

2026-27 Proposed Budget

Community Engagement Feedback



Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
1	Should add free EV charging to support community like Monash (in conjunction with Chargefox). Can place at Libraries, community centres, Aqualinks etc . They used state grant/funding too. Here is a link for more info: https://www.monash.vic.gov.au/Waste-Sustainability/Living-Sustainably/Monash-Achieves-Net-Zero/EV-charging-bays-and-Councils-vehicle-fleet-transition	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. In September 2025, Council selected Energy Australia to investigate the installation of EV charging infrastructure at up to 7 selected Council owned sites. They are currently working through power provisioning and other technical matters to establish final feasibility. It is expected that these sites will come into service over the course of 2027. Given the costs involved in the setup and power costs, it is understood that these sites will be on a user pays basis at appropriate market rates for the charging speeds provided. Evaluations and options will be reported back to Council for consideration.
2a	Parking fees for short-term parking of less than three hours in Harrow Street, Box Hill, should be reduced to encourage people to use the Harrow Street car park and walk to the shopping center. This change could help decrease traffic within the CBD area. A rate of \$1 per hour for the first three hours would be more in line with rates in the Box Hill Central area.	Action: Include the revised Harrow Street multi deck car park hourly parking rates in the 2026/27 Budget as follows: • 1st hour: \$1 • 2nd hour: \$1 • 3rd hour: \$1 • Each additional hour: \$4 (capped at \$11 per day) These changes aim to balance affordability with the need to manage demand in a busy commercial centre. Council's parking network is designed to provide a mix of options. Nearby centres, such as Centro Box Hill, cater to short term shoppers with low cost parking, while on street parking (\$3.50 per hour) promotes quick turnover. Harrow Street car park typically supports medium to longer stays, complementing these options. The proposed reduced cost for the first three hours will further support short term visits, providing additional short term parking options for the community and making it easier for people to shop, dine and access services in Box Hill. Council's rates remain broadly competitive with other public parking in the precinct and have not increased for two years. Overall, the proposed changes support fair access, local businesses and efficient parking management.



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2b	Additionally, the casual use fee for the Elgar Park Synthetic facility is currently missing from the fees and charges schedule. When I inquired about casual use, I was informed that the cost is \$80 per hour, which needs to be lowered.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Council has not included fees and charges for Elgar Park synthetic as this site is managed under a lease with Elgar Park Regional Hockey (EPRHA). The fee schedule, however, has been agreed between Council and EPRHA, which aligns competitively with benchmarking of suitable facilities, noting the high cost of provision, maintenance and renewal of such a surface. Hourly casual fees include: - \$25 p/h – Charities - \$75 p/h – Club Training - \$88 p/h – Club Competition - \$127.50 p/h - Public Schools - \$150.50 p/h – Private Schools - \$165 p/h – Commercial Providers We note your feedback and acknowledge that there is currently no casual rate available for general public users or residents, noting the categories and associated fees outlined above. Council will provide this feedback to the EPRHA for consideration of an additional category to help ensure all community groups and individuals are appropriately considered within the fee structure.
2c	It's also encouraging to see no increase in the waste charge.	Comments are noted.
2d	Lastly, there should be significant investment in CCTV installation throughout Box Hill to deter crime, along with further efforts to improve the general surroundings.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Within the Box Hill Activity Centre there are 25 Council owned fixed CCTV cameras. These are located at the Box Hill Mall (21 cameras) and Box Hill Gardens (4 cameras). Outside of the Box Hill Activity Centre there are 14 Council owned fixed CCTV cameras located within Mitcham in the Britannia Mall precinct. In line with Council's CCTV in Public Places Policy and CCTV Code of Practice, Council maintains existing infrastructure and does not allocate budget for the installation of new CCTV systems. However, Council's Community Safety team has recently secured grant funding to purchase 2 mobile CCTV surveillance trailers. The trailers will be managed by Victoria Police, with the primary purpose of prevention and detection of crime or enforcement of the law, and to improve public safety and enhance perceptions of security across Whitehorse, particularly Box Hill. We understand that SRLA is undertaking redevelopment within the Box Hill Mall Precinct and may consider additional fixed CCTV as part of the train station works. In addition, the Department of Transport and Planning has CCTV coverage at most signalised intersections along arterial roads, which Victoria Police can access for investigative purposes where required. For broader community safety concerns, Whitehorse City Council can raise relevant matters through the new Whitehorse Community Safety Committee. The Committee is Chaired by Cr Prue Cutts, with substitute Cr Jason Martin and has a strategic and prevention focus. Alternatively, concerns can be raised with the Whitehorse Local Safety Operational Committee, chaired by Victoria Police. The Local Safety Committee focuses on hot-spots and includes representatives from Council's Community Safety team, Victoria Police, Neighbourhood Watch, and our major retail precincts, including Box Hill.

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3	Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 2026/27 Proposed Budget. There is \$14.18 million allocated for the Box Hill City Oval and a further \$13.68 million allocated to pavilion upgrades. This money (13.3% of the total Council budget in major capital works alone) funneled into team sports by Council provides disproportionate benefit to men and boys, white Australians and people without a disability. Community sport is valuable and important but so are most things Council funds, and the largesse provided to sporting clubs is staggering.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Council investment in assets is underpinned and guided by our Asset Plan (2025-2035). This guidance ensures infrastructure decisions align with asset condition, community needs and the roadmap of our Financial Plan (2025-2035). Pavilion project upgrades, including Box Hill City Oval, form part of Council's long-term strategy to improve the functionality, accessibility, and capacity of recreational facilities across the municipality. The pavilion upgrades aim to meet current standards for universal access, gender equity, and user needs. The proposed investment in Box Hill City Oval precinct is focused on enhancing both community use and broader sporting outcomes, with funding committed from both Federal (\$13.6m) and State (\$6m) Governments.
4	Dear Council Team, I would like to propose a suggestion regarding parking arrangements in our local area. To help increase customer traffic and support local businesses, it may be beneficial to consider offering more flexible free parking options, such as limited free parking at street-front spaces and underground parking areas for a reasonable period of time. For example, allowing 1–2 hours of free parking could encourage more visitors to shop, dine, and use local services, which would benefit both businesses and the wider community. Convenient parking access often plays an important role in attracting customers, especially when people compare different shopping areas.	Action: Include the revised Harrow Street multi deck car park hourly parking rates in the 2026/27 Budget as follows: • 1st hour: \$1 • 2nd hour: \$1 • 3rd hour: \$1 • Each additional hour: \$4 (capped at \$11 per day) These changes aim to balance affordability with the need to manage demand in a busy commercial centre. Council's parking network is designed to provide a mix of options. Nearby centres, such as Centro Box Hill, cater to short term shoppers with low cost parking, while on street parking (\$3.50 per hour) promotes quick turnover. Harrow Street car park typically supports medium to longer stays, complementing these options. The proposed reduced cost for the first three hours will further support short term visits, providing additional short term parking options for the community and making it easier for people to shop, dine and access services in Box Hill. Council's rates remain broadly competitive with other public parking in the precinct and have not increased for two years. Overall, the proposed changes support fair access, local businesses and efficient parking management. In relation to your feedback on free parking, Council does not provide free street parking in Box Hill as this would encourage all day parking by long term users and commuters, and restrict availability for shorter term visitors. Paid parking encourages turnover in on street parking to support shoppers and businesses operating in the Box Hill commercial precinct. Council does however provide free weekend parking at the Harrow Street car park. Council does not control the charges situated within private commercial developments

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5	Harrow St car park fee proposal: - 1st hour: \$1 - 2nd hour: \$1 - 3rd hour: \$1 - Every hour thereafter: \$4 (up to a daily maximum of \$11)	Action: Include the revised Harrow Street multi deck car park hourly parking rates in the 2026/27 Budget as follows: • 1st hour: \$1 • 2nd hour: \$1 • 3rd hour: \$1 • Each additional hour: \$4 (capped at \$11 per day) These changes aim to balance affordability with the need to manage demand in a busy commercial centre. Council's parking network is designed to provide a mix of options. Nearby centres, such as Centro Box Hill, cater to short term shoppers with low cost parking, while on street parking (\$3.50 per hour) promotes quick turnover. Harrow Street car park typically supports medium to longer stays, complementing these options. The proposed reduced cost for the first three hours will further support short term visits, providing additional short term parking options for the community and making it easier for people to shop, dine and access services in Box Hill. Council's rates remain broadly competitive with other public parking in the precinct and have not increased for two years. Overall, the proposed changes support fair access, local businesses and efficient parking management.
6	We support the proposed revised parking fee structure for Harrow Street, with \$1 per hour for the first three hours, followed by \$4 per hour thereafter (capped at a daily maximum of \$11). This approach provides affordable short-term parking, which is critical to encouraging visitation, increasing foot traffic, and supporting local businesses in Box Hill. Lower initial rates reduce the barrier for customers, while the higher rates for longer stays ensure appropriate turnover and availability. Overall, this is a balanced and practical solution that improves accessibility while supporting the local economy.	Action: Include the revised Harrow Street multi deck car park hourly parking rates in the 2026/27 Budget as follows: • 1st hour: \$1 • 2nd hour: \$1 • 3rd hour: \$1 • Each additional hour: \$4 (capped at \$11 per day) These changes aim to balance affordability with the need to manage demand in a busy commercial centre. Council's parking network is designed to provide a mix of options. Nearby centres, such as Centro Box Hill, cater to short term shoppers with low cost parking, while on street parking (\$3.50 per hour) promotes quick turnover. Harrow Street car park typically supports medium to longer stays, complementing these options. The proposed reduced cost for the first three hours will further support short term visits, providing additional short term parking options for the community and making it easier for people to shop, dine and access services in Box Hill. Council's rates remain broadly competitive with other public parking in the precinct and have not increased for two years. Overall, the proposed changes support fair access, local businesses and efficient parking management.
7	Is there anything in the current draft budget relating to commemorating the 100th anniversary of the City of Box Hill?	There is currently no provision in the Budget 2026/27 for commemorating the 100th anniversary of the former City of Box Hill, however Council will consider the annual community dinner as an opportunity to celebrate the 100 year anniversary with the dinner to be held at the Box Hill Town hall for the 27/28 Financial year, quotes are being obtained at the moment to support a 2027/28 event (July 2027).



