MAROONDAH 2050

Maroondah City Council

Maroondah Liveability Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy 2021-2031

Maroondah Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025 Update Draft

Working towards a healthy, inclusive and connected community

ELAINE

Contents

Executive summary	**4**
A message from our Councillors	**6**
Background	**7**
Strategic context	**8**
A Strategy for Liveability, Wellbeing and Resilience in Maroondah	**15**
Healthy Lifestyles	**16**
Liveable neighbourhoods	**19**
Safe communities	**22**
Social inclusion	**25**
Embracing Diversity	**28**
Social harms	**31**
Related Council documents	**34**
Making it happen	**35**
Guiding principles	**36**
Measuring our progress	**38**
Glossary	**39**

Executive summary

The *Maroondah Liveability Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy 2021*-2031 (October 2025 Update*)* (the Strategy) is Council's key social environment strategic plan that describes how Council and partners will work towards enhanced community health and wellbeing, liveability, and resilience over 10 years from 2021-2031. The Strategy is also Maroondah's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

In accordance with the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*, Council is required to prepare a health and wellbeing planning document every four years, within 12 months of general council elections. The *Maroondah Liveability Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy 2021-2031 (October 2025 update)* meets these statutory requirements and is an updated version of the previous *Maroondah Liveability Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy 2021-2031.* As a requirement of good practice and in response to the Victorian Public Health Act 2008, the Strategy has been updated to

- incorporate recent community consultation and feedback,
- update the data and research, and,
- review the priority actions in line with the above.

The Strategy outlines a vision for the future social environment of the municipality supporting the desired outcomes within *Maroondah 2050- Our future together*. Through this Strategy and supporting action plans, Council and its partners will work towards a common agenda that is evidence informed, community driven and seeks to improve the health and wellbeing of Maroondah residents.

In addition, Council also has a range of other supporting strategic documents that guide service delivery for population cohorts, age groups, enabling activities and community issues.
These include strategic documents in relation to children and families, young people, ageing residents, people with a disability, gender equity, arts and culture, reconciliation, physical activity, affordable housing, and gambling.

The *Maroondah Liveability Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy 2021-2031 (October 2025 update)* was originally developed in 2021 through extensive community engagement, stakeholder consultation, and background research and this version has been updated with 2025 engagement, consultation, data, and research. This work has helped to inform areas of population health that are key priorities to address, community aspirations and needs and gaps in service provision and support within our community. The impacts of the global coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on the Maroondah community have also been considered to incorporate long-term directions for community recovery. Details on the background research findings, community feedback and the social health profile can be found in the *Maroondah Liveability Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy Background Report - (October 2025 update).*

The background research and community engagement has led to an expanded perspective of community health that incorporates three broad and interconnected community outcomes of: community health and wellbeing, liveability, and resilience.

To support the efforts towards these three interrelated community outcomes, a set of six focus areas are identified: healthy lifestyles, liveable neighbourhoods, safe communities, social inclusion, embracing diversity and social harms. These focus areas form the basis of this Strategy and Council will continue to develop partnerships across a wide range of community service agencies, community organisations and groups, and community members to facilitate successful implementation.

To articulate the specific actions of Council in working towards the key priorities in this Strategy, a number of action plans will be developed and implemented. These associated action plans, including the *Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2025-2029,* will highlight the short-medium term priorities of Council in working towards the Strategy and will be reviewed regularly during its lifespan to ensure they are responsive to community needs.

The *Maroondah Liveability Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy 2021-2031 (October 2025 update)* provides a clear framework and common agenda for Council and its partners to collectively work on over 10 years to enhance the health and wellbeing, liveability, and resilience of our community.

A message from our Councillors

We are pleased to present the *Maroondah Liveability Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy 2021-2031 (2025 update)*

The Strategy is Council's key social environment strategic plan that describes how Council and partners will work towards achieving enhanced community wellbeing, liveability, and resilience over the next 10 years. In 2031, Maroondah will be a liveable, healthy, and resilient community where everyone can belong, thrive, and grow.

The Strategy is guided by the community vision for Maroondah as outlined in *Maroondah 2050 - Our future together* and fulfils the statutory requirements of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 as Maroondah's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

The Maroondah 2050 Community Vision was adopted in May 2025 following extensive research, and community and stakeholder consultation. It reflects emerging trends, community needs and aspirations. The Vision is the foundation from which Council shapes all its long-term plans for the municipality.

The *Maroondah Liveability Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy 2021-2031 (2025 update)* has been developed through extensive community engagement, stakeholder consultation, and analysis of factors that influence the health, wellbeing, liveability, and resilience of the Maroondah community.

Council's contribution to delivery of this Strategy will be highlighted in a range of supporting action plans, including those with a focus on health and wellbeing, disability, children and families, and positive ageing.

These action plans will be revised periodically to enable adaptation to emerging community needs and aspirations over its lifespan.

Through the implementation of this Strategy, Council will continue to take a lead role in ensuring our city remains a great place to live, work, play and visit.

Acknowledgment of Country

We, in the spirit of Reconciliation, acknowledge the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation as Traditional Custodians of the land now known as the City of Maroondah, where Indigenous Australians have performed age old ceremonies. We acknowledge and respect their unique ability to care for Country and their deep spiritual connection to it. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present, and emerging

Background

Our city

The City of Maroondah covers a land area of 61.4 square kilometres in Melbourne's outer east, 22 kilometres from the Central Business District.

The area is an urban residential municipality, with an estimated population of 117,434 residents and 47,021 households with an average of 2.54 people per household.

The first settlers to the area prior to European colonisation were the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin nation approximately 60,000 years ago.

The Wurundjeri People have a deep spiritual connection to the land and a unique ability to care for Country.

The City of Maroondah includes the suburbs of Bayswater North, Croydon, Croydon Hills, Croydon North, Croydon South, Heathmont, Kilsyth South, Ringwood, Ringwood East, Ringwood North, and Warranwood. The city also includes small sections of Kilsyth, Park Orchards, Vermont, and Wonga Park.

Maroondah has four activity centres at Croydon, Ringwood, Heathmont, and Ringwood East with Ringwood being one of the largest in Melbourne. Maroondah has the strategic advantage of being located at the north-eastern junction of the Eastern Freeway - East Link corridor. There are two train lines and a large number of bus routes linking the city with other regions. Our sustainable transport links continue to expand, with on-road cycling paths and 40km of shared trails, including the Mullum Mullum Creek Trail, the East Link Trail, the Tarralla Creek Trail, and the Dandenong Creek Trail.

In addition, a range of key service and retail precincts are clustered along the Maroondah Highway corridor and 31 neighbourhood, community and local shopping centres are spread throughout the municipality.

Over 10,100 businesses operate within the city, with 97.5% of these being small businesses employing less than 20 people. Most businesses (61.5%) by number are in the construction; professional, scientific & technical services; rental, hiring & real estate services; retail; and health care & social assistance. The top sectors for jobs (64.6%) are health care & social assistance, retail trade, manufacturing; construction; and education & training.

Compared with metropolitan Melbourne, Maroondah has a slightly higher proportion of residents aged 50 and over and a lower proportion of residents aged between 20 to 34 years.

Maroondah is an increasingly culturally and linguistically diverse community. About one in four Maroondah residents were born overseas. The most common countries of birth for overseas residents are England, China, India, Myanmar, and Malaysia.

With little remaining land available for greenfield residential development, future population growth will be stimulated by housing consolidation.

Strategic context

The Maroondah Liveability Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy 2021-2031 (October 2025 Update) is a long-term strategic plan that outlines a vision for the future social environment of the municipality supporting the desired outcomes within our Community Vision *Maroondah 2050*. Through this strategy and supporting action plans, Council and its partners will continue to strive towards enhancing the health and wellbeing, liveability, and resilience of our community.

Maroondah 2050: Our future together

Maroondah is a safe, inclusive, and vibrant community, striving for a green, prosperous, and sustainable future for all.

The Maroondah 2050 Community Vision describes our community's aspirations for the future of Maroondah looking ahead to the year 2050.

