds of residents** in the city **speak languages other than English** at home and one in seven residents has limited fluency in the use of spoken English.

**Nearly two thirds** of residents were **born overseas** and residents come from **157 different birthplaces**.

## Place

Quality infrastructure across the city includes **61km of shared bike paths, 1,084km of footpaths** and **127 playgrounds**.



The City of Greater Dandenong encompasses an area of **129 square kilometres in Melbourne's south east**, approximately 35km from the Melbourne central business district.

It is home to **35 sports reserves, 197 parks totalling 523 hectares** and **33 bushland areas**

## Opportunity

**Key industries** within the municipality include **health care, retail trade, wholesale trade** and **transport and warehousing**.

Tourism is a key focus for Council and the area has **many attractions** including **cultural precincts, culturally diverse cuisine, and food and shopping tours**.

The **City of Greater Dandenong** is renowned as the **manufacturing hub of Victoria** with the industry accounting for **22 per cent of all jobs**.



The **Afghan Bazaar** cultural precinct and **Melbourne's first Indian cultural precinct** bring many visitors to the city along with the **iconic Dandenong Market** which attracts over **five million visitors** a year.

# Our Great City

## Our Vision

Greater Dandenong is a safe and vibrant city of opportunity for all – to visit, work, live and play

## Our Key Strategic Objectives

### People

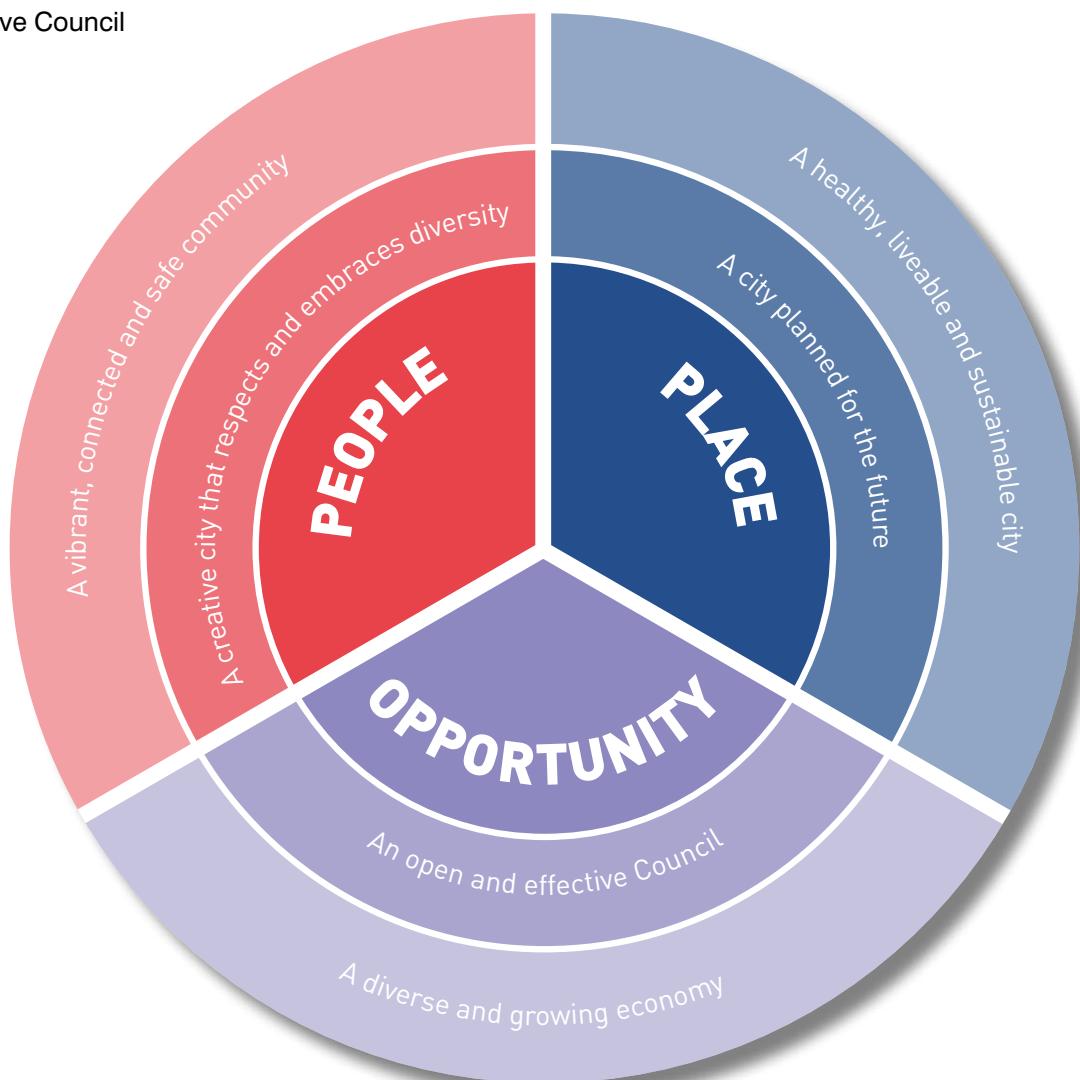
- A vibrant, connected and safe community
- A creative city that respects and embraces diversity