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8	Introducing a \$1 parking rate for the first three hours at Sky Square would encourage short, purposeful visits and increase foot traffic into the precinct. Affordable parking lowers the barrier for customers to stop, shop and dine, directly supporting local cafes, retailers and services. Increased visitation helps activate the precinct throughout the day and strengthens overall business sustainability. Consideration should also be given to discounted parking options for staff working in the Sky Square area. Current parking costs of approximately \$10 per day are a significant expense for staff. Staff are also customers who regularly spend money in local businesses, contributing to the precincts economy. Supporting staff parking would help retain workers, encourage local spending, and reinforce Sky Square as a vibrant and accessible destination.	Sky Square is a private development over which Council has no control of the prices to pay for their on-site parking.
9	As part of budget to upgrade playgrounds can you give consideration to sun protection. As a new resident to the Vermont South area, a lot of the playgrounds nearby do not provide any shade protection over play area. Furthermore, it would be great to have more running tracks around.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Council recognises the importance of shade in play spaces. Our approach prioritises natural shade where possible, with shade structures considered at higher-use sites. A shade sail trial is being delivered in 2025/26, with Slater Reserve Play Space (Blackburn North) identified as the trial site which will be assessed to help inform future planning. Council also continues to improve shared paths and recreational networks. Your feedback regarding running tracks will be considered as part of future planning.
10a	Solid effort...some glaring omissions, the gravel carpark cnr Whitehorse and Elgar road, open it up to parking...	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. An options analysis on activating 450 Whitehorse Rd and part of 835 Whitehorse Rd as a carpark is currently being developed. Consideration is being given to construction methodologies that will provide a suitable surface that balances both cost, function, safety and maintainability. This analysis will be completed prior to any construction of the preferred solution. Funding is proposed to be provided through the Capital Works Program existing allocations for car park improvements. 



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10b	put a bottle collection, massive purple bin at the town hall and civic centre..glad the purple bin isn't happening	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Currently in Whitehorse, glass can be placed in the yellow-lid mixed recycling kerbside bin. The Victorian Government requires Councils to provide separate glass recycling service through a purple lidded bin from 1 July 2027. Details of what complies for this service i.e. through drop off points, are meant to be included in standards for kerbside services which the current Victorian Government is yet to finalise beyond a draft. Providing several drop-off points would not comply with the current draft standards. Council's position is it does not support the requirement to provide a kerbside glass bin recycling service in its current form and encourages residents to continue to place glass in the yellow-lid bin where it continues to be recycled.
11a	I think the City should consider reducing the proposed budget line to pavilion upgrades,	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Council investment in assets is underpinned and guided by our Asset Plan (2025-2035). This guidance ensures infrastructure decisions align with asset condition, community needs and the roadmap of our Financial Plan (2025-2035). Pavilion project upgrades form part of Council's long-term strategy to improve the functionality, accessibility, and capacity of recreational facilities across the municipality. The pavilion upgrades also aim to meet current standards for universal access, gender equity, and user needs. As part of project scoping and development, officers consider a range of construction methodologies and delivery options to ensure projects are planned and delivered in a cost-effective and fit-for-purpose manner. This includes consideration of opportunities to improve construction efficiency, reduce delivery risk, and provide flexibility to respond to future community needs. Council is currently developing a Draft Pavilion Development Policy, which will provide further guidance for the planning, design and delivery of pavilion projects. The draft policy includes consideration and assessment of modular construction approaches where appropriate to support efficient project delivery. Of the \$13.68m in the capital works plan allocated to pavilion upgrades, \$8.52m (62.3%) is funded via Federal and State government grants.
11b	and add more to the bin/trash collection line.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Households that receive kerbside bin services are charged for these services through the Waste Service Charge. The cost of providing, maintaining and servicing public litter bins is also recovered through the Waste Service Charge. Any requests for new litter bins will be assessed based on set criteria.

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12a	Overall, I feel the Whitehorse Proposed Budget 2026/27 is a fair and reasonable one that does not eat too much financially into Council reserves. However, once again, it seems sporting facility upgrades are getting a disproportionately large amount of funding, without recognition that there are many in the Whitehorse community that are elderly and can neither access nor play sport. In fact, at the last Census 24%+ of Whitehorse residents were aged over 60 years.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Council investment in assets is underpinned and guided by our Asset Plan (2025-2035). This guidance ensures infrastructure decisions align with asset condition, community needs and the roadmap of our Financial Plan (2025-2035). Sporting facility upgrades, such as pavilion projects and Box Hill City Oval form part of Council's long-term strategy to improve the functionality, accessibility, and capacity of recreational facilities across the municipality. The pavilion upgrades aim to meet current standards for universal access, gender equity, and user needs. Importantly these facilities are designed with broader community access and activation in mind, in addition to the sporting stakeholders. The proposed investment in Box Hill City Oval precinct is focused on enhancing both community use and broader sporting outcomes, with a total of \$19.6m committed from Federal (\$13.6m) and State (\$6m) Governments. Of the \$13.68m in the capital works plan allocated to pavilion upgrades, \$8.52m (62.3%) is funded via Federal and State government grants. There are a range programs and services in Budget that support people for all ages, including older people and their carers. For example, Council presents an annual Midweek Matinee Program for older residents and carers monthly as an opportunity to gather, connect and enjoy daytime entertainment. Art programs for older people and carers also exist through Council's Gallery, Community Arts Centre, Heritage Museum and heritage programs, art and craft classes and Festival program. Council also provides a Positive Ageing Connect and Support service where older people, including carers, can receive assistance with how to navigate supports available. Our recreation and leisure services also have a range of tailored program, and the draft Budget includes off-peak discounted aquatic entry for including health card holders, pensioners and students.
12b	This brings me to my key points, that Whitehorse should exhibit a greater Duty of Care to all its residents, including the elderly. Pretty much everyone in Whitehorse uses the footpaths unless they are bedridden. Even those on mobility scooters use footpaths. So, it seems that the budget of \$3.36M allocated to the Footpath Renewal Program is inadequate. In fact, it looks like it is only a roughly 2% increase over the current financial year Budget. 2% is well below the rate of inflation.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Footpaths are inspected and repaired in accordance with Council's Road Management Plan. Residents can also easily report footpath issues using Snap Send Solve by taking a photo, adding a brief description, and submitting it through the app, ensuring the issue is quickly directed to the appropriate council team for action. The proposed funding for footpath renewal is a 3.2% increase from the previous year, including an additional \$600,000 that was allocated to footpath maintenance to ensure compliance with Council's amended Road Management Plan (effective 16 February 2026). Asset modelling has been considered in developing the funding allocation. Further funding is provided in Council's operational budget for maintenance and to address reactive requests relating to footpaths.

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13a	Both the City of Melbourne and the Victorian State Government have recently recognised the urgent need to address graffiti vandalism in their jurisdictions. COW suffers the same scenario, with the establishment of women's shelters, never ending numbers of massage parlors, late nite liquor stores and tobacco stores bringing with them the consequences of their typical clientele. Why is there no serious allocation of funds to maintaining the city, when it is to be expected that the provision of business licenses to such establishments will increase the need for maintenance.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. There is additional funding included in the proposed budget for maintaining the city. The proposed budget includes funding a new dedicated graffiti removal role, to add to the two graffiti removal roles that are already funded. The proposed budget also includes an additional cleansing officer for the central Box Hill area, to add to the two cleansing officers that are already based in central Box Hill.
13b	Secondly, how long until COW follows other cities, and acknowledges the need for local government provided overnight security, in response to the completely out of control increase in local crime.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Council continues to monitor crime trends across Whitehorse in partnership with Victoria Police. At this stage crime data and identified trends have supported a range of targeted community safety responses rather than the introduction of a costly overnight security service. This has included the establishment of a new Community Safety Committee, ongoing joint work with Victoria Police on crime prevention outcomes and the deployment of mobile CCTV in identified locations to support crime reduction and community safety outcomes. Council will continue to monitor crime trends and review initiatives as required to respond to emerging community safety issues.
14	I am disappointed to see no additional funding for investment in neighbourhood house infrastructure. Many of these facilities are no longer fit for purpose and require redevelopment to meet current community standards.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Council recently reviewed its Neighbourhood and Community Houses (NCHs) and found that the current facilities are not fully meeting community expectations. While Council continues to fund maintenance and small improvements to these centres, more long-term planning is needed to guide future investment decisions across all community infrastructure, including NCHs. On 16 March 2026, Council resolved to increase the total operating funding provided to NCHs by an additional \$33,299 per annum, making the total operational investment for 2026/27 \$408,000 across the 10 NCHs in Whitehorse.
15	Great to see that Bill Sewart Athletics Track is set to be resurfaced. This upgrade is well overdue, as the current surface has reached the end of its lifespan and is experiencing a number of significant issues. I look forward to the improved facility being available for public use.	We note and appreciate your support. Council investment in assets is underpinned and guided by our Asset Plan (2025-2035). This guidance ensures infrastructure decisions align with asset condition, community needs and the roadmap of our Financial Plan (2025-2035). The renewal of the athletics surface at Bill Sewart (Nunawading Athletics) is included in the draft Budget.
16	Great to see that Bill Sewart Athletics Track is finally getting resurfaced. It's been well overdue, and I'm really looking forward to seeing it refreshed and back to its best.	We note and appreciate your support. Council investment in assets is underpinned and guided by our Asset Plan (2025-2035). This guidance ensures infrastructure decisions align with asset condition, community needs and the roadmap of our Financial Plan (2025-2035). The renewal of the athletics surface at Bill Sewart (Nunawading Athletics) is included in the draft Budget.
17	Need new track	We note and appreciate your support. Council investment in assets is underpinned and guided by our Asset Plan (2025-2035). This guidance ensures infrastructure decisions align with asset condition, community needs and the roadmap of our Financial Plan (2025-2035). The renewal of the athletics surface at Bill Sewart (Nunawading Athletics) is included in the draft Budget.