It is a vision that is unique to Maroondah. It speaks to:

- The way our community wants to feel - safe and included,
- How they want the municipality to be - vibrant and green, and
- What they want to strive for - a prosperous and sustainable future for all.

Future outcomes we are working towards

To bring the Maroondah 2050 Community Vision to life, and focus the work of Council, five outcome areas have been identified.

A healthy, inclusive, and connected community	A safe and liveable community	A green and sustainable community	A vibrant and prosperous community	A well-governed and empowered community

Guiding principles

In delivering on the outcome areas the following guiding principles were identified by the Maroondah Community Panel to shape the services, functions, and activities of Council.

- Affordable
- Accessible
- Inclusive
- Liveable
- Sustainable

Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023-2027

In Victoria, the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 gives state and local government specific responsibilities to plan for and contribute to protecting and improving community health and wellbeing. The Act requires a State public health and wellbeing plan and municipal public health and wellbeing plans to be prepared sequentially every four years. These plans inform each other and provide the basis for an integrated planning approach in Victoria.

The Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023-2027 identified 10 priority areas as seen below. The Plan recognises key links between a number of these priority areas, including recognition that many actions to increase active living and healthy eating can contribute to reducing climate change.

Where relevant to its role and local community needs, Council will seek to work in partnership with other agencies to support the areas of priority and focus highlighted in the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023-2027.

- Improving sexual and reproductive health
- Reducing harm from tobacco and e-cigarette use
- Improving wellbeing
- Increasing healthy eating
- Increasing active living
- Reducing harm from alcohol and drug use
- Tackling climate change and its impacts on health
- Preventing all forms of violence
- Decreasing antimicrobial resistance across human and animal health
- Reducing injury

Maroondah's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan

The Strategy along with the *Background Research Report-Update 2025*, is also a statutory document that has been prepared in accordance with requirements set out in the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008. This Act requires Council to prepare a health and wellbeing planning document every four years, within 12 months of general council elections.

The Act requires that this document describes how Council and its partners will work towards achieving maximum health and wellbeing for our community over the next four years.

The Act requires that the plan must:

1. Include an examination of the data about health status and health determinants in the municipal district.

2. Identify goals and strategies based on evidence for creating a local community in which people can achieve maximum health.

3. Provide for involvement of people in the local community in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the public health plan.

4. Specify how Council will work in partnership with the Department of Health and other agencies undertaking public health initiatives, projects, and programs to achieve the goals identified in the plan.

5. Be consistent with the Council Plan and the Municipal Strategic Statement.

The *Maroondah Liveability Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy 2021-2031(October 2025 update)* and the *Background Research Report (Update 2025)* meets these statutory requirements and is an update of the *Maroondah Liveability Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy 2021-2031.*

In updating this Strategy and our response to the *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023-2027,* six focus areas have been identified. The focus areas and the strategic priorities for each of them respond to the research and community consultation and align with Maroondah 2050.

What we mean by community health and wellbeing, liveability and resilience

One aim of this Strategy is to integrate and align the broad domains of wellbeing, liveability, and resilience as they relate to and impact community health and wellbeing. Whilst historical health planning in local government has focused primarily on the social determinants of health, it is increasingly recognised that wellbeing, liveability, and resilience are broader concepts that include the social determinants and together, play key roles in enabling people to live their best lives.

Wellbeing

Wellbeing is a concept that encompasses the social, economic, environmental, cultural, and political conditions that people need to flourish and fulfil their potential. While there are many definitions and models of wellbeing, this Strategy is based on the World Health Organisation (WHO) definition that considers wellbeing as a state in which every individual realises their potential, can cope with normal stresses of life and work productively, and contribute to their community.

Wellbeing is considered a state of equilibrium that balances physical wellbeing, resources, psychological wellbeing, good relationships, and freedom and effectiveness in action. This 'state of equilibrium' or balance is affected by life events and challenges. Stable wellbeing is achieved when individuals have the psychological, social, and physical resources they need to meet a particular psychological, social, and/or physical challenge. In more recent years, wellbeing has been considered and measured across age group cohorts, different geographic scales, and population groups.

Wellbeing is measured both subjectively and objectively. Subjective wellbeing is based on how an individual evaluates their life and is determined by their own assessment of domains such as standard of living, personal health, achievements in life, personal relationships, personal safety, community connectedness, future security, and spirituality/religion. Objective wellbeing focuses more on measuring the observable conditions that affect an individual's life such as life expectancy, income, nutrition, employment, education, and democratic participation.

Council's background research, data analysis and community engagement highlighted five key wellbeing areas of focus in Maroondah: community safety, healthy lifestyles, socially inclusive communities, open space, and environmental sustainability.

Liveability

Liveability links the importance of place to community health and wellbeing, sustainability, and productivity through consideration of how natural and built environments, including availability and access to amenities, can support people's quality of life. The concept of 'liveability' is experienced differently by various population groups and liveability varies over time. At an individual level, liveability is the extent to which we enjoy the quality of life afforded by the place we reside, while at a community level it reflects the degree to which a place offers opportunities for the community to enjoy its attributes.

Council's research for this Strategy identified the key factors that contribute to the liveability of a community. These include shared physical features of the natural built and economic environment; availability of healthy environments for home, work, and play; services provided to support people in their daily lives; socio-cultural features of a place including social cohesion and safety; and the perceived reputation of an area.

Examples of key contributors to community liveability include employment, food, housing, public open space, transport, walkability, and social infrastructure.

The liveability of a place contributes to the desirability and attractiveness of that place and has both a direct and indirect influence on community health and wellbeing. Liveable communities create conditions that optimise health and wellbeing outcomes for people by influencing the social determinants of health. The Australian Prevention Partnership Centre identifies the following domains of liveability that contribute to the

health and wellbeing of a community: crime and safety; education; employment and income; health and social services; housing; leisure and culture; local food and other goods; natural environments; public open space; transport; and social cohesion and local democracy.

Examples include the provision of supportive infrastructure; creating a 'sense of community' and social support; reducing crime rates and improving perceptions of safety; facilitating education opportunities and providing access to open space.

Council's background research, data analysis and community engagement highlighted six key areas of focus for liveability in Maroondah: alcohol environments, food environments, community connectedness, employment, open space, and housing.

Resilience

Resilience describes a desired state to cope effectively with challenging events for individuals, households, communities, and organisations. Individual resilience refers to the ability to cope with personal challenges, while collective community resilience relates to how a community remains connected and functional when faced with societal level challenges such as natural disasters and pandemics.

Resilience is measured against seven community resilience characteristics of being: safe and well; connected, included, and empowered; a dynamic and diverse local economy; sustainable built and natural environment, culturally rich and vibrant; democratic and engaged; and reflective and aware. Communities that are resilient typically have a strong economy, good access to services and infrastructure, ample quality open space environments, low rates of crime, positive social interaction and inclusion, strong institutions and governance, and positive leadership.

Resilience can be built by reducing vulnerability and empowering people to be well-resourced, connected, and prepared. Strengthening our wellbeing (e.g., physical, and mental health), connection (e.g., personal networks and relationships to the neighbourhood), knowledge (e.g., local, and shared knowledge) and security (e.g., adequate shelter and personal safety) can increase our resilience.

Council's background research, data analysis and community engagement highlighted a broad range of focus in the social, built, natural and economic environments to enhance community resilience in Maroondah. Some examples include ensuring construction is well designed and accessible; maintaining opportunities for social inclusion and connection; and nurturing vibrant local businesses.

The role of local government in facilitating community health and wellbeing, liveability and resilience

Local government is uniquely placed and plays a particularly significant role in enhancing community health and wellbeing, liveability and resilience.

Historically local governments have had responsibility for delivering community services such as immunisation, early years and childcare services, youth, and aged care services; regulating behaviour in public places and the handling of food; disposing of waste; building community facilities; and maintaining our public places and spaces.

These roles are increasingly more dynamic and require councils to collaborate with partner agencies to collectively shape community wellbeing, liveability and resilience at individual, neighbourhood, municipal and regional levels.

