

Greater Dandenong

ANNUAL REPORT

2017–18



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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 168,000 people with a forecast of 205,000 people by 2028.

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

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, **234** land reserves, **33** bushland areas and **101** playgrounds.

Opportunity

Other **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 **30 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

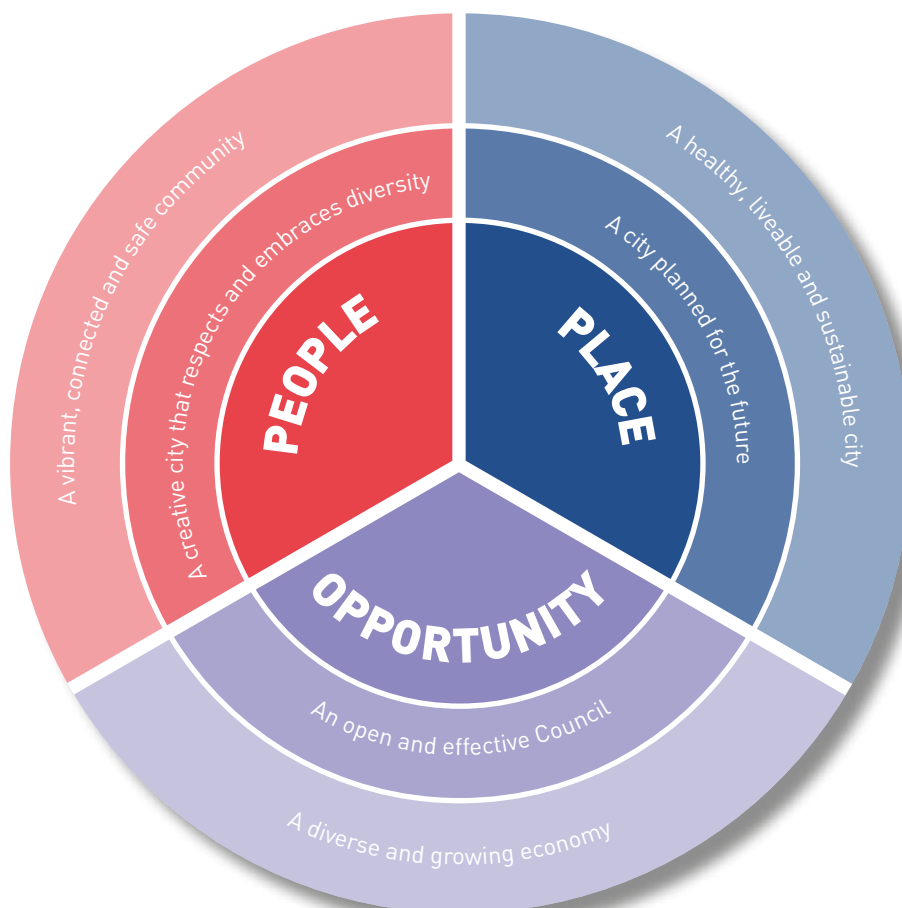
- ▶ A vibrant, connected and safe community
- ▶ A creative city that respects and embraces diversity

Place

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

Opportunity

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





Heesco in front of a section of his mural at the Dandenong Market titled "Year of the Wolf"

OUR GREAT CITY

Message from the Mayor

The City of Greater Dandenong is officially the most culturally diverse community in Australia according to the 2016 Australian Bureau of Statistics census data. We have long held claim to being the most culturally-diverse city in Victoria, but this is the first time in the city's history that it has ranked number one nationally.

With residents from 157 different birthplaces and more than half of our residents born overseas, all corners of the globe are represented in our vibrant community.

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

Council has launched its People Seeking Asylum and Refugees Action Plan 2018–21 which outlines key actions and initiatives designed to support people seeking asylum and refugees over the next four years. Through joint efforts with the Asylum Seeker and Refugee Communities Advisory Committee we have developed a plan that addresses the priority areas of concern. Collaboration with our advisory committee enables us to work with other agencies and services within the community to further identify opportunities to address these issues and to continue to build Greater Dandenong into a truly inclusive and culturally vibrant community.

Council also launched its first Reconciliation Action Plan which provides a framework for Council to realise its vision for reconciliation with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. This strategy is a practical plan of action which will provide social change and economic opportunities, as well as demonstrate Council's commitment to the local Indigenous community. It seeks to foster increased understanding, respect and inclusion in this region.

The City of Greater Dandenong is also committed to supporting our ageing population and collaborating with the community to build a city for all ages, which accommodates and respects people regardless of their life stage and capabilities. Council endorsed its Positive Ageing Strategy 2017–25, which aims for Greater Dandenong to be a place where the contribution of older people is recognised and where they are respected and able to safely and independently participate in activities and access services. This strategy focuses on promoting an integrated, whole-of-Council approach that encourages older people to maintain their links with their neighbourhoods and families and use their skills and knowledge to benefit the community.

The push to bring the A-League to the south east has gained momentum this year. The City of Greater Dandenong, together with the City of Casey and Cardinia Shire Council, has continued to spearhead the Team 11 bid to bring the eleventh A-League club to south-east Melbourne.