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18	It would be great to see Bill Stewart track getting an upgrade. Long overdue.	We note and appreciate your support. Council investment in assets is underpinned and guided by our Asset Plan (2025-2035). This guidance ensures infrastructure decisions align with asset condition, community needs and the roadmap of our Financial Plan (2025-2035). The renewal of the athletics surface at Bill Sewart (Nunawading Athletics) is included in the draft Budget.
19	Love the Nunawading athletics track resurfacing. My son is a current state champion that trains at the venue so will be fantastic to be training at a high quality venue. And hopefully allow competitions to be held at the venue, welcoming athletes from around the state to show off the venue and suburb	We note and appreciate your support. Council investment in assets is underpinned and guided by our Asset Plan (2025-2035). This guidance ensures infrastructure decisions align with asset condition, community needs and the roadmap of our Financial Plan (2025-2035). The renewal of the athletics surface at Bill Sewart (Nunawading Athletics) is included in the draft Budget.
20	Resurfacing the bill Sewart track	We note and appreciate your support. Council investment in assets is underpinned and guided by our Asset Plan (2025-2035). This guidance ensures infrastructure decisions align with asset condition, community needs and the roadmap of our Financial Plan (2025-2035). The renewal of the athletics surface at Bill Sewart (Nunawading Athletics) is included in the draft Budget.
21	I support the proposed budget and the investment in the track project. It's great to see funding going towards improving local sporting infrastructure and creating better facilities for the community. Projects like this not only support participation in sport and healthy lifestyles, but also help build a stronger, more connected community. Overall, the budget shows a positive commitment to delivering practical improvements and investing in infrastructure that benefits both current and future residents.	We note and appreciate your support. Council investment in assets is underpinned and guided by our Asset Plan (2025-2035). This guidance ensures infrastructure decisions align with asset condition, community needs and the roadmap of our Financial Plan (2025-2035). The renewal of the athletics surface at Bill Sewart (Nunawading Athletics) is included in the draft Budget. Comments are noted, thank you for your feedback.
22a	1. Glass Recycling: I am supportive of Council's decision to exclude the cost of the Introduction of the purple glass recycle bin and strongly support the push by Council's including Whitehorse to stop its introduction altogether. I firmly believe the container deposit scheme modified to take glass jars, wine, beer and spirit containers is a much more cost-effective way to recycle glass. I support WHCC and many other Council's Advocacy to state government for this change, however I believe Council should include in the proposed budget a contingency figure should the State Government impose it on all Council's.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. The support for Council's decision on the glass recycling bin service including advocating for an expanded container deposit scheme is noted. If the State Government imposed a glass recycling service on all councils, there will need to be a variation to the budget and there is contingency planning for this.
22b	2. Drainage - under buildings, roads, streets etc. I believe that the current figure set aside for drainage upgrades is very insufficient, given that there are substantial areas with ageing Drainage systems with substantially increased loads on the planning agenda and the push towards intense development under the Suburban Rail loop and Activity centre programs. This is something that we must carefully plan for to avoid and future flooding and contamination.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Council has budgeted for an increase in capital expenditure on drainage over the next four years: 2026/27 \$3.452M 2027/28 \$4.644M 2028/29 \$4.805M 2029/30 \$5.044M There is also a further \$1.23m allocated via the 2026/27 operating budget on drain maintenance.



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22c	3. Street lighting on Council controlled roads I believe the funding for street lighting on the above roads is inadequate. I acknowledge that there are minimum standards for lighting and these minimum standards may currently be met, however with more and more people using Public Transport and more likely to use these roads in future, it is safety issue especially for women and young families. I believe that Council needs to go above the minimum standards and invest more in street lighting especially close to public transport, an example is Gardenia Street, Blackburn which is near the Station. It's extremely dark at night.	Action: Inclusion of \$100k in the 2026/27 Budget for additional street lighting to enhance community safety. Thank you for your feedback expressing concerns regarding public lighting, particularly in areas close to public transport. Council acknowledges the important role that public lighting plays in supporting community safety, accessibility and comfort, particularly for pedestrians, public transport users, women and families travelling at night. Your feedback regarding perceived lighting levels in this area has been noted. Public lighting across the municipality is delivered through a partnership arrangement between Council and the electricity distribution company (United Energy and CitiPower), which owns and maintains the majority of the lighting assets. Requests for additional lighting or upgrades are assessed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account a range of factors including relevant Australian Standards, road classification, surrounding land use, pedestrian activity, safety considerations and available funding. While existing lighting may comply with the applicable standards, Council also considers broader factors such as community expectations and emerging usage patterns when reviewing lighting needs. Over many years, Whitehorse City Council has undertaken a range of lighting upgrade initiatives across the municipality, progressively transitioning to more energy-efficient and higher-quality lighting. Council has delivered LED and T5 lighting upgrades throughout the municipality, improving both energy efficiency and lighting performance (for public safety) while reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Your concern regarding lighting in the vicinity of public transport infrastructure is noted and will be referenced for further assessment against these criteria. Should an upgrade be supported, the works will be prioritised in line with Council's broader capital works and infrastructure programs. Council has received additional funding for public lighting through Security Infrastructure Grant for the approximate amount of \$150,000 over three years, including this financial year. The majority of the funding is allocated to 2026/2027 financial year (approximately \$100,000), and in 2027/2028 (approximately \$50,000). Council is focusing on delivering projects based on the outcomes of the extensive community feedback during the Community Safety Engagement in October 2025 (Your Say Survey and Interactive map). The main focus at the moment is the upgrade of the lights in the Box Hill Area, as well as the upgrade of public lighting infrastructure along key Link roads (which primarily serve to collect and distribute traffic from local areas to the broader Arterial Road Network) and Collector roads (which function mainly as feeders to Link roads). While Council is already delivering additional lighting to improve public safety, current programs are largely reactive and based on community complaints. Over the years, Council has progressively replaced outdated fittings with more sustainable, energy-efficient, and brighter lighting technologies. Council will prioritise areas where lighting is obscured by tree canopies, as well as locations surrounding shopping strips, schools, medical centres, and hospitals. These upgrades aim to significantly enhance public safety by improving visibility for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers, particularly during evening and early morning hours. A proactive, targeted approach will better address safety concerns and reduce the risk of crime and antisocial behaviour, contributing to a safer environment for both residents and visitors. Enhanced lighting in these high-traffic and community-focused zones will support a more secure and welcoming public realm.



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22d	4. Footpaths maintenance and widening I believe that Council should invest more for the maintenance of footpaths. I am aware of instances where people I know have fallen and given we have an ageing population and the risk of being sued Council needs to take greater action needs to be taken on this to prevent these incidents. I would like to know the trend over the last 3 years in terms of trips and falls on Council controlled footpaths and believe the number of incidents should be published. As such the investment in lighting and maintenance must be addressed.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Council continues to inspect, maintain and repair footpaths to comply with the Road Management Plan that was amended effective from 16 February 2026. In 2026/27, an additional \$600,000 is allocated to footpath maintenance to ensure compliance with the Road Management Plan where standards were increased from the previous revision. Insurance claims that relate to road assets are not separately reported. The Road Management Plan in the current and previous version have been effective in defending claims relating to road assets.
22e	I also strongly support the significant investment in drainage along Mont Albert Road and Hamilton Street, along with the proposed design and streetscape redevelopment and upgrade of the Hamilton Street shopping precinct. It will be really good to see the end of flooding in the florist and post office as well.	Comments are noted. Planning work continues for the Hamilton Street streetscape project, key activities planned include a further round of community engagement and detailed design. Construction is expected to commence in the latter part of the FY26/27.
22f	I was very pleased to see that Whitehorse Council has purchased land along Mont Albert Road, Mont Albert for the creation of a park next to the Hamilton Street heritage precinct. This is excellent use of Whitehorse City Council Open Space Reserve Funding and will provide much needed public open space in an area that has seen much destruction of open space through the level crossing removal project.	Comments are noted, thank you for your feedback.
22g	5. Swimming Pools- Budgetary Initiative I strongly support Council's initiative to run a 12-month trial of reduced charges for Centrelink and low-income earners living in Whitehorse, to help them to access the pools at a significantly reduced rate – between 10:00am and 2:00pm. This is during off peak times and makes much sense for both users and Pool operations. This gives people who otherwise could not afford to go an opportunity to improve their swimming skills, thereby possibly reducing drownings.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Thank you for your feedback. At the 23 February Council Meeting it was resolved to introduce a 12 month trial of an 'off peak' swim entry (between 11am-2pm) for all concession holders that reside in Whitehorse (including Health Card, pensioners and students). The cost will be \$4 per entry.