Through integrated strategic planning, agile and responsive service delivery, building partnerships with local stakeholders, and empowering community members, local government works to build social capital, create community capacity, address the social determinants of health, and enhance the places and spaces where people live, work and play.

In accordance with the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*, the function of local government, is to seek to protect, improve and promote public health and wellbeing within a municipality by:

- Creating an environment which supports the health of members of the local community and strengthens the capacity of the community and individuals to achieve better health by initiating, supporting, and managing public health planning processes at the local government level
- Developing and implementing public health policies and programs within the municipal district
- Developing and enforcing up-to-date public health standards and intervening if the health of people within the municipal district is affected
- Facilitating and supporting local agencies whose work has an impact on public health and wellbeing to improve public health and wellbeing in the local community
- Coordinating and providing immunisation services to children living or being educated within the municipal district
- Ensuring that the municipal district is maintained in a clean and sanitary condition.

A snapshot of just some of the services provided by Council to facilitate and enhance community health and wellbeing, liveability and resilience are highlighted in the table below:

Wellbeing	**Liveability**	**Resilience**
• Providing access to sport and recreation facilities • Delivering maternal and child health services • Enabling early childhood education • Empowering and supporting youth and young adults • Supporting vulnerable residents • Promoting lifelong learning and social connection through community houses	• Enhancing and maintaining open space, bushland, and reserves • Providing and enhancing shared trails, footpaths, and roads • Planning for changes to land use • Promoting and activating liveable neighbourhoods • Supporting local businesses and shopping strips • Facilitating community gardens	• Leading emergency management preparation, response, relief, and recovery • Providing community grants to support local groups and organisations • Mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change • Planning for the future housing needs of the community • Ensuring a financially sustainable approach to service delivery

• Delivering community wellbeing activities, events, and programs	• Providing public art, access to galleries and community involvement in arts and cultural activities • Encouraging connection to First Peoples cultures	

Additional frameworks

In addition to *Maroondah 2050* and the *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023-2027* as detailed above, several other frameworks have informed this Strategy to support the enhancement of community health and wellbeing, liveability, and resilience outcomes in the municipality.

Social determinants of health

The social conditions in which people are born, live and work are considered important determinants of their health outcomes. The health advantages and disadvantages experienced by people are shaped by their broader social and economic conditions. The Framework suggests that inequalities in health appear in the form of a 'social gradient of health' that relates a person's socioeconomic position to their overall health and wellbeing outcomes.

Factors such as income, education, housing, conditions of employment, power, and social support act to strengthen or undermine the health of individuals and communities. Because of their potent and underlying effects, these health-determining factors are known as the 'social determinants of health.' The World Health Organisation (WHO) has described social determinants as the circumstances in which people grow, live, work, and age, and the systems put in place to deal with illness.

PERMA+

While the identification and treatment of mental health problems is critically important for those facing mental illness, it provides an incomplete picture of mental health. Positive psychology is a complementary approach that shifts the focus from what is clinically wrong, to the promotion of wellbeing and the creation of a satisfying life filled with meaning, pleasure, engagement, positive relationships, accomplishment, and health. Positive Psychology, also referred to as Wellbeing Science, is the scientific study of human flourishing, and an applied approach to optimal functioning. It has also been defined as the study of the strengths and virtues that enable individuals, communities, and organisations to thrive.

The components of PERMA+ (Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment PLUS Optimism, Physical Activity, Nutrition, and Sleep) provide a framework to understand and cultivate wellbeing. When introduced effectively, positive psychology provides strong scientific evidence about what works to improve wellbeing at both an individual and community level.

The PERMA+ model has been central to Council's partnership with Communities of Wellbeing Inc. over recent years. Established in 2015, Communities of Wellbeing Inc collaborates with local stakeholders across a range of settings to build capability, wellbeing literacy and social connections to enable communities to flourish.

Communities of Wellbeing Inc. works across five key areas of impact in Maroondah: home and family life, financial life, learning and education, work life, and social and public life. One key area of impact has involved the Maroondah Positive Education Network which has seen teachers and students embed wellbeing into the curriculum and culture of local schools.

Place Planning for Liveable Neighbourhoods

The Place Planning for Liveable Neighbourhoods project (the 'Project') focuses on better planning of our local activity centres to create places that are more liveable, where people can connect with their community, attract investment, and support local resilience. Council is seeking community input to ensure that local aspirations are included in future planning.

Croydon South and Ringwood North have been chosen as the first focus areas for the Project due to their potential to improve the quality of life for local communities within a walkable area and to build on previous community projects. The Project aims to identify opportunities to bring social, economic, and environmental benefits to local neighbourhoods. The Project aligns with the 'Liveable Neighbourhoods' focus area of this Strategy.

Liveable neighbourhoods can shape the way we live, feel, enjoy, and experience our community and are important for health and wellbeing. Liveable neighbourhoods are safe, attractive, socially inclusive, and environmentally sustainable. They aim to support 'living locally' by planning for walkable, well-serviced places where Maroondah residents can meet their needs. The outcomes of the Project seek to improve Council's approach to planning for liveable neighbourhoods and are intended to be replicated across the municipality.

What the evidence tells us

Significant and comprehensive background research was undertaken into a range of topics, issues and population health needs to inform this Strategy. Research has focused on the impacts on the Maroondah community where data has been available but has also sought to understand the broader national and international context through a literature review.

Comprehensive community consultation has also informed the Strategy focus areas and strategic priorities that support the three outcome areas of health and wellbeing, liveability, and resilience.

Details of the research and community consultation results that have informed this Strategy can be found in the *Background Research Report: Liveability, Wellbeing, and Resilience Strategy (Update 2025)* that is a companion document to this Strategy.

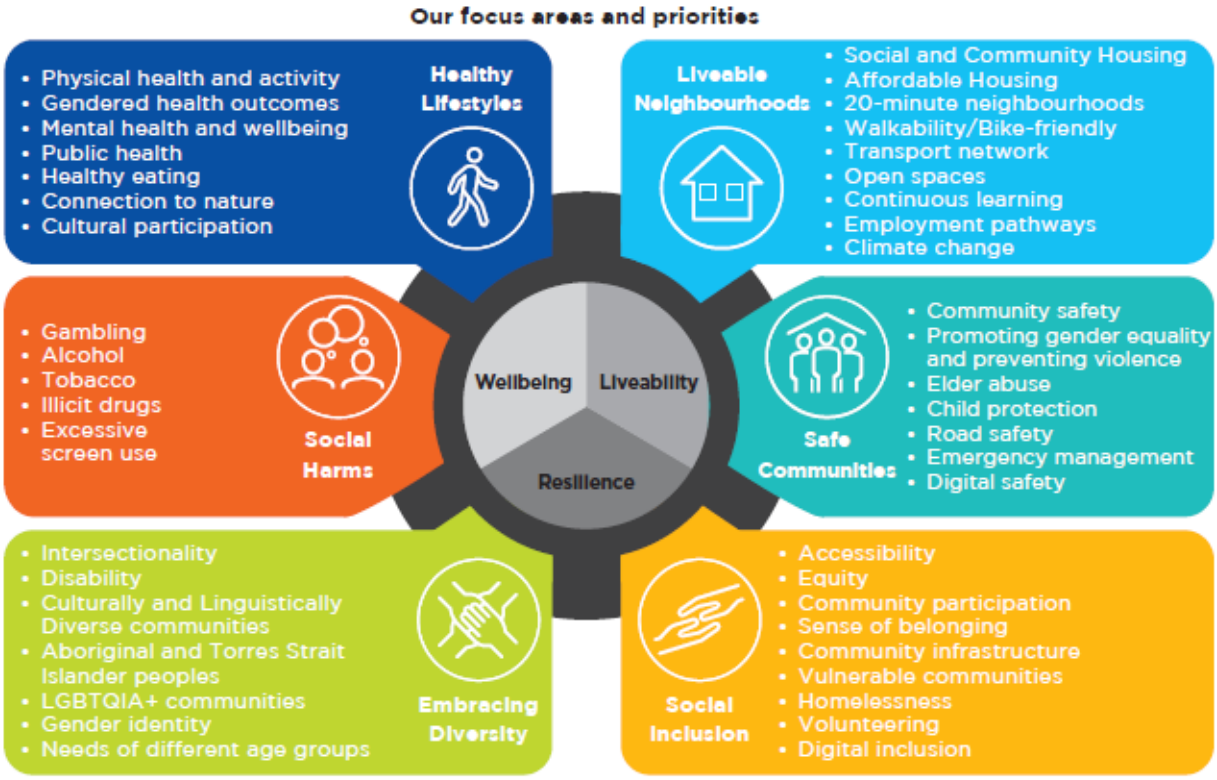
A Strategy for Liveability, Wellbeing and Resilience in Maroondah

Our community vision

Maroondah is a safe, inclusive, and vibrant community, striving for a green, prosperous, and sustainable future for all.