### Place

- A healthy, liveable and sustainable city
- A city planned for the future

### Opportunity

- A diverse and growing economy
- An open and effective Council



1



# Our Great City

## Message from the Mayor

The City of Greater Dandenong continues to position itself as a vibrant, diverse and welcoming community.

We have a proud history of welcoming people to our city from around the globe and ensuring they become and remain active, happy and engaged residents.

We are now officially recognised as Australia's most culturally diverse community with residents from more than 160 different nations calling Greater Dandenong home.

There are almost 2,000 people seeking asylum in Greater Dandenong – the highest of any Victorian municipality. These people are some of our community's most vulnerable and Council is committed to supporting them.

Council has been working very hard in the advocacy space during the past 12 months. We recognise the importance of working in partnership with our community and other tiers of Government to bring positive outcomes for everyone who lives in our community.

Greater Dandenong City Council led a campaign to have financial and support services reinstated for asylum seekers. The 'Back your neighbour' Campaign saw 22 Councils from across Victoria and NSW band together to advocate strongly against the Federal Government cuts.

Council also advocated for the Federal Government to continue funding four-year-old kinder through the I Love Kinder campaign. Council values the importance of early childhood education for all of its residents. In recognition of this, Council built a new early years facility at Yarraman Oaks Primary School in Noble Park. This state-of-the-art building will serve the Noble Park community for many years to come and is a valuable addition to the education services Council provides to the youngest members of our community.

Council recognises the community's need for quality facilities and has invested significantly in projects that add value and enjoyment to the lives of the people who live, work and visit our city.

The Springvale Community Precinct project continues to progress well. The redevelopment of City Hall has been well received by the community and stage two is now well underway. It is exciting to see the transformation of the former Springvale municipal offices into a world-class community facility providing a variety of learning, leisure and cultural spaces. Once stage two is complete in the first half of 2020 the location will boast a new Springvale Library, customer service centre and meetings rooms. This is all part of Council's commitment to building a better Springvale.

Other significant projects completed in the past 12 months include the redevelopment of Dandenong Park. Works include construction of the Stan Prior Stage, a new toilet block, picnic and barbecue areas and a multipurpose court. Council also worked in partnership with Development Victoria to deliver the new multi-sport park located on the corner of Cadle and Walker streets in Dandenong. It features courts for a range of recreational activities including basketball, netball and soccer.

Council values partnerships and believes by working together with other tiers of government and the community we can continue to achieve positive outcomes for the community.

Our Community Satisfaction Survey results were very positive and saw Council ranked higher than the state average in all areas. Community engagement was a particularly well ranked area. Council places a great deal of value on the ideas and information our community share and feeds this into Council's strategies and plans.

An extensive review of Council's Dog Off-Leash Strategy was completed and the community provided some fantastic feedback which helped us identify locations for new off-leash areas in Greater Dandenong.

The community also helped inform the Indian Cultural Precinct Framework. This framework outlines what initiatives the community and other key stakeholders would like to see put in place to grow and develop this precinct in Dandenong. The framework was nominated for an Australian Institute of Landscapes Architecture award.

Renowned as a City of Celebration, Greater Dandenong hosted more than 100 cultural and community festivals this year. In addition to this Council organised a number of well-attended events including Snow Fest in Springvale and New Year's Eve in Harmony Square. The eight major events run by Council attracted a combined total of 85,000 people.

Council's Civic Facilities continue to be embraced and supported by the local community with 11,720 bookings across a number of halls for the past year. The redevelopment of Springvale City Hall has certainly enhanced our offerings and the influx of bookings is proof that the community approve of the recent works undertaken.

As Mayor of this great city I am very proud to present our 2018–19 Annual Report. What I have mentioned above is just a highlight of what has been achieved in the past 12 months so I would encourage you to peruse this document to learn more.

I would like to thank my fellow Councillors and Council staff for the work they do for the City of Greater Dandenong. They work tirelessly to ensure we are providing high quality services and facilities for all and I commend them for this. I strongly believe that by working together we will continue to achieve the best outcomes for our city.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roz Blades".

**Roz Blades AM**  
Greater Dandenong Mayor



# Our Great City

## Chief Executive Officer's Report

2018–19 has been yet another very successful year for Greater Dandenong City Council.

Many diverse achievements have been accomplished by Council for the benefit of its community:

- Eight major events held with a total of 85,000 attendees – *confirming that Greater Dandenong is most certainly, a ‘City of Celebration’;*
- a new multi-sport park completed in Walker street – *reflecting our ongoing partnership with the State and Development Victoria;*
- various grants received, one in particular being \$75,000 from the State Government to implement Council’s Preventing Violence/Gender Equity Action Plan – *confirming our commitment to this cause;*
- strong advocacy campaigns including ‘Back your neighbour’ for reinstatement of ‘Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS)’ – *highlighting Council’s role and the specific role of passionate Councillors, for changes that will benefit the community;*
- Community Satisfaction Survey outcomes – *that place Council at the top end of metropolitan Councils;*
- sustainability projects including Council’s sixth Sustainability Festival and Year One of the Urban Tree Strategy that saw 2,624 trees planted;
- a Community Revitalisation Employment Project that delivered a range of initiatives designed to increase the work readiness of local jobseekers – *reflecting Council’s unwavering support for the disadvantaged in its community;*
- the implementation of a Digital Strategy including the website redevelopment project; and,
- continued high use of Council’s facilities including almost 12,000 venue bookings across numerous halls and meeting rooms.

These are just some of the hundreds of outcomes generated in the year that together, confirm Council’s commitment to service and to the support of its diverse communities.

Upgrading or renewal of assets continues to be a key focus of Council and in this last year, the following were delivered:

- Dandenong Park improvements including construction of the ‘Stan Prior Stage’, new toilet block, picnic and bbq area and multipurpose court;
- continued progress on the Springvale Community Precinct project;
- a new Early Years facility at Yarraman Oaks Primary School Noble Park; and
- numerous streetscape projects including Afghan Bazaar (new lighting and traffic signals) and Walker Street (paving, lighting etc).

Planning for future works, essential upgrades and improvements is also most important and included the adoption of four park master plans, Frederick Wachter Reserve, Burden Park, Warner Reserve and Parkfield Reserve; and the Indian Cultural Precinct Framework was nominated for an Australian Institute of Landscape Architecture Award.

In 2014, Council delivered a new Dandenong Civic Precinct and with its Library, state-of-the-art community facilities, civic square, next generational screen and community meeting spaces, it continues to exceed all expectations. It is important and noteworthy therefore that just five years later in 2019, we have seen significant progress made in the delivery of the Springvale Community Precinct. This project – like its predecessor – reinforces the ‘capacity’ of a Council and community to create better public places.

These signature projects – and many others underway or planned including a new Aquatic Centre to replace Oasis; upgrades to the Noble Park Aquatic Centre; more streetscape improvements; and numerous new sports pavilions and facilities – reinforce Greater Dandenong’s standing as a prominent city in a developing region that places strong emphasis on quality facilities for its community.

Greater Dandenong remains highly regarded as a revitalising city that:

- increasingly responds to regional needs;
- has principal and neighbourhood activity centres that reflect growing standards of amenity and opportunity;
- is well-served by public transport (but with many remaining needs);
- has significantly improved infrastructure and assets; and
- remains a centre for employment in the region.

### Sound Financial Management

Council's operating result was a surplus of \$31.3 million. It is important to note that these surpluses are 'accounting surpluses' which include a range of non-cash items such as depreciation on Council assets, assets written off, assets gifted to Council by developers (eg. roads, footpaths and open space) and exclude cash costs such as capital expenditure.

Through sound and prudent leadership by Council and management by staff, Council remains in a healthy financial position although it must again be stated, that this will be tested into the future by the compounding effect of rate capping.

Despite these obvious challenges, Council remains focused on its purpose and objective – to provide quality services and assets to the people and businesses of this city. As stated in previous years, Council will not allow its hard earned and sound financial position to be unreasonably impacted by external challenges.

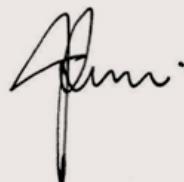
### Capital Improvements

\$53.6 million was spent on capital improvements during the year, \$21.0 million was on asset renewals with a further \$9.8 million on upgrades to existing infrastructure assets.

It is pleasing to report that the funding of basic infrastructure – roads, footpaths and drains – in 2018–19, was maintained at \$12.0 million. This investment continues to underpin the importance of Council's maintenance and protection of existing assets.

An extensive list of improvement projects was completed and these are outlined elsewhere in this report.

2018–19 was by any measure, another successful year for Council. I commend the Council on its leadership and achievements in 2018–19 and thank the many wonderful staff who remain committed to local government service within Greater Dandenong City Council.



**John Bennie PSM**  
Chief Executive Officer