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22h	6. Aqualink Nunawading Redevelopment I understand that the Aqualink Nunawading Centre facility is ageing and coming to the end of its useful life with a significant development investment soon to be required. I also understand that a rebuild would cost around \$100.00 million dollars and that Council has been looking at several options. Council needs to include a contingency for redevelopment of the pool within the budget so that residents and ratepayers are informed that this much-loved asset needs a significant investment in the near future. I would like to know how much funding has been set aside in this current year's budget and past budgets for this. Council needs to consider whether to build a smaller more efficiently designed facility or whether it will consider working with other neighbouring Councils to build a regional pool to offset such a major expense. It may need to work with the State and Federal Government to seek funding to do this, especially given the upcoming State Election in November.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Council is undertaking planning work for the replacement of the ageing Aqualink Nunawading facility. This is a significant community asset and will require careful consideration by Council. Funding for a redevelopment will require contributions from other levels of government so a budget commitment by Council has not yet been determined. Council takes a prudent financial management approach and the 10 year Financial Plan has been developed to provide for future operational and capital expenditure. Future Council decisions will be required to determine the final design of the facility and final budget allocation. The proposed 2026/27 Budget includes \$0.50 million to progress with the concept design and community consultation for a planned redevelopment of Aqualink Nunawading as part of its decision on 23 February 2026 to approve an allocation of \$2.5 million across the 2026/2027 and 2027/2028 Budgets to progress with the Concept / Schematic Design and Community Consultation.
22i	7. Investment in Parks and Gardens I would like to see the Budget for the above include more funding for more trees to provide shade over play space and also to fund the cost of more varied play/park equipment to enable participation for children and teenagers and adults with all abilities, separate to children's play areas. They also need better paths, facilities, toilets and rest areas including seating.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Council's budget allocates provision for planting over 1,000 park trees per annum. Tree planting location assessments include providing future shade for play space areas. Council recognises the importance of providing inclusive and accessible open spaces, including diverse play and recreation opportunities, improved paths, seating, toilets and rest areas. Council is currently developing the <i>Play and Social Recreation Action Plan</i>, which explores opportunities to diversify play and park equipment to better cater for people of all ages, abilities and recreation interests, while balancing financial sustainability. In addition, the adopted <i>Whitehorse Open Space Strategy 2024</i> highlights the importance of improving accessibility, path networks, shade, canopy trees and inclusive infrastructure across the municipality. These directions will help inform the future planning and design of open space projects.



Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
22j	8. SES Whitehorse Could SES Whitehorse use the land opposite Box Hill Fire Station.? Is there any Budget to support the SES with land suitable for a new emergency service facility? Whitehorse residents value and appreciate the work of the men and women dedicated volunteers. The work these people do saves Council thousands of dollars each year and protects life and property. The existing facility in Box Hill has been condemned multiple times and is considered dangerous. If Council can include a contingency in the 2026-27 Budget to enable it to identify potential surplus land within Council's portfolio or other land that could be modified and utilized by the SES. Another option may be to sell any Council surplus land to the Victorian State Government Emergency Service that can then build a facility that can be used by the Whitehorse SES. The aim would be to build a modern facility based on the template to provide this valuable service in the future. Another possibility is for the State Government Emergency Service pay to lease the land from Whitehorse Council and then it be developed for use.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. The SES provides a valuable service to Whitehorse residents, and the work of the volunteers is highly regarded. The SES is a State Government agency funded by the State. Council currently supports the SES by hosting the current SES facility at the Whitehorse Operations Centre. As the SES is a State agency, there is no funding in the proposed Council budget for the SES service. The responsibilities of the SES and Council are clearly defined. The SES does not undertake Council work, noting that there may be occasions in storm events where both Council and the SES will work collaboratively to address emergency tree matters. The SES and Council staff have held a number of meetings regarding future sites and Council staff understand that the SES continues to seek a new location. There are no surplus Council sites that have been identified for sale or lease as part of this process.
	Final Remarks: Please sincerely and respond to all of my comments and suggestions. I would appreciate a written response from the Mayor and or appropriate responsible Council Officers.	Council officers will provide a written response to the respondent upon finalisation and adoption of the 2026/27 Budget.



Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
23	To: Mayor, Councillors and Officers, City of Whitehorse Please find attached a formal submission from the Metro East Bicycle User Group regarding the City of Whitehorse draft budget for FY27. We are writing to register our serious concern that, while funding is allocated to planning and strategy work, the draft budget allocates no funding to actually deliver new, safe cycling infrastructure. We ask that Council reject this draft in its current form and amend it to: 1. Fund the construction of cycling infrastructure (not only design work). 2. Establish a clear, funded pipeline across the forward estimates with cycling as a separate budget line item. 3. Itemise each project and location with amounts allocated for planning, design, and delivery. 4. We also ask Council to commit to delivering the priority connectivity projects listed in the attached submission. Given the importance of these decisions to community safety and mobility, we request a written response outlining how Council will address each of the issues raised, including what delivery funding will be allocated in FY27 and the dates for any proposed briefings or consultation. We are available to meet with Councillors and relevant officers to discuss the attached recommendations.	Action: An additional allocation of \$150,000 to be added to the existing \$850,000 budget allocation in the 2027/28 capital works plan for the provision of active transport infrastructure, for a total budget allocation in 2027/28 of \$1,000,000. Council officers will provide a written response to the respondent upon finalisation and adoption of the 2026/27 Budget.

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Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
23a	The Metro East Bicycle User Group wishes to register our extreme disappointment with the draft budget for FY27. MeBUG calls upon the councillors of the City of Whitehorse to reject this proposed budget and we call upon the council to amend the budget appropriately to invest in the health and safety of the residents. In the current budget, the Whitehorse council has proposed: \$125k for designing trail interconnections. \$532K for the Box Hill Integrated Transport Strategy and Nelson Road, but they have allocated \$0 for actually putting down any new concrete and building any new, safe infrastructure. The cycling-related' budget provision is especially disappointing given the current fuel crisis where people should be given alternatives as a priority. It also stacks up very poorly compared to neighbouring municipalities who are investing in new paths and trails.	Over the past few years, Council implemented 8 Easy Ride Routes (ERR) that include routes NS1, NS2, NS4, NS6, NS10, EW2, EW4 and EW6. In addition, Council is currently designing connections between various ERR as identified in the evaluation report and through community feedback. These connections are between ERR NS1 and NS2, and between NS4 and NS6. These connections are scheduled to be completed by June 2026. The evaluation report revealed that the ERR network is viewed positively by most participants, albeit with some suggestions for improvements and connections. These issues are present on both main roads and local streets. It was recommended in the report that Council sought to address these issues before extending the ERR network. Some other key active transport projects recently completed by Council include a new shared user path through Surrey Park, raised intersection treatments along Station St, Box Hill (Bank St, Oxford St, Harrow St, Ashted Rd), zebra crossing at Main St Blackburn (for cyclists and pedestrians). Cycling projects currently being scoped, planned and designed by Council include, the Rooks Rd connection between the Pipe track and the Box Hill to Ringwood SUP, Mahoneys Rd on road bicycle lane connection between Hawthorn Rd and Burwood Hwy, connection between Whitehorse Rd and the Box Hill to Ringwood SUP along the Harvey Norman laneway, Nunawading and Richards St, Mitcham. Council is delivering the recommendations and actions through its current Cycling strategy such as the Easy Ride Routes project over the past several years. Council officers are taking a strategic approach to managing cycling and safe cycling connection throughout the City in alignment with its cycling strategy. An <i>Integrated Transport Strategy</i> (which will include Active Transport Actions) is currently being developed and is expected to be completed at the end of 2026. The implementation of an Integrated Transport Strategy is subject to future budget funding allocations. The current allocation of funding provides for the detailed design of cycling connection upgrades that link key intersections along service roads and safe pedestrian crossing improvements such as along Gawler Chain at intersecting roads. These designs will then lead to physical improvements carried out.

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Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
23b	We note that in the previous years budget there were the following 2 line items: • \$0.15 million to develop concept plans for bike path upgrades along service roads(Dorking Road, Linsley Street, Dunlavin Road and Edward Street intersections). • \$0.13 million to commence investigations and concept designs for cycling connection upgrades, including linking service lanes, footpath widening and trail connections. We have not yet seen any concept plans developed for any of the upgrades along the service roads in item 1. Noting that Linsley St already has the required concrete in place (and has done so since the service lane was altered back in about 1990). Have these plans been completed? Why does there need to be so much time taken with planning, designing and executing? We've already got the Linsley St intersection as shown below, give us 3 more just like it.	The identified Whitehorse Road cycling connection improvement projects at Linsley St and Dorking Rd, Rooks Rd and Dunlavin St and at Whitehorse Rd and Edwards St are currently being investigated, planned, scoped and assessed. A reasonable period of time is required for this critical work to be carried out. The detailed designs are proposed to be finalised for each of these intersections during the 2026/27 year, leading into budget planning and construction. An additional allocation of \$150,000 to be added to the existing \$850,000 budget allocation in the 2027/28 capital works plan for the provision of active transport infrastructure, for a total budget allocation in 2027/28 of \$1,000,000.
23c	Also we haven't seen any concept designs or been provided with any feedback regarding the 2nd item which was investigating Burwood Highway as a major route to link the Eastlink/Burwood Highway trails in Knox to Syndal to Heatherdale Pipeline Trail.	The Burwood Highway connection between Eastlink and Holland Gully Reserve is currently being investigated and designed and will include Council funding for the 26/27 year for further design consideration. Suitable connection to the Pipe path at Burwood Hwy will also be considered. An additional allocation of \$150,000 to be added to the existing \$850,000 budget allocation in the 2027/28 capital works plan for the provision of active transport infrastructure, for a total budget allocation in 2027/28 of \$1,000,000.
23d	The turnaround time to develop concept plans, perform investigations, do preliminary work, site explorations before having briefings and community feedback sessions before maybe if we are lucky, reluctantly actually delivering what was overwhelmingly asked for more than 10 years ago is painful and infuriating and makes things impossible for councillors to achieve during the course of a term in office. We remind you that the key infrastructure centrepiece item in the 2016 Cycling Strategy (The completion of the full Syndal Heatherdale Pipeline Trail) has still not been achieved.	As you are aware, various sections of the MW Pipe Path have been upgraded by Council in alignment with the MW Capital Works water infrastructure renewal program. The remaining sections of the pipetrack project is currently on hold due to the MW water main renewal planning and construction timeframes, which is beyond Councils control.

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Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
23e	We also note that in planned Capital Works for future financial years in FY28 there is only \$61k allocated for new Footpaths and Cycleways, there's \$29k in FY29 and \$65k for FY30. That is for both new Footpaths and Cycleways, so effectively the budget for the next 4 financial years for cycling infrastructure is planned to be zero. For a council that has delivered a Forecasted Surplus of \$14M in 25/26 and a budgeted surplus of \$34M in 26/27, it is obviously not a case of lack of funding to be able to deliver the projects that we have been asking for. We have consistently advocated for projects to link the existing trails in the municipality, projects to provide connectivity to train stations, schools, libraries, places of worship, sports facilities, and places of employment.	With respect to projects that provide safe connections to existing trails and key destination points, Council is taking a strategic approach to managing cycling and safe cycling connections throughout the City in alignment with its current cycling strategy. Council is currently designing connections between various Easy Ride Routes (ERR) as identified in the evaluation report and through community feedback. These connections are between ERR NS1 and NS2, and between NS4 and NS6. These connections are scheduled to be completed by June 2026. Cycling projects currently being scoped, planned and designed by Council to provide connections for cyclists and pedestrians include: the Rooks Rd connection between the MW Pipe track and the Box Hill to Ringwood SUP, Mahoneys Rd on road bicycle lane connection between Hawthorn Rd and Burwood Hwy, connection between Whitehorse Rd and the Box Hill to Ringwood SUP along the Harvey Norman laneway, Nunawading and Richards St, Mitcham. An <i>Integrated Transport Strategy</i> (which will include Active Transport Actions) is currently being developed and is expected to be completed at the end of 2026. The new strategy will aim to provide transport system choices that are sustainable, safer and reliable that better connect people to places. There will be an action plan developed as part of the Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy that will identify future projects.
23f	Our key projects that we want to see built to provide connectivity across the municipality remain unchanged. We want to see: 1. Completion of the Syndal to Heatherdale corridor linking the Box Hill to Ringwood Trail to the Waverley Rail Trail. This needs connection along Rooks Rd (1a) and the link between Springvale Rd and Ballantye St (1b) completed. 2. Connection between the brand new Ngarrak Nakorang Wilam trail and the Pipeline Trail 3. Connection along Middleborough Rd to link the Gardiners Creek Trail to the Box Hill to Ringwood Trail 4. Connection along Dorking Rd to link the Box Hill to Ringwood Trail to the Koonung Creek Trail via the existing Bushy Creek Trail 5. Connection between the Eastlink/Dandenong Creek Trails and the Gardiners Creek Trail along (5a) Burwood Hwy to the Pipeline Trail and (5b) utilising Holland Gully trail) 6. Completing the Hawthorn to Box Hill Trail Thank you, MEBUG	Council is delivering the recommendations and actions through its current Cycling strategy such as the Easy Ride Routes project over the past several years. Council officers are taking a strategic approach to managing cycling and safe cycling connection throughout the City in alignment with its cycling strategy. An <i>Integrated Transport Strategy</i> (which will include Active Transport Actions) is currently being developed and is expected to be completed at the end of 2026. The implementation of an Integrated Transport Strategy is subject to future budget funding allocations. There will be an action plan developed as part of the Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy that will identify future projects. With regards to the highest priority list you have referenced in your document, an update is as follows: 1a) Rooks Road design connecting the pipetrack to the BH to Ringwood SUP is currently being investigated and a budget has been allocated to this project for 26/27 (design) and 27/28 (construction), 1b) this project is on hold due to MW water main renewal and is not within Councils control, 2) the NNW trail to pipetrack trail is a Council advocacy piece working with the State Government to provide a safe crossing across Springvale Road, 3 & 4) These project are not in Council's current pipeline of cycling projects., 5) the Burwood Highway connection between Eastlink and Holland Gully Reserve is currently being investigated and designed and will include funding for 26/27 for further design consideration, 6) The Box Hill to Hawthorn trail is an ongoing advocacy project for both Boroondara and Whitehorse Councils. Finally, a project that has not been highlighted in your report that is being constructed in 26/27 from the Box Hill Integrated Transport Strategy budget allocation is a bicycle connection at the Brougham / Thurston / Oxford / Surrey Drive roundabout providing an improved connection between Thurston Street and the existing off road path along Surrey Drive.

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Community Engagement Feedback



Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
24	As a long term resident, I am wondering if there is a possibility for a drinking water fountain to be installed at Brentford Square shopping precinct. There is a lack of water fountains in our area anyway and believe that this location is ideal for one to be installed. Very centrally located. Please see examples of water fountains below. One has 3 water points - bubbler, bottle filler and dog water bowl, the other just bubbler and bottle filler. I reckon there are 2 possible locations for this proposed fountain at Brentford Square. I have photos below of those locations. Location 1 - Near playground at the back of Woolworths Location 2 - In the newly updated covered seating area near Post Office and Dental surgery. Yarra Valley Water could pitch in potentially, as they are located within our shire. Good advertising for them!	Action: Inclusion of \$15,000 in the 2026/27 budget for installation of a drinking water fountain at Brentford Square shopping precinct. After considering the site options, officers suggest that the most appropriate location for a drinking fountain within Brentford Square would be within the vicinity of the Public Toilet facility, due to good access to existing services (water supply). The probable cost to install a drinking fountain at this location is in the order of up to \$15,000. This would allow for the supply and installation of a mixed-use drinking fountain (bubbler, water bottle filler and dog-bowl) associated drainage and pavement makegood. The final location for the new drinking fountain will consider future upgrades within this precinct including the Public Toilet and Play Space renewal, ensuring that its installation will not be compromised when these future renewals are delivered.
25	Dear Council, I am writing to raise a safety concern regarding the footpath conditions on Meerut Street, Mitcham. Currently, Meerut Street lacks a dedicated footpath, leaving residents with no option but to walk on the road. This poses a significant safety risk, particularly for children, elderly residents, and families with prams who have no safe alternative to sharing the road with passing vehicles. As part of the 2026–27 annual budget considerations, I would respectfully urge the Council to prioritise the construction of a footpath along Meerut Street. A footpath is a fundamental piece of infrastructure that directly impacts the safety and wellbeing of residents using this street on a daily basis. I trust that the Council shares our community's commitment to ensuring all residents can move safely within our neighbourhood, and I hope this matter can be given serious consideration in the upcoming budget cycle. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further if needed.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. There are a number of streets within Whitehorse and other urban areas that do not have a footpath. Generally, footpaths were installed at the time of the residential subdivision development and funded by the developer. Meerut Street was developed many years ago and sits within an SLO3 (Significant Landscape Overlay – Schedule 3) area in Whitehorse, with well established street trees on both sides of the street. SLO3 in Whitehorse aims to protect valued landscape character and vegetation, meaning new footpath proposals must be designed to minimise impacts on trees and streetscape. These trees would need to be removed if a footpath was to be installed. There are no proposals to remove the trees or install a footpath.

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Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
26	Not enough on climate, roads/infrastructure, Blame on state govt. Would love some more inclusion as whitehorse is a very diverse population. Didnt see any coucil members at naidoc week evwns last year at all. In fact, even the wevsite was difficult to navigate so i participated in events in monash instead I feel like the mayor and my council are very right wing, and would prefer to be living in the 60s.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Thank you for taking the time to share your feedback. We value community input and appreciate the opportunity to better understand your perspectives. We acknowledge your concerns regarding the level of focus on climate action and investment in roads and infrastructure. Council is committed to delivering essential services while continuing to invest in the infrastructure that supports our growing and diverse community. The proposed 2026/27 budget includes an \$85 million capital works program, with \$2.91 million allocated to road resurfacing and \$1.47 million for kerb and channel renewal. The Proposed Budget also supports delivery of the Integrated Council Plan Action Plan, including cost-effective actions to reduce corporate emissions and development of a Climate Response Plan for 2027–2030. You’ve also raised concerns about how Council communicates its role in relation to the State Government. We understand the importance of clear accountability and will continue working to ensure our messaging reflects both our responsibilities and advocacy. We appreciate your comments on inclusion, particularly in a diverse community like Whitehorse. Council’s newly established Multicultural Advisory Committee will provide culturally diverse perspectives to help shape our services, policies and plans, and identify ways to strengthen social and cultural inclusion and celebrate our multicultural community. Your feedback regarding NAIDOC Week participation and website accessibility is also valuable. Council recognises the importance of visible support for cultural events and accessible information. Information about local events is available at www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au/whats-on-whitehorse and we have recently updated the website to provide a simpler search function. We will continue to improve awareness and engagement. Finally, we acknowledge your concerns about Council leadership and direction. Council is committed to representing a broad range of community views and values, and respectful feedback plays an important role in ensuring we remain responsive. Thank you again for contributing to the budget consultation process. All feedback will be considered before the budget is finalised.
27	I would like to express my strong support for the sports ground upgrade for the Bill Stewart area. My kids have used the area for many years for school events and now continuing with athletics. It is truly a community used area with so many different groups making use of the space. However, the track is in desperate need for refurbishment, and access is not possible for anyone with mobility issues.	We note and appreciate your support. Council investment in assets is underpinned and guided by our Asset Plan (2025-2035). This guidance ensures infrastructure decisions align with asset condition, community needs and the roadmap of our Financial Plan (2025-2035). The renewal of the athletics surface at Bill Sewart (Nunawading Athletics) is included in the draft Budget.
28	Support budget of Bill Stewart Hall and athletes facilities	We note and appreciate your support. Council investment in assets is underpinned and guided by our Asset Plan (2025-2035). This guidance ensures infrastructure decisions align with asset condition, community needs and the roadmap of our Financial Plan (2025-2035). The renewal of the athletics surface at Bill Sewart (Nunawading Athletics) is included in the draft Budget.



Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
29	Hi, yes we would love to see the night markets back! Every month throughout the year would be amazing. Different stalls throughout the year would also be great. I think if it's maintained regularly through the year, it won't be as busy (shoulder to shoulder busy) as it was with the limited 3. It definitely brings community together and we need more of these free events in our local area. Thanks.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. We have received extensive feedback from visitors and stallholders and are currently undertaking an evaluation to assess the impact of the markets. Evaluations and outcomes will be reported back to Council for consideration.



Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
30	On behalf of the Mega Mile Precinct Group (MPG) Incorporated, I write in strong support of the proposed budget item relating to the development of a Business Precinct Program. While MPG was formally incorporated in July 2025, our journey began almost a decade ago with the ambition to establish an association representing one of Australia's largest home and lifestyle precincts. With the support of past and present Councilors including Councilors Weller and Stennett and the Investment and Economic Development Team through Dani Ahimastos, we are now working in a more coordinated way with precinct businesses, as well as with local and broader organizations that add value to the precinct, the broader community and Whitehorse City Council. As a trader association, we represent a growing membership base and advocate for over 200 businesses along the strip, collectively employing more than 2,500 people. Currently funded through memberships, we have made significant progress in just 10 months, including the development of a new brand, website and social media presence. We have also partnered with the Eastern Emergency Relief Network (EERN) and the Australian Bedding Stewardship Council (ABSC) to deliver a pilot program focused on the reuse of mattresses that would otherwise go to landfill. It is anticipated this initiative could serve as a model for other precincts across Australia. Several additional initiatives are also in development, further demonstrating the value of a well-organized and collaborative association. The Mega Mile is comparable in scale to a large shopping center. While we are supported by a dedicated committee of business owners and Council officers, access to seed funding at this stage would be instrumental in helping us realize our full potential and achieve our strategic objectives. We therefore strongly support the proposed funding for new and emerging trader associations, such as MPG, to help establish a strong and sustainable foundation for future success.	Comments are noted. Confirming the positive feedback is supported and the program will be designed to ensure that the Megamile Precinct Group is eligible to apply.



Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
31a	Do We Want To see Twilight Markets continue at Britannia Mall in Mitcham? Whitehorse has two very well organised, and highly attended markets every month, at the community precinct around the library. The concept of a twilight market is great but the limited number of (expensive, not local) vendors, and lack of variety in stalls honestly made it a waste of time. The space at Britannia Mall really was under utilised. For all the promotion and advertising, it took 5 minutes see all there was to see. What a let down. Were the Britannia Mall markets to continue to run I would expect better affordability, actual local vendors, more variety, more stalls, and local musicians/buskers. The market is best suited to clement weather, and would be better attended during the warmer 6 months of the year.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. We have received extensive feedback from visitors and stallholders and are currently undertaking an evaluation to assess the impact of the markets. Evaluations and outcomes will be reported back to Council for consideration.

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Community Engagement Feedback

Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
31b	By the way, the plans to erect permanent shade awnings in Britannia Mall must be scrapped... trees are far more welcome in an outdoor space! Just look at what they did at Brentford Square... complete idiocy. I have lived and worked in Whitehorse for over 20 years, and frankly I'm appalled at the amount of money that has been wasted in "beautifying" the shopping precinct around Britannia Mall, enough with re-replacing the footpaths and seating. How about a small play space? How about a drinking water fountain? How about some herb and flower container gardens? How about investing in projects that actually benefit the community?	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. The first stage of consultation on the Britannia Mall shelter structure was completed in April 2026. The key aim of this consultation was to determine whether there was community support for the project and to identify any key feedback themes. Feedback indicated approximately 73% community support for the provision of permanent shelter at Britannia Mall. In response to the feedback, the architect has proposed three shelter structures designed to protect the trees, minimise the bulk of the shelters, and address maintenance concerns. Consultation on the concept design will commence in late June 2026 and remain open for three weeks. Consultation methods will include a YourSay survey, social media, and a mail-out. The project will be tendered in September/October 2026. The construction delivery period will be finalised following consultation with traders. The project is expected to be delivered by mid-2027. The project has received co-funding with \$250,000 secured through the State Government 'Multicultural Business Precinct Revitalisation Program'. Further to the above, the Britannia Mall Upgrade Project was completed in early 2022 with an approximate project value of \$1.1M. The project scope included replacement of the existing uneven brick paving with exposed aggregate concrete to provide a safer and more accessible pedestrian environment, along with upgrades to street furniture and lighting. The project also incorporated two bookable activation spaces to support community use and local business activation within the mall precinct. Community engagement was undertaken in mid-2020 and included consultation with residents and property owners within a 400-metre radius, as well as traders within the Mitcham shopping precinct. Feedback received through the consultation process informed the staging of works, furniture design and overall layout outcomes. Further correspondence, including the proposed concept design and project delivery timing, was distributed to stakeholders in late 2020. In relation to the request for a play space, this was considered during the project planning process; however, it was ultimately determined that a dedicated play space was not appropriate for this location. Britannia Mall functions as a key pedestrian thoroughfare and activity zone supporting outdoor dining, community activation and high pedestrian movement, while also operating in close proximity to vehicle movements and servicing requirements. Given these constraints, a play space was not considered suitable within the available footprint. Additionally, Halliday Park, located approximately 1.5 km from Britannia Mall, already provides a broad and diverse range of play opportunities, informal sporting amenities, open space areas and supporting car parking facilities for the wider community. Provision of a drinking fountain within the mall is currently being considered as part of the Britannia Mall Shelter Project. As this is an additional scope item, delivery would be subject to future budget availability.

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Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
32	This is the first time I've really looked at Council's budget and I was surprised at the balance between traditional core council responsibilities (rubbish, roads and footpaths) and other expenditure. In our current difficult financial times, it is really important for council to maintain parks and sporting fields, to support a vibrant cultural and social life and provide welfare support as required. However, many ratepayers would appreciate rates being kept as low as possible at the present time, even below the amount allowed by the rate cap if possible. Perhaps there is scope for reining in rates increases by deferring some of the expenditure on refurbishing sporting facilities or other non-essential items.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Council acknowledges the observations regarding the balance between core Council responsibilities—such as waste, roads and footpaths—and broader expenditure, as well as the importance of maintaining parks, sporting facilities and community services that support a vibrant and connected municipality. We also recognise the concerns raised about affordability and the preference expressed to limit rate increases, particularly in the context of ongoing cost-of-living pressures. These considerations are an important part of the budget development process and are carefully weighed during Council's deliberations. Council's approach to asset investment and capital works is guided by its Asset Plan, which provides a long term, strategic framework for managing community infrastructure. This guides decisions about the timing and scope of works to include consideration for asset condition, risk, service levels and whole of life costs. In relation to the suggestion of deferring certain capital works, such as sporting facility refurbishments or other non-essential projects, Council undertakes regular reviews of its capital program to ensure that projects are prioritised appropriately. This includes assessing opportunities to defer or rescope works where it is reasonable to do so, while also balancing the need to maintain community assets and avoid higher costs or service impacts in the future.
33	The proposed increase in various fees and charges to ratepayers, residents and permit applicants is extremely disappointing and out of step with community expectations. In the current inflationary environment, council needs to be cutting back unnecessary expenditure rather than increasing the fees and costs it imposes on others.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Council acknowledges the community's concern regarding increases to fees and charges, particularly in the current cost-of-living environment. A number of fees and charges are set by State or Federal legislation and are not subject to discretionary change by Council. These statutory fees are updated when changes are advised by the relevant authority. User fees generally relate to recovering part of the cost of providing services to those who use them. In setting these fees, Council seeks to balance cost recovery with community affordability. While Council remains focused on improving efficiency and reducing costs, some fee adjustments are required to ensure the ongoing and sustainable delivery of Council services. In 2026/27, Council's Waste Service Charge is proposed to decrease by an average of 3.0% per household.
34	I would like to see an urban forest close to Box Hill central to offset the high-rise development and have a place of peace that supports native wildlife.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Council's Urban Forest is measured across the whole municipality. Local projects contribute to greening and cooling objectives while providing places that support wildlife and community usage. In Box Hill these projects include planting new street trees throughout many streets, the new Suburban Rail Loop open space replacement parks in Elingworth Parade and Watts St, and vegetation planting in parks including Box Hill Gardens and Whitehorse Reserve. Council continues to advocate for green space on Whitehorse Rd as part of the Suburban Rail Loop project. Council is currently also exploring options for micro forests that could be configured in small spaces to assist with greening and cooling in urban areas. Council aims to balance the needs of open space for community usage including active and passive recreation, and trees and vegetation that provides biodiversity, habitat and local environmental benefits.



Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
35	Greater emphasis on improving walking and cycling environments is needed, especially in denser areas like Box Hill and along critical walking and cycling routes. Those choosing to ride their bike, or who use a bike for work, are more and more forced to use footpaths. Investigations for improved cycling and walking environments should include simple, low-cost initiatives that calm traffic on local streets such that they can be shared more so in a safe manner. You don't have to build a whole new path or rip a road, it can be as simple as using planter boxes, park furniture, paint, and other store-bought materials to create modal filters and to narrow roads to slow car traffic down and reduce rat running. These initiatives can also be staged as trials to bring the community on board. Such measures will produce positive cascading effects on amenity, health, safety, and the local economy.	Action: An additional allocation of \$150,000 to be added to the existing \$850,000 budget allocation in the 2027/28 capital works plan for the provision of active transport infrastructure, for a total budget allocation in 2027/28 of \$1,000,000. Council is delivering the recommendations and actions through its current Cycling strategy such as the Easy Ride Routes project over the past several years. Council officers are taking a strategic approach to managing cycling and safe cycling connection throughout the City in alignment with its cycling strategy. An Integrated Transport Strategy (which will include Active Transport Actions) is currently being developed and is expected to be completed at the end of 2026. The implementation of an Integrated Transport Strategy is subject to future budget funding allocations. There will be an action plan developed as part of the Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy that will identify future projects. A project that has not been highlighted in the Proposed Budget 2026/27 is the construction of a bicycle connection at the Brougham / Thurston / Oxford / Surrey Drive roundabout providing an improved connection between Thurston Street and the existing off road path along Surrey Drive. With regards to projects that are currently being designed in 25/26 and into 26/27 include: 1) Rooks Road connecting the pipetrack to the BH to Ringwood SUP and 2) the Burwood Highway connection between Eastlink and Holland Gully Reserve is currently being investigated and designed and will include funding for 26/27 for further design consideration. These designs will lead to future construction, subject to budget allocations. Over the past few years, Council implemented 8 Easy Ride Routes (ERR) that include routes NS1, NS2, NS4, NS6, NS10, EW2, EW4 and EW6. In addition, Council is currently designing connections between various ERR as identified in the evaluation report and through community feedback. These connections are between ERR NS1 and NS2, and between NS4 and NS6. These connections are scheduled to be completed by June 2026. A recent evaluation report revealed that the ERR network is viewed positively by most participants, albeit with some suggestions for improvements and connections. These issues are present on both main roads and local streets. It was recommended in the report that Council sought to address these issues before extending the ERR network. Some key active transport projects recently completed by Council include a new shared user path through Surrey Park, raised intersection treatments along Station St, Box Hill (Bank St, Oxford St, Harrow St, Ashted Rd), zebra crossing at Main St Blackburn (for cyclists and pedestrians). Cycling projects currently being scoped, planned and designed by Council include, the Rooks Rd connection between the Pipe track and the Box Hill to Ringwood SUP, Mahoneys Rd on road bicycle lane connection between Hawthorn Rd and Burwood Hwy, connection between Whitehorse Rd and the Box Hill to Ringwood SUP along the Harvey Norman laneway, Nunawading and Richards St, Mitcham.



Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
36a	1. The FOGO waste should be collected weekly as maggot can grow easily especially in warmer days. Perhaps making the red bin to be collected fortnightly and green bin along with organic waste to be collected weekly? That's to promote better habits and recycling mindset.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. On 8 December 2025 Council considered bin collection options and resolved to adopt maintaining the weekly garbage service and fortnightly mixed recycling service, and changing to a mandatory food organics and garden organics (FOGO) service for all applicable households collected fortnightly.
36b	2. Davy lane reserve improvement seems taking ages. I wonder if there's any progress update?	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Thank you for your feedback regarding Davy Lane Reserve. Council acknowledges the community's interest in seeing improvements delivered at the reserve. We are pleased to advise that the draft Strathdon Davy Community Precinct Masterplan was endorsed by Council on 20 April 2026 to proceed to community consultation. Community consultation is currently being planned and is scheduled to commence in July 2026. The consultation process will provide the community and stakeholders with the opportunity to review the draft masterplan and provide feedback to help inform the final plan. Given the scale and complexity of the precinct, future improvements are expected to be delivered in stages over time and remain subject to future Council budget considerations and prioritisation processes. Council appreciates the community's patience and ongoing interest in the future of the reserve.
36c	3. It seems there's no proper kid playground around the Mahoney ward within the Forest Hill Reserve area. Should you consider to add that there to promote young family here?	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Council recognises the importance of accessible and high-quality play spaces in supporting healthy and connected communities, particularly for young families. The adopted <i>Open Space Strategy 2025</i> includes recommendations for Forest Hill Reserve to improve unstructured recreational opportunities through a future Landscape Masterplan, including consideration of potential play space upgrades or renewal. This action has been identified as a "Very High" priority, with implementation intended within 1–4 years, subject to future budget considerations and Council prioritisation. Council is also currently reviewing the municipality-wide play space network through the <i>Play and Social Recreation Action Plan</i> to help guide future provision for a growing and diverse community.
37	Increasing childcare fees are incredibly disappointing. This service is critically important to so many families in the area. Fees should not rise in the current economy with family budgets already so stretched.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. The fees set for Council's Child Care services take into account increases to staffing and materials costs. Council benchmarks fees against 30 other local child care providers and Council's fees remain below the average.



Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
38	We would like to see an outdoor gym either at Wattle Park or the Gardiners Creek trail for the residents who live near Wattle Park. We don't have any that are walking distance from where we live in Aylwin Avenue. Thank you for taking the time to read this.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. The draft <i>Bennettswood Reserve Masterplan</i>, endorsed by Council for Round 2 community consultation on 2 February 2026, proposes a diverse range of fitness equipment along the Gardiners Creek Trail between Holland Avenue, Deakin and the Burwood Student Village precinct outside Bennettswood Reserve. The draft masterplan is expected to be released for community consultation in July/August 2026 and will provide a valuable opportunity for the community to provide feedback on these proposed improvements.
39	Hi, The night market was great. Good for summer months. My kids loved the entertainment with the fire juggler. There should be an act at every market to entertain the kids. Just wondering re the cost to run, I assume you charge the stall holders a fee? I used to run a market at La Trobe University years ago and we would make a profit from charging the stall holders a small fee.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Stallholders were charged a fee however this did not cover the full cost of delivery. We have received extensive feedback from visitors and stallholders and are currently undertaking an evaluation to assess the impact of the markets. Evaluations and outcomes will be reported back to Council for consideration.
40	Hi, I am writing as a committed parent with twin sons who have participated for many years with Little Athletics and then progressing to Senior Athletics with Athletics Victoria. Over the years in various age groups the boys have represented and won medals: for their club in the Victorian State Championships and the ACT Championships; as well as for Victoria in the Australian Athletics Championships in all states of Australia. Also, one of my boys has won a silver medal for Australia in the U18 Pole Vault at the World Athletics sanctioned Oceania Games. The boys have a heavy training schedule with David Thomson's elite Pole Vault squad attending up to 4 times a week during the year. Last month, several of David's Pole Vault athletes won gold medals at this year's Australian Athletics Championships. Unfortunately the East Burwood (Bill Stewart) Athletics Track (BSAT) has deteriorated over the years to the point that Athletics Victoria has excluded it from their regular competition due to safety concerns for competing athletes. The run-down conditions of the track and facilities at BSAT is an impediment to athletes achieving the high standards they strive for. Notwithstanding, the athletes do their best with what is available at BSAT. Therefore, I enthusiastically welcome the proposed renewal of East Burwood Athletics Track. This is long overdue.	We note and appreciate your support. Council investment in assets is underpinned and guided by our Asset Plan (2025-2035). This guidance ensures infrastructure decisions align with asset condition, community needs and the roadmap of our Financial Plan (2025-2035). The renewal of the athletics surface at Bill Sewart (Nunawading Athletics) is included in the draft Budget.



Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
41	Hi there, I live in Blackburn South and we need a public toilet in the area. I have had people stop and ask where they are and even taken someone back to my house to use my own toilet. We need one in the area of Wurundjeri walk urgently.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. The pavilion currently under construction at Mirrabooka Reserve (adjacent to Wurundjeri Walk) will include a public toilet as part of the new facility and is scheduled for completion by December 2026. In addition, the <i>Wurundjeri Walk Masterplan</i> , endorsed on 8 December 2025, identifies a future public toilet south of the car park at the end of Orchard Grove, adjacent to the oval. This item is currently identified as a low priority initiative and is therefore likely to be delivered within the next 10–15 years subject to funding allocation.

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Community Engagement Feedback

Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
42	I am very disappointed to see that there is no funding for new, safe cycling infrastructure. Only last year did you just do a survey for the new transport strategy and residents clearly expressed their desire for better cycling infrastructure, in fact one of the "key themes" that the new strategy was based on is "Support cycling by improving connections and providing more cycling infrastructure" according to your website. Yet the draft budget features no funding for any new cycling infrastructure to be constructed in the next year and minimal the years after, only for designs and planning. It has been years since any new cycling infrastructure was added in Whitehorse while neighbouring councils are doing much more: Monash recently opened the Atkinson St cycleway in Oakleigh last year and will extend it in the coming years, Maroondah is currently building a new bike path along Bedford Rd linking the Box Hill-Ringwood and Ringwood-Belgrave trails and Boroondara is spending \$12 million over 4 years for their Greenways to provide safe cycling infrastructure. Whitehorse is falling behind in regards to sustainable transport, we need to actually fund new infrastructure. Especially during this fuel crisis which has made many people reconsider their transport decisions. There are so many places that could benefit: shared paths need to be better connected and the Easy Ride network needs physical infrastructure - painting bicycle symbols on the road has not made anyone feel safer cycling. We need safe, protected cycling infrastructure to be funded in not only this budget but in years to come.	Action: An additional allocation of \$150,000 to be added to the existing \$850,000 budget allocation in the 2027/28 capital works plan for the provision of active transport infrastructure, for a total budget allocation in 2027/28 of \$1,000,000. Council is delivering the recommendations and actions through its current Cycling strategy such as the Easy Ride Routes project over the past several years. Council officers are taking a strategic approach to managing cycling and safe cycling connection throughout the City in alignment with its cycling strategy. An <i>Integrated Transport Strategy</i> (which will include Active Transport Actions) is currently being developed and is expected to be completed at the end of 2026. The implementation of an Integrated Transport Strategy is subject to future budget funding allocations. There will be an action plan developed as part of the Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy that will identify future projects. A project that has not been highlighted in the Proposed Budget 2026/27 is the construction of a bicycle connection at the Brougham / Thurston / Oxford / Surrey Drive roundabout providing an improved connection between Thurston Street and the existing off road path along Surrey Drive. With regards to projects that are currently being designed in 25/26 and into 26/27 include: 1) Rooks Road connecting the pipetrack to the BH to Ringwood SUP and 2) the Burwood Highway connection between Eastlink and Holland Gully Reserve is currently being investigated and designed and will include funding for 26/27 for further design consideration. These designs will lead to future construction, subject to budget allocations. Over the past few years, Council implemented 8 Easy Ride Routes (ERR) that include routes NS1, NS2, NS4, NS6, NS10, EW2, EW4 and EW6. In addition, Council is currently designing connections between various ERR as identified in the evaluation report and through community feedback. These connections are between ERR NS1 and NS2, and between NS4 and NS6. These connections are scheduled to be completed by June 2026. A recent evaluation report revealed that the ERR network is viewed positively by most participants, albeit with some suggestions for improvements and connections. These issues are present on both main roads and local streets. It was recommended in the report that Council sought to address these issues before extending the ERR network. Some key active transport projects recently completed by Council include a new shared user path through Surrey Park, raised intersection treatments along Station St, Box Hill (Bank St, Oxford St, Harrow St, Ashted Rd), zebra crossing at Main St Blackburn (for cyclists and pedestrians). Cycling projects currently being scoped, planned and designed by Council include the Rooks Rd connection between the Pipe track and the Box Hill to Ringwood SUP, Mahoneys Rd on road bicycle lane connection between Hawthorn Rd and Burwood Hwy, connection between Whitehorse Rd and the Box Hill to Ringwood SUP along the Harvey Norman laneway, Nunawading and Richards St, Mitcham.
43	Just wondering where funding in the budget is for aged care services and also to support family carers. The budget always focuses on families services not everyone lives in a traditional family with children.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Council's Positive Ageing Connect and Support service provides one-one-one assistance to older people, including people who have caring responsibilities. The Positive Ageing service developed a Carer's Handbook in 2025 listing support services for carers that is being reprinted in 2026 due to demand as well as being translated into simplified Mandarin.
44	Respondent only included the word "okay"	Comments are noted, thank you for taking the time to share your feedback.



Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
45	Dear Councillors I am writing to request that there could be extra money assigned in the 2026/27 Budget to increase the number of Twilight Markets, that proved to be so successful and so well attended, over the past months. Perhaps the number of markets could be increased to six, over the period from November to April. As we are all aware, Mitcham is a wonderful place to live with so much going on. However, there are very few occasions where the whole population can come together, without travelling out of our own neighborhood. The Mitcham Twilight Market is a relaxed and family friendly space where one can browse the interesting stalls and enjoy good food and entertainment, whilst catching up with neighbours and friends. It is also a great forum for the Whitehorse Council to have a public face to promote and address Council events and information, in a more casual atmosphere than that of the Council offices. I hope you will consider my request as I believe that over time, an increase in the number of Mitcham Twilight Markets would be a real 'plus' for our community and would grow and promote our suburb.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. We have received extensive feedback from visitors and stallholders and are currently undertaking an evaluation to assess the impact of the markets. Evaluations and outcomes will be reported back to Council for consideration.
46	Good Evening Re: Mitcham Markets I was a stallholder at the March and April markets. The twilight markets for me were a great success and going forward this is what i think. Running the twilight markets in the daylight savings months as this years April market was outside of daylight saving i think it did have a small impact on crowd attendance. Friday nights were great and i think they worked well. I definitely would love to see the markets continue and even though i only did 2 of the 3 markets, for the April market i had quite a few return customers.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. We have received extensive feedback from visitors and stallholders and are currently undertaking an evaluation to assess the impact of the markets. Evaluations and outcomes will be reported back to Council for consideration.
47	where is money for the arts and older persons especially for carers of the older person?	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. The arts offer a range of programs for people for all ages, including older people and their carers. Council presents an annual Midweek Matinee Program for older residents and carers monthly as an opportunity to gather, connect and enjoy daytime entertainment. Art programs for older people and carers also exist through Council's Gallery, Community Arts Centre, Heritage Museum and heritage programs, art and craft classes and Festival program. Council also provides a Positive Ageing Connect and Support service where older people, including carers, can receive assistance with how to navigate supports available.

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Community Engagement Feedback



Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
48	FROM WHITEHORSE RATEPAYERS & RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION	
48a	1. Why are tree management costs predicted to decrease in the 2026/27 year when more trees are required to be planted to meet projected requirements for tree canopy cover in the region?	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Council has assessed service provision methodology for street tree planting and is bringing the service in house to enable a more cost-effective outcome. Funds for delivery method has been shifted to several accounts within the Arbor budget. Council will still deliver the required numbers of new street trees to meet Urban Forest objectives and Council Plan KPI's.
48b	2. We are concerned that there are predicted surpluses increasing every year at the same time that rates are predicted to increase year on year.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Council acknowledges the concern regarding increasing projected surpluses alongside rate increases. Forecast surpluses are an important part of Council's long-term financial sustainability. They provide funding for Council's capital works program, helping to deliver and maintain essential community infrastructure such as roads, facilities and public spaces, without relying solely on debt. It is also important to note that forecast surpluses in future years include capital grant funding received from other levels of government, which is allocated to specific projects and contributes to these results. Maintaining a sustainable financial position ensures Council can continue to meet the needs of the community both now and into the future.
48c	3. We believe that the council needs to re-examine its priorities and look especially at the spend on roads and drainage which is aging and could lead to flooding in a number of areas given climate change.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. The proposed level of spending on roads and footpaths is based on asset modelling to maintain the overall condition of the network. Council continues to inspect, maintain and repair roads and footpaths to comply with the Road Management Plan that was amended effective from 16 February 2026. Council has budgeted for an increase in capital expenditure on drainage over the next four years: 2026/27 \$3.452M 2027/28 \$4.644M 2028/29 \$4.805M 2029/30 \$5.044M There is also a further \$1.23m allocated via the 2026/27 operating budget on drain maintenance.

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Community Engagement Feedback



Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
48c	We also believe that there may need to be a review of street lighting to ensure the safety of residents coming home at night	Action: Inclusion of \$100k in the 2026/27 Budget for additional street lighting to enhance community safety. Thank you also for your feedback expressing concerns regarding public lighting. Council acknowledges the important role that public lighting plays in supporting community safety, accessibility and comfort, particularly for pedestrians, public transport users, women and families travelling at night. Public lighting across the municipality is delivered through a partnership arrangement between Council and the electricity distribution company (United Energy and CitiPower), which owns and maintains the majority of the lighting assets. Requests for additional lighting or upgrades are assessed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account a range of factors including relevant Australian Standards, road classification, surrounding land use, pedestrian activity, safety considerations and available funding. While existing lighting may comply with the applicable standards, Council also considers broader factors such as community expectations and emerging usage patterns when reviewing lighting needs. Over many years, Whitehorse City Council has undertaken a range of lighting upgrade initiatives across the municipality, progressively transitioning to more energy-efficient and higher-quality lighting. Council has delivered LED and T5 lighting upgrades throughout the municipality, improving both energy efficiency and lighting performance (for public safety) while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
48d	4. In the budget we are told that there has been an overall increase in information technology by \$0.97 million, mainly reflecting an overall increase in costs associated with upgrading and replacing legacy technology systems. It appears that this cost has been increasing year on year and may be associated with the technology transformation programme which has been ongoing for years. This technology programme we were told was originally going to transform communication and the website. Given that so much money has been spent over the years on overhauls, why is there so much more money being spent now? Has there been any thought to the operation of the use of Artificial Intelligence to reduce costs in this area?	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. The 2026/27 Proposed Budget remains at the same level as the approved 2025/26 Budget. The cost of technology is core to ensuring all Council's services are able to be delivered securely. Similar to construction costs, technology costs are experiencing increases above the rate cap and CPI. Council's work has focused on replacing and modernising legacy systems, ongoing cybersecurity requirements, and ensuring our technology platforms remain reliable, secure and fit for purpose. Technology renewal is not a one-off project but an ongoing process as systems age and community expectations continue to change. Council is actively exploring opportunities to use Artificial Intelligence to improve efficiency and reduce costs over time. This includes the recent launch of AI-powered website search and an internal AI Enablement Program focused on identifying practical efficiencies and service improvements across the organisation. Council is committed to protecting the data it holds and will exercise caution when exposing its data to AI tooling. All AI tools must meet Australian data sovereignty requirements and cyber safety standards for use at Council.
48e	5. Why is customer support budgeted to increase by over \$200,000 in the budget?	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. The increase in the Customer Support budget reflects continued support for the Box Hill Customer Service Centre at the Box Hill Town Hall and focussing on supporting our call volumes, telephone grade of service and customer experience.
48f	6. Why is commercial strategy and contracts projected to nearly double in this year's budget?	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. This change is due to Council's organisational restructure in March 2026. As part of this restructure, two existing roles were transferred from the Continuous Improvement area into the Commercial Strategy & Projects function. The budget also includes a limited tenure role that concludes part way through the year. Overall, this represents a realignment of existing resources rather than an increase in ongoing costs.

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Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
48g	7. We support the council's stand on the issue of the purple bins but we ask what the cost to ratepayers will be IF the State decides to force all Councils to introduce the bins	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. The cost of providing a purple-bin glass recycling service from 1 July 2027 is estimated to be around \$4 million with an annual ongoing cost estimated at an additional \$1.7 million.
48h	8. Given all the expenditure on technology and the constant mantra of ideas champions why is there not a reduction in employee costs but constant increase if technology is allowing things to be done more efficiently?	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Council has avoided millions of dollars of costs escalation due to the organisation's commitment to continuous improvement, innovation