Our key focus areas

To deliver this vision and support the overall vision of Maroondah 2050 - Our future together, six focus areas have been developed (see diagram below) that will create a framework for actions that Council will undertake to achieve this vision.



Healthy Lifestyles

In 2031 Maroondah will be a healthy and active community where all people are physically and mentally well.

The research tells us

Healthy lifestyles refer to positive outcomes that are achieved through behaviours that promote health, including reducing the risk of chronic illness and disease and improving overall physical and mental wellbeing. Healthy lifestyles can help to improve happiness and satisfaction in life, reduce our risk of chronic illness and disease, improve life expectancy, and maintain good mental health. Healthy lifestyles are directly influenced by physical and mental wellbeing, physical activity, and social interaction, along with consumption of healthy food and drinks.

Our health is also strongly linked to external environmental factors. Individual lifestyle behaviours are affected and shaped by the conditions and environment in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age.

Physical inactivity significantly increases the risk of developing cardiovascular disease, diabetes, breast and colon cancer, mental health issues, experiencing falls and musculoskeletal conditions.
Spending time in nature has been shown to have many positive effects on physical, social, and mental health. However, our changing climate has significant consequences for the environment and for public health, wellbeing, and safety. The direct and indirect impacts of climate change are likely to exacerbate existing public health risks and represent a substantial risk to human health.

Did you know?

- The percentage of adults in Maroondah who are obese or overweight increased from 52% in 2017 to 56.7% in 2023. Men are 20% more likely than women to be obese or overweight.

- In 2023 over 20% of Maroondah residents reported experiencing high to very high levels of psychological distress. And 20% sought professional help for a mental health problem. However, men in Maroondah are less likely to have sought professional help for a mental health problem (7%), compared to women in Maroondah (22%) and men in Victoria (14%).

- In 2023 almost 16% of Maroondah's adult population reported that they undertook no physical activity at all while 47% reported that they undertook less than the recommended amount of 150 minutes per week.

Our community said

Our community values enhanced physical and mental health and wellbeing facilitated by exercise, healthy eating, and access to health services. There is an understanding that healthy lifestyles, which include being socially connected and with opportunities to connect with nature, lead to improved wellbeing and reduced illness. Mental health within the community was particularly impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the community desire a greater focus on mental health in Council's service delivery, programs, and events.

The community also highlighted the need for more affordable facilities, free outdoor recreation options as well as active and passive activities that promote health and wellbeing for all. Health and wellbeing facilities, spaces, services, programs, and events provided by Council, and its partners, are highly regarded. Community members highlighted that Council should further raise awareness of what is on offer within the Maroondah community to enhance residents' health and wellbeing. The community suggested that programs should be co-designed with user groups and relevant community organisations for suitability

and success. Partnering with community groups could increase funding opportunities, strengthen advocacy, and enable greater delivery of initiatives.

We will work towards healthy lifestyles in Maroondah by focusing on the following strategic priorities and objectives:

Physical health and activity

Work in partnership to promote physical health, through the delivery of accessible initiatives, programs, and services.

Provide and enhance accessible active and passive open spaces, active travel infrastructure, sporting precincts and integrated recreation facilities, to increase opportunities for and participation in physical activity.

Work in partnership to provide safe, inclusive, and accessible environments and opportunities for all community members to undertake physical activity.

Gendered health outcomes

Work in partnership to provide services and initiatives that support gendered health outcomes including known health risks, heart disease, cancer, physical activity, maternal health, parenting, healthy masculinities, reducing stigma and supporting those experiencing vulnerability.

Mental health and wellbeing

Work in partnership to promote awareness of mental health, build the capacity of the community to navigate mental health challenges, and advocate for and support at-risk community members to access services.

Work in partnership to promote awareness of mental wellbeing and using prevention and strength-based approaches to build the resilience of the community and enhance their wellbeing.

Public health

Work in partnership to implement a preventative approach to addressing current and emerging public health issues, including communicable diseases and drug-resistant infections, and chronic diseases.

Work in partnership to advocate for and support the community to minimise the health impacts of climate change, with a focus on vulnerable groups.

Healthy eating

Provide leadership in healthy eating through the promotion of healthier food and drink options for Council facilities, events, spaces, and places. Work in partnership to promote healthy eating through community education, initiatives, and service delivery. Encourage and promote sustainably grown local produce, enhanced food security and facilitate social inclusion.

Connection to nature

Enhance Maroondah's canopy vegetation, habitat corridors, parklands, bushlands, and waterways to promote mental wellbeing, facilitate physical activity, encourage the community's social connection to the natural environment.

Cultural participation

Work in partnership to curate arts and cultural activities, installations, and activations to promote health and wellbeing and encourage social connection.

Indicators of progress

Self-reported health
Percent of Maroondah residents reporting their health as very good or excellent

Subjective wellbeing
Subjective Wellbeing Index for Maroondah residents and Maroondah resident satisfaction with life as a whole

Physical activity
Percent of Maroondah residents who are sufficiently physically active

Healthy eating
Percent of Maroondah residents who meet daily consumption guidelines for fruit and vegetables

Alignment to Maroondah 2050 Outcomes

- A healthy, inclusive, and connected community
- A green and sustainable community

Alignment to Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023-2027 priorities

- Increasing healthy eating
- Increasing active living
- Improving wellbeing

"People are living older and improving people's mental and physical health should be a financial and social benefit to community."

Croydon Hills, 18-34, Male

Liveable neighbourhoods

In 2031 Maroondah will be a network of liveable neighbourhoods with a range of opportunities to live, work and play locally.

The research tells us

Neighbourhoods shape the way we live, feel, enjoy, and experience our community and are important for health and wellbeing. Liveable neighbourhoods are about 'living locally' - giving people the ability to meet most of their everyday needs within a 20-minute walk from home, with access to safe cycling and local public transport options. They are safe, attractive, socially inclusive, and environmentally sustainable. Key elements of a liveable neighbourhood include affordable and diverse housing, education and employment opportunities, public open space, local shops, health and community services, and leisure and cultural opportunities, via convenient public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure. Local neighbourhood design and activation influences physical activity, health outcomes, social connectedness, and sustainability.

Did you know?

- In 2021 33.5% of Maroondah residents lived and **worked locally**.
- 72% of Maroondah dwellings are estimated to be within **400m of public open space**, which is higher than Knox (69%) and Yarra Ranges (53%).
- In 2021, 33% of renters were experiencing rental stress and 14% of homeowners were in mortgage stress
- An estimated 88% of households and businesses in Maroondah are located within **400m of regular public transport.**

Our community said

Our community highly values the location, proximity, and accessibility of Maroondah with 25% of community contributions identifying this as something that makes Maroondah great. Further development of accessible local neighbourhoods within Maroondah is also supported. Facilities and community services, parks and playgrounds, shops and businesses, accessibility and amenities, open space and green space, public transport and walkability all contribute to liveability in Maroondah.

There is a desire to foster a sense of community and create inviting places of belonging within neighbourhoods. Our community would like to see the creation and activation of local innovative spaces and places that provide the potential for passive recreation and social connections. Our community understand the impacts of climate change and recognise the importance of action for our future, with a strong sense that the green space, clean air and natural environment in Maroondah needs to be protected. There is a desire for stronger action to address climate change and encouraging community behaviour change to reduce environmental impact

We will work towards healthy lifestyles in Maroondah by focusing on the following strategic priorities and objectives:

Social and Community Housing

Work in partnership to increase investment in accessible, high quality, safe and well-located social and community housing.

Affordable Housing

Advocate and promote a diverse range of high quality innovative and affordable housing options to meet the needs of all income levels and life-stage requirements.

Local neighbourhoods

Facilitate an integrated network of thriving local neighbourhoods across Maroondah that facilitate a sense of belonging and healthy lifestyles, that also enable access to key services and amenities; and education and employment opportunities; and places of connection.

Walkability/Bike-friendly

Work in partnership to facilitate local neighbourhood networks that are walkable and bike-friendly, and promote active travel of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.

Transport network

Advocate and work in partnership to enable an integrated network of safe, accessible, and efficient transport options, including public transport, which meet the needs of people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.

Open spaces

Promote and enhance Maroondah's active and passive open spaces to provide opportunities for connection, exercise, play and enjoyment for all people.

Continuous learning

Plan, advocate, and facilitate improved access and opportunities for continuous learning for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.

Employment pathways

Work in partnership to facilitate local employment pathways with a focus on young people, people with a disability, along with people experiencing mid-career transition and seeking to re-enter the workforce.

Climate change

Foster liveable places and spaces for our community that can adapt to climate change and responding to current and future risks.

Work in partnership to reduce Maroondah's greenhouse gas emissions and foster a culture of sustainable living within the community.

Indicators of progress

Attractive open space
Public open space in Maroondah (hectares)

Household stress
Percent of Maroondah households in the lowest 40% of incomes who are paying more than 30% of their usual gross weekly income on housing costs

Transport proximity
Percent of Maroondah households that are within 200 metres of a bicycle facility and/or 400 metres of a bus stop and/or 800 metres of a train station

Environmental leadership
Community perception of Council's performance in relation to environmental sustainability

Alignment to Maroondah to 2050 Outcomes

- A safe, and liveable community
- A healthy, inclusive, and connected community
- A green and sustainable community
- A vibrant and prosperous community

Alignment to Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023-2027 priorities

- Tackling climate change and its impact on health
- Increasing active living
- Improving wellbeing

"Liveable neighbourhoods involve a balance between housing, green corridors, sporting facilities, schools and community facilities."

Warranwood, 60+, Female

Safe communities

In 2031 Maroondah will be a community where all people feel and are safe.

The research tells us

Safety is a fundamental component of wellbeing, liveability, and resilience. The degree to which someone feels safe within a home, workplace or community has a significant impact on how and where they live, work and play. Feeling safe and secure within a home, neighbourhood, workplace, online and in community can affect one's sense of freedom, levels of stress and overall physical and mental health, trust, social habits and lifestyle behaviours, social connections, work and study productivity, and participation in leisure, community, and physical activities.

Did you know?

- In 20201/22, the Maroondah offence incident rate was marginally lower than the Victorian rate (6,128 per 100,000, compared to 6,694). Most incidents occurred in Ringwood and Croydon, and the major locations were in homes and streets/lanes/footpaths.
- Over 15% of the vision statements suggested by our community related to safety.

Our community said

Our community view safety as the foundation of liveability. To further improve safety in Maroondah, our community recommend addressing and improving infrastructure in the community that impacts perceptions of safety, including lighting and CCTV. There is a desire for Council to partner with organisations to promote community safety, positive cultures in community sport, digital safety awareness and behaviours, provide family violence education and support those at risk of family violence.

There is a desire from the community for Council to continue supporting residents during emergencies and an understanding that climate change is likely to increase these events. Responsiveness and reaction time are crucial to support residents (particularly vulnerable residents) during emergencies. The community also see value in learning from the experiences of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and extreme weather events in emergency planning and management.

We will work towards safe communities in Maroondah by focusing on the following strategic priorities and objectives:

Community safety

Work in partnership to promote community safety and implement initiatives and practices aimed at improving the actual and perceived safety of the community.

Plan and advocate for the application crime prevention and community safety principles that facilitate safe places and spaces.

Promote and facilitate safer cultures, spaces and settings relating to issues of gambling, alcohol, and other drugs.

Promoting gender equality and preventing violence

Work in partnership to promote gender equality and inclusion in Maroondah to facilitate fairness of opportunity, safe environments and respectful relationships that reduce all forms of gender-based violence and discrimination.

Elder abuse

Advocate and support initiatives for the prevention of all forms of elder abuse.

Child protection

Promote a culture of child safety that is prevention focussed and proactive, encourages the empowerment of children and young people, and supports all people in the community safely disclose risks of harm to children and young people, and to respond effectively to allegations of child abuse.

Road safety

Work in partnership to advocate for road safety infrastructure and promote road safety through education and training.

Emergency management

Work in partnership to utilise existing community resources and strengths to build resilience and preparedness and reduce vulnerability.

Provide leadership in community-centred response, relief, recovery, and regeneration arising from disruptions and emergencies, including those resulting from climate change.

Digital safety

Work in partnership to raise awareness of digital safety to minimise harm and promote safe online behaviours and interactions.

Indicators of progress

Perceptions of safety
Percent of Maroondah residents who agree that they feel safe when walking alone at night

Crime
Offence rate per 100,000 population in Maroondah

Appearance of public areas
Community satisfaction with the appearance of public areas

Alignment to Maroondah to 2050 Outcomes

- A safe and liveable community
- A vibrant and prosperous community
- A healthy, inclusive, and connected community

Alignment to Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023-2027 priorities

- Reducing injury
- Preventing all forms of violence

"We should all feel safe to go about our business, regardless of the hour of the day or day of the week. We should be able to walk the streets at night or early morning without fear or trepidation."

Ringwood, 35-59, Female

Social inclusion

In 2031 Maroondah will be an inclusive, accessible, and equitable community where all people can participate, feel connected and experience a sense of belonging.

The research tells us

A socially inclusive community enables all members of the community to fully participate and contribute to social, economic, and cultural life in a welcoming and safe manner. Being socially included means that people have the resources, opportunities and capabilities they need to participate in education and training (learn), participate in employment, unpaid or voluntary work including family and carer responsibilities (work), connect with people, use local services and participate in local, cultural, civic and recreational activities (engage), and influence decisions that impact them (voice). Research shows that social connection and participation is fundamental to positive mental health and wellbeing, reduce psychological distress and help to maintain overall health and wellbeing. Being inclusive involves deliberate actions taken to remove or reduce barriers to inclusion and to create opportunities that facilitate and encourage full and equal participation.

Did you know?

- In 2021, 24% of all households in Maroondah were lone person households and 60% of those are women.
- In 2023, 16.4% of residents reported that they had experienced discrimination in the previous six months which is the second highest percentage in the Eastern Metropolitan Region.
- Maroondah's rate of homelessness is 42.1 per 10,000 people which is the third highest in the Eastern Metropolitan Region.
- Almost 15% of Maroondah residents volunteer in the community which is fourth highest in the Eastern Metropolitan Region and higher than Greater Melbourne at 12.1%.

Our community said

Maroondah is seen as a friendly and inclusive community. Social inclusion is seen as currently supporting health and wellbeing needs in the community through its promotion of acceptance, belonging and support. It is important for people to be part of a community with friendships, environments where people feel valued and appreciated, and opportunities to volunteer. No one in the community should experience discrimination, feel threatened or be excluded.

Social relationships were understood to be important in preventing family violence and critical to survival in an emergency, as people who are not connected are more vulnerable. Key areas of need included supporting community members with a disability and elderly people, increasing community connection, addressing homelessness, and supporting vulnerable people and those living alone.

Social inclusion is facilitated through initiatives, activities, programs, and events, which bring people together and provide the opportunity for social connection and community participation. There is a role for Council to promote opportunities for community involvement, encourage local leaders to act as community connectors, create opportunities for volunteers and support local volunteer-led organisations. The importance of bringing people together to create a shared purpose, foster community connection and create networks using inviting places and spaces that create a sense of belonging was identified. There is a strong desire to ensure that all community members have access to services, facilities, and community connection opportunities where everyone can feel valued and empowered. Council can learn through lived experiences of community groups and embed this input into planning and service delivery.

We will work towards safe communities in Maroondah by focusing on the following strategic priorities and objectives:

Accessibility

Promote, provide, and improve community infrastructure, services and events that are accessible for all people.

Equity

Promote and create opportunities for equity across all abilities, ages, cultures, genders, languages, religions, sexualities, and socio-economic groups.

Community participation

Work in partnership to create opportunities for community participation and social connection for all people.

Sense of belonging

Encourage and promote opportunities for all people to develop a strong sense of belonging to their local community.

Community infrastructure

Plan, provide and promote opportunities and places for social connection and cultural vibrancy through community infrastructure and activation across Maroondah.

Vulnerable communities

Work in partnership to advocate for and support vulnerable and disadvantaged communities and community members.

Homelessness

Work in partnership to support community members experiencing or at risk of homelessness and promote pathways out of homelessness.

Volunteering

Work in partnership to support, empower and connect organisations and groups that involve volunteers. Promote diverse and attractive opportunities and empower local volunteers.

Digital inclusion

Work in partnership to enable access to digital environments and build confidence in digital literacy.

Indicators of progress

Sense of community
Percent of Maroondah residents who agree people are willing to help in their neighbourhood
Percent of Maroondah residents who agree they live in a close-knit neighbourhood

Social connectedness
Percent of Maroondah residents who agree people in their neighbourhood can be trusted

Volunteerism
Percent of Maroondah residents who actively volunteer

Alignment to Maroondah 2040 Outcomes

- A healthy, inclusive, and connected community
- A vibrant and prosperous community
- A well-governed and empowered community

Alignment to Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023-2027 priorities

- Preventing all forms of violence
- Improving wellbeing

"…it creates good people and strong communities when people do things together with a common interest."

Croydon, 35-59, Female

Embracing Diversity

In 2031 Maroondah will be a harmonious community that celebrates and embraces diversity where all people are respected and valued.

The research tells us

Diversity plays a major contributing factor towards community liveability, health, and wellbeing. Embracing diversity is the practice of including and involving people from a range of different social and ethnic backgrounds, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, or other ideologies.

The practice includes the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment, moving beyond simple tolerance and embracing and understanding the rich dimensions of diversity within everyone.

Maroondah is home to a diverse range of communities including, but not limited to, people with disability, cultural and linguistic diverse (CALD) communities, First Peoples, people with a range of faiths, and community members with different gender and sexual identities.

Did you know?

- In 2021, almost 20% of Maroondah residents spoke **a language other than English** at home. Compared to 17% in 2016.
- In 2021 6.2% of Maroondah's population had a profound or severe disability
- 734 Maroondah residents identified as First Peoples compared to 560 residents 2016.
- In 2021 the most prevalent health condition of First Peoples was a mental health condition at 20.1%. This is almost double the general Maroondah percentage at 10.4% and higher than Greater Melbourne at 18.6%.
- In 2023, 58% of LGBTQIA+ Victorians reported that they faced unfair treatment based on sexual orientation and 78% of trans and gender-diverse Victorians have faced unfair treatment based on their gender identity.

Our community said

Our community values the celebration of diversity, with an expectation that it can increase community harmony and promote acceptance. With increasing diversity of all ages, abilities and backgrounds, there is continued desire to see this diversity celebrated and embraced.
Council has a role in leading by example and encouraging diversity to be visible, normalised, and celebrated in Council services and activities. Community leaders of diverse groups provide insights in the planning and delivery of services.

The community also see the importance of educating the community about embracing diversity and learning from the wisdom of diverse groups, including First Peoples. Our community also recognise the importance of creating welcoming environments and accessible services for diverse groups within Maroondah. Council has an opportunity to explore communication channels to effectively reach all diverse groups across Maroondah.

We will work towards Embracing Diversity in Maroondah by focusing on the following strategic priorities and objectives:

Intersectionality

Understand, respond to and advocate for intersectional needs of all communities, with a focus on reducing discrimination and barriers; promoting equality and respect; and inclusive service delivery.

Disability

Facilitate and advocate equal opportunity for people of all abilities, their families, and their carers to actively and fully participate in the life of our community.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities

Work in partnership to understand and support the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse communities to participate in the life of our community actively and fully, including refugees, new arrivals, migrants, and interfaith communities.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Work collaboratively to celebrate, promote, recognise, and integrate the culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to facilitate equity, respect, understanding and reconciliation.

LGBTQIA+ communities

Advocate and promote equity, safety, inclusion, and wellbeing for community members of all sexualities.

Gender identity

Advocate and promote equity, safety, inclusion, and wellbeing for community members of all genders and gender identities.

Needs of different age groups

Work in partnership to facilitate the health and wellbeing of all children and their families through meaningful engagement, proactive advocacy, opportunities for participation and access to inclusive local services and spaces.

Work in partnership to raise the wellbeing of Maroondah's young people to be healthy, connected, engaged, and prepared.

Work in partnership to encourage positive ageing by optimising opportunities for participation, health, and security to enhance the quality of life as people age in our community.

Indicators of progress

Recent migrants

Number of migrants and refugees settling in Maroondah

Culturally and linguistically diverse communities

Proportion of residents who speak a language other than English at home

Alignment to Maroondah 2050 Outcomes

- A healthy, inclusive, and connected community
- A vibrant and prosperous community
- A safe and liveable community
- A well-governed and empowered community

Alignment to Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023-2027 priorities

- Preventing all forms of violence
- Improving wellbeing

"As a person from a marginalised group, having diversity as something not only encouraged but celebrated is something I believe is actually needed. Without it, many people face significantly diminished quality of life and social rejection that can have severe consequences."

Croydon, 18-34, Female

Social harms

In 2031 Maroondah will be a socially responsible community that inspires positive choices and reduces impacts from harmful social behaviours.

The research tells us

There are a range of social behaviours that result in disruptive and negative impacts on individual, family, and community wellbeing. Lifestyle behaviours such as tobacco, drug, and alcohol abuse, problem gambling and excessive screen use are acknowledged as contributing factors to poor mental and physical health. Harmful levels of alcohol consumption present major health issues associated with increased risk of chronic disease, injury, and premature death. Effects of Illicit drug use can be severe, including poisoning, heart damage, mental illness, self-harm, suicide, and death.

Tobacco smoking is the single most important preventable cause of ill health and death in Australia, and longitudinal data shows that there is a downward trend in national tobacco consumption. There is however, a concerning increasing trend toward the use of vapes, especially among younger people. Excessive screen use can lead to broad-ranging harms with significant physical, mental, social, and economic costs for individuals and communities. Gambling-related harm involves adverse consequences leading to health or wellbeing impacts on an individual, family unit, community, and population levels. Problem gambling has been linked to poor employment outcomes, higher rates of diabetes, poor mental wellbeing, and suicide ideation as well as family violence.

Did you know?

- Maroondah has a far higher rate of alcohol-related ambulance attendances than any other Local Government Area in the EMR, as well as Metropolitan Melbourne. In 2023, 18.5% of Maroondah residents surveyed reported that they smoked or vaped daily. This is the highest percentage in the Eastern Metropolitan Region and equal to Greater Melbourne.
- Electronic Gaming Machine losses in Maroondah in 2023/24 amounted to $64 million compared with $45 million during 2019/20 (a 42% increase in losses).
- In 2024 there were 1428 incidents of family violence in Maroondah which is an increase of 9% from 2023.

Our community said

The community understand there is a continued need to proactively address safety issues around gambling, alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and excessive screen use. It is viewed that addressing these harms will strengthen the community atmosphere of Maroondah. Our community are aware of the need to promote positive coping mechanisms and healthier alternatives to drugs and alcohol.

There is also a need to change unhealthy and harmful attitudes surrounding alcohol and other drugs, particularly in community sport. Educating the community on how alcohol, drugs and problem gambling are linked to family violence was seen as important. The community also highlighted the importance of positive social connections as a preventative measure to social harms.

We will work towards addressing Social Harms in Maroondah by focusing on the following strategic priorities and objectives:

Gambling

Work in partnership to prevent and minimise gambling-related harm in the community through collective advocacy, health promotion and raising awareness around the impacts of harmful gambling behaviours.

Alcohol

Work in partnership to prevent and minimise alcohol-related harm in the community through joint advocacy, education and promoting safer alcohol cultures and environments.

Tobacco

Work in partnership to de-normalise smoking behaviours and reduce smoking-related harm through education, community awareness, regulation and increasing smoke-free public spaces.

Illicit drugs

Work in partnership to minimise illicit drug-related harm in the community through advocacy, education, and facilitating safer cultures, spaces, and places.

Excessive screen use

Work in partnership to raise awareness of the health impacts of excessive screen use and promote safe and healthy screen behaviours and interactions.

Indicators of progress

Gambling

Reduction in EGM per person spend

Alcohol

Reduction in presentations of alcohol related incidents at emergency departments during high alcohol consumption hours

Illicit drugs

Reduction in hospital presentations of drug-related incidents

Tobacco

Reduction in daily smoking rate

Alignment to Maroondah 2050 Outcomes

- A safe and liveable community
- A healthy, inclusive, and connected community

Alignment to Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023-2027 priorities

- Reducing harm from tobacco and e-cigarette use
- Reducing harm from alcohol and drug use
- Preventing all forms of violence
- Improving wellbeing.

"Pokies are a blight on the outer suburbs and alcohol is too readily available, e.g., home delivery 24hrs a day."

Heathmont, 60+, Female

Related Council documents

- Arts and Cultural Development Strategy 2020-2025
- Asset Plan
- Children and Families Strategy 2020
- Climate Change Risk Adaptation and Mitigation Strategy 2018/19-2021/22
- Council Plan 2025-2029
- Croydon Structure Plan
- Disability Policy and Action Plan 2022-2026
- Equally Active Strategy 2019
- Gambling Policy 2018 (under review)
- Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025
- Gender Equity Policy 2018
- Housing Strategy 2022
- Maroondah 2050 Community Vision
- Maroondah Affordable and Social Housing Policy 2018
- Maroondah COVID-19 Recovery Plan 2021
- Maroondah Vegetation Strategy 2020-2030
- Municipal Emergency Management Plan
- Open Space Strategy 2016 (under review)
- Physical Activity Strategy 2024-2029
- Positive Ageing Framework and Action Plan 2021-2025
- Reconciliation Action Plan 2018 (under review)
- Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre masterplan 2018 (under review)
- Road Management Plan 2021-2025
- Sustainability Strategy 2022-2031
- Youth Strategy 2017

Making it happen

Council will continue to play a key role in leading work on each of the themes, strategic priorities, and objectives. Partnerships between a wide range of State government departments, community service agencies, community organisations and groups, and community members will be vital in implementing the *Maroondah Liveability Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy 2021-2031(Update 2025)*.

This Strategy will form a key pillar within Council's Integrated Planning Framework - taking direction from *Maroondah 2050* and the Council Plan 2025-2029 - and providing direction for a wide range of other action plans, social policies, Council services and programs, and projects.

The Strategy, and its related documents will help to shape where Council will focus its resources, energy, and efforts - whilst acting as a catalyst for community partnerships and providing a strong evidence base for seeking grant funding from other levels of government and relevant sectors.

To articulate the specific actions of Council in working towards the key priorities in this strategy, a number of integrated action plans will be developed/reviewed and implemented. These associated action plans will highlight the short/medium priorities of Council in working towards the strategy and be reviewed regularly during the lifespan of the strategy to ensure they are responsive to community needs.

Guiding principles

In framing the *Maroondah Liveability Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy 2021-2031 (Update 2025),* the following guiding principles provide core underpinning values that guide future action, service delivery and decision-making.

Human Rights

Council recognises and protects the rights, interests and responsibilities of individuals, the community, and public bodies across the City of Maroondah in accordance with the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities. The Charter contains 20 basic rights that promote and protect the values of freedom, respect, equality and dignity. All of Council's strategies, policies and decision-making procedures are compatible with the Victorian Charter, which reflects the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Council aims to ensure that it pursues a human rights approach across all areas of Council activity.

Equity

Equity is the process required to achieve equality, where everyone is treated the same or has the same life opportunities. We must first ensure equity before we can enjoy equality, which only works if everyone starts from the same place. By taking an equity stance, Council recognises that affirmative measures must be put in place for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds, to overcome structural barriers and discrimination that prevent inclusion, participation and access to resources and opportunities.

Gender

Council recognises that within all communities, women, men, and gender diverse people have diverse needs, benefits, access to power, resources and responsibilities. Council is committed to gender equity, that is, the process of being fair to women, men, and gender diverse individuals by recognising diversity and disadvantage and directing resources and services towards those most in need to ensure equal outcomes for all.

Evidence informed

Council is committed to using evidence to design, implement and improve planning, programs, and service delivery. Learning from the successes and failures of previous actions and programs increases understanding of best practice. Evidence helps us to best meet the needs of our community, best focus our resources, choose the most effective approaches, continuously improve our efforts and services, and provide successful and positive outcomes for our community.

Community engagement

Council is committed to engaging with the Maroondah community in a meaningful, accountable, responsive, and equitable way. Our community and stakeholders play a vital role in shaping the City of Maroondah. Through community engagement, Council gains a strong understanding of our community's wants and needs to ensure we are achieving the best possible outcomes for our community.

Environmental sustainability

Council understands that environmental sustainability and the impacts of climate change are closely related to community health and wellbeing. The importance of building resilience in communities to reduce climate change impacts is particularly important.

Interconnected

It is recognised at the outset that all the focus areas, topics, population groups and issues considered by this strategy are interconnected, interdependent and have complex relationships with each other. The six focus areas identified in this strategy are strongly interconnected and impact each other. For example, Safe Communities influence Liveable Neighbourhoods, both of which can facilitate Healthy Lifestyles. Within each of the six focus areas, there are key topics. These also have strong connections and influence each other. For example, research demonstrates that problem gambling (topic area within Social Harms) is associated with family violence (topic area within Safe Communities).

Measuring our progress

The *Maroondah Liveability Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy 2021-2031* (October Update 2025) highlights a broad range of priorities for enhancing the health, wellbeing, liveability, and resilience of the Maroondah community from 2021-2031.

The associated action plans highlight the short to medium priorities of Council in working towards the priorities of the Strategy. Meaningful change often occurs gradually, and it is easy to overlook progress unless this is measured. To measure progress toward achieving the preferred future outcomes outlined in this strategy, a number of key indicators have been selected linked to each of the six Themes.

Over time, these indicators will be used to identify how successful the initiatives of Council and its community partners have been in working towards the future outcomes outlined in the *Maroondah Liveability Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy 2021-2031(October 2025 Update)*. Council will periodically report on the broader outcomes achieved relating to these indicators along with some of the activities undertaken in progressing towards the overall vision statements highlighted in the strategy.

Council Advisory Committees will also be engaged to inform and provide direction on priorities in the Strategy, along with receiving regular reports on the implementation of initiatives. In addition, Council will report on progress made on key action plans that are linked to strategy on an annual basis. Service delivery activities to support the priorities of this Strategy will also be captured in *Council's Annual Report*.

Achievements associated with this strategy will be incorporated into the State of Maroondah Report that is currently prepared every two years. The State of Maroondah Report is intended to celebrate achievements, recognise efforts, monitor trends, and identify areas for future improvement in working towards the Maroondah 2050 Community Vision.

A full review of this Strategy will be undertaken in 2029/30.

Glossary

Activity Centres: Areas that provide a focus for services, employment, housing, transport, and social interaction. They range in size and intensity of use from smaller neighbourhood centres to major suburban centres and larger metropolitan centres. Croydon is a designated Major Activity Centre and Ringwood is a higher order designated Metropolitan Activity Centre.

Affordable housing: Housing where the cost (whether of mortgage repayments or rent) is no more than 30 per cent of the household's income, for households in the bottom two quintiles (lowest 40%) of median incomes for a defined area.

Biodiversity: The term given to the variety of all forms of life. It is the variety within and between all species of plants, animals and micro-organisms and the ecosystems within which they live and interact. Biodiversity spans organisms from the smallest virus to the largest trees.

Canopy cover: The fraction of ground area covered by the vertical projection of tree crown perimeters.

Carbon Neutral Certification: Endorsement that entity that has meet the requirements of the National Carbon Neutral Standard.

Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006: Victorian Government legislation created to protect and promote human rights. It sets out freedoms, rights, and responsibilities.

Climate change: Changes in the state of the climate, including an increase in extreme weather events, long-term changes in weather patterns and sea level rise, attributed directly or indirectly to human activity.

Community Vision: Description of the municipal community's aspirations for the future of the municipality for at least the next 10 fiscal years. The *Maroondah 2050 Community Vision* represents the strategic direction of Council as required by section 90 of the Local Government Act 2020.

Council Plan: A four-year plan which provides the medium-term framework for Council operations by outlining: the strategic direction of Council (Community Vision); strategic objectives for achieving the strategic direction (future outcomes); strategies for achieving the objectives for a period of at least the next four financial years (key directions); strategic indicators for monitoring the achievement of objectives (Council Plan indicators); and a description of Council's initiatives and priorities for service, infrastructure and amenity (priority actions).

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD): A broad term used to describe communities with diverse languages, ethnic backgrounds, nationalities, traditions, societal structures, and religions; widely used to refer to people born overseas, in non-English speaking countries.

Digital literacy: Having the skills you need to live, learn, and work in a society where communication and access to information is increasingly provided through digital technologies such as internet platforms, social media, and mobile devices.

Digital safety: Involves protecting and safeguarding the privacy of individuals in online settings, protecting people from predatory and harmful online behaviours such as cyberbullying, and preventing people being exposed to inappropriate content and material.

Elder abuse: A single or repeated act, or lack of action, which causes harm or distress to an older person and is carried out by someone they know and trust such as carers, family members or friends. Elder abuse can take various forms such as physical, psychological, or emotional, sexual, and financial abuse.

Equity: Providing impartiality, fairness, and justice for all people. This involves recognising that each person has different circumstances and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome.

Environmentally Sustainable Design: Building design that seeks to improve building performance, reduce environmental impacts, resource use and waste and create healthy environments for occupants. The aim is to create comfortable and healthy indoor environments while reducing resource use (including energy and water consumption), waste, and operating costs.

First Peoples A person of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent

Food security: All people, always, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life.

Gender-based violence: Refers to harassment, harmful or violent acts directed at an individual based on their sex or gender.

Gender Equality Action Plan: Strategies and measures for promoting gender equality in the workplace. Under the Gender Equality Act 2020, Council is required to develop a Gender Equality Action Plan every four years.

Gender identity: How one perceives their gender, show or express their gender to others and how one wants others to treat them. See also Sexual Identity.

Gendered health outcomes: There are different health and social needs experienced by specific genders. Consideration of a gender lens helps to address the health issues and challenges experienced by specific gender to overcome the health and wellbeing disparities experienced by different genders.

Governance: How Council operates as a decision-making body, its relationship with the administration and the ways that Council engages with their community.

Habitat corridor: A linear strip of vegetation that provides a continuous (or near continuous) pathway between two habitats where a species can find the food, shelter, protection, and mates for reproduction it needs.

Healthy masculinity: Involves men using their physical and emotional strengths to champion healthy behaviours and communities. It seeks to remove harmful behaviours associated with gendered stereotypes and focus on positive qualities without being restricted by gender expectations.

Household stress: Experienced when housing costs are high (more than 30%) relative to income and these housing costs are likely to reduce a household's ability to afford other essential living costs such as food, clothing, transport, and utilities.

Human rights: The 20 basic rights identified in the United Nations Charter of Human Rights that promote and protect the values of freedom, respect, equality, and dignity.

Indicators of progress: Selected indicators that will be used to identify how successful the initiatives of Council, businesses, community groups and individuals have been in working towards the future outcomes outlined in the *Maroondah Liveability Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy 2021-2031*.

Intersectionality: A theoretical approach that understands the interconnected nature of social factors – such as gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language, religion, class, socioeconomic status, gender identity, ability, or age – which create overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage for either an individual or group.

LGBTIQA+: Acronym used to refer to people associated with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer people and other sexuality, gender, and bodily diverse communities. There is no single LGBTIQA+ community, rather a plurality of identities and experiences.

Marginalised, disadvantaged, and vulnerable groups: Individuals or groups of people who do not have access to the same opportunities, rights, tools, and/or resources that are available to the majority of people in society.

Medium density housing: A category of residential development that falls between detached housing and multi-story apartments. The category includes duplex, semi-detached, terrace and townhouse dwelling types.

Municipal Emergency Management Plan: Addresses the prevention of, response to, and recovery from emergencies within the municipality of Maroondah.

Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS): The MPS is part of the Maroondah Planning Scheme. It sets out the vision for future use and development and provides an overview of important planning issues in Maroondah. It includes thematic strategic directions relating to how Maroondah is expected to change through the application of the policy and controls in the planning scheme. Council must consider and give effect to the MPS when making planning decisions.

Plan Melbourne: The metropolitan planning strategy prepared in 2016 by the Victorian Government to provide direction for the growth and future development of Greater Melbourne over the next 35 years. It sets the strategy for supporting jobs, housing, and transport, whilst building upon distinctiveness, liveability, and sustainability.

Planning scheme: A legal document prepared by Council and approved by the Minister. It contains policies and provisions that control land use and development within a municipality.

Positive Psychology: A scientific approach to studying human thoughts, feelings, and behaviour, with a focus on strengths instead of weaknesses. Positive psychology focuses on the positive events and influences in life to help people flourish and live their best lives.

Reconciliation: Involves strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples, for the benefit of all Australians. Reconciliation cannot be seen as a single issue rather the inter-related dimensions of historical acceptance; race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity and unity.

Refugee: A person who has fled their country of origin and is unable or unwilling to return because of a well-founded fear of being persecuted because of their race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.

Safer culture: An environment that is safe for people; where there is no assault, challenge, or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need. Safer cultures involve shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge, and people being able to learn, live and working together with dignity.

Service Delivery Plan: A detailed four-year work plan to guide how a particular Council service area will support the achievement of relevant Maroondah 2050 Community Vision future outcomes and key directions as outlined in the Council Plan.

Social housing: Short and long-term rental housing that is owned and run by the government or not-for-profit agencies. Social housing is an overarching term that covers both public housing (government managed) and community housing (not-for-profit housing association managed).

Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage: The relative level of people's access to material and social resources, and their ability to participate in society.

Structure Plan: A means to provide precinct-specific direction on the extent, form and location of land use and development.

Subjective wellbeing: Relates to an individual's perspective on their own wellbeing along with how they experience and evaluate their lives. It is based on their self-reported evaluation of quality of life, quality of relationships, meanings, achievements, and individual values.

Subjective Wellbeing Index: Self-reported ratings of personal wellbeing across the domains of standard of living, health, achievements in life, community connection, personal relationships, safety, and future security; converted into an index score with a range of 0 (completely dissatisfied) to 100 (completely satisfied).

Sustainability: The principle of providing for the needs of the present community without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The principle seeks to achieve long-term health and wellbeing across social, economic, environmental, and cultural domains.

Wards: A geographical area which provides a fair and equitable division of a local government area. There are nine Wards in Maroondah, with one elected Councillor per Ward.

To contact Council

- phone 1300 88 22 33 or (03) 9298 4598
- SMS 0480 020 200
- visit our website at www.maroondah.vic.gov.au
- email maroondah@maroondah.vic.gov.au

Translating and Interpreter Service
13 14 50

National Relay Service (NRS)
13 36 77

MaroondahCityCouncil
maroondahcitycouncil
Maroondah City Council
CityofMaroondah
Maroondah City Council

Maroondah City Council