An exciting development this year has been the unveiling of stadium plans proposed for a site on Cheltenham Road, next to Dandenong train station. Concepts designed by Cox Architecture has Dandenong Stadium capacity at 12,000–15,000 with the ability to expand to 20,000 in the future. Various funding options are being explored and the stadium build is dependent on the Team 11 bid being successful.

It has also been a busy year for infrastructure projects in the city, with a number of major projects underway.

Council this year allocated \$6.9 million (spent \$5.6 million) for stage three works at Tatterson Park, including construction of the state-of-the-art lan Tatterson Pavilion, synthetic soccer pitch and access road and car park works. This premier multi-purpose sporting hub is a wonderful asset for our great city, and will cater for everything from grass roots sport right through to elite level competition.

The second stage of the Springvale Community Precinct also commenced, and includes the construction of the new Springvale Library and community hub. The significant investment by Council in this precinct will see the site of the former Springvale municipal offices on Springvale Road transformed into a world-class community facility, providing a variety of learning, leisure and cultural spaces.

It gives me great pleasure to present our 2017–18 Annual Report. We are very proud of what we have achieved in the past year, and I encourage you to take the time to read through the highlights contained in this document.

I would like to thank my fellow Councillors and staff at the City of Greater Dandenong for their continued support and contributions in helping to make our city such a wonderful and vibrant place in which to live, work and play.



Cr Youhorn Chea
Greater Dandenong Mayor

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OUR GREAT CITY

Chief Executive Officer's Report

Council has maintained balance in the delivery of its key performance outcomes over the last year. Healthy community satisfaction ratings confirm that a focus on quality service delivery continues and strong investment in infrastructure is evidence of Council's long-term commitment to asset revitalisation.

In 2017, Council reopened a refurbished and more accessible Springvale City Hall creating one of the most appealing community buildings in the region. In 2018, Council fulfilled its commitment to the Springvale Civic Masterplan and let a tender for the balance of the precinct works – a Springvale Community Hub and quality public landscape surrounds. The 'Hub' will house a library, customer service centre, community meeting rooms and a new home for the Springvale and District Historical Society. Council remains on track to deliver this project in 2020.

Council again participated in the Local Government Victoria Community Satisfaction Survey – the results again being most pleasing. Council outperformed the average for metropolitan Melbourne in all but one surveyed category – and missed the average by one point in that sole category. Most pleasing of the results were significant increases in 'overall performance' (up from 64 to 66) and 'overall direction' (up from 60 to 64 – as compared to the average for Melbourne Councils of 54). We regard such survey results as promising; as an indication of a point in time; and, as encouragement to strive for better results in the year ahead.

Council continued its objective to improve fundamental asset renewals, drains, footpaths and roads, and is making steady progress in maintaining this vast network at an optimal service level.

This report outlines many significant achievements in recurrent service delivery. I echo the suggestions of the Mayor and others and encourage all readers to scan the 'Performance Highlights' detailed in this report as it is encouraging to note the levels of achievement and performance.

Council's Strategic Focus

In 2017–18, Council has demonstrably maintained its focus on:

- ▶ **Advocacy for better outcomes** – Council's ongoing call for grade separations saw the completion of works in this year and a similar call for improved arterial road capacity has seen the announcement of a 'South-East Roads Package' that will improve access/egress to the employment zones of the city.
- ▶ **Securing partnerships in the delivery of community needs** – Council has worked hard and advocated strongly for the needs of disadvantaged people and has had no hesitation in speaking up for, and supporting, refugees and new arrivals to this city, seeking more material aid for families in need, tackling the impacts of problem gambling on vulnerable people, continuing a strong stand to eradicate violence against women, advocating for greater controls over sales of packaged liquor (for the anti-social implications that this generates), and pursuing improved and environmentally sustainable outcomes throughout the city.
- ▶ **Commitment to the progressive enhancement of community infrastructure** – with increasingly high levels of capital investment including essential investment in renewals (looking after the infrastructure we already have).
- ▶ **Creating a sound and sustainable financial strategy that can ensure operational resourcing and capital investments that satisfy community expectations** – highlighted in this last year in particular by satisfactory operations and ongoing capital investment in a rate capped environment.

Sound Financial Management

Council's operating result was a surplus of \$46.9 million. It is important to note that this is an 'accounting surplus' which includes 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 excludes cash costs such as capital expenditure.

Council remains in a healthy financial position through sound and prudent leadership by Council and its staff, although it must again be stated, that this will continue to be tested by the compounding effect of rate capping and the vagaries of certain external influences such as recycling commodity prices.

Capital Improvements

\$37.1 million was spent on capital improvements during the year with \$18.6 million spent on asset renewals and \$6.5 million on upgrades to existing infrastructure assets.

Funding of basic infrastructure (roads, footpaths and drains) was maintained at \$12 million and 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.

I commend the Council on its leadership and achievements in 2017-18 and thank the many wonderful staff that remain committed to local government service within Greater Dandenong City Council.



John Bennie PSM
Chief Executive Officer

Healthy community satisfaction ratings confirm that a focus on quality service delivery continues and strong investment in infrastructure is evidence of Council's long-term commitment to asset revitalisation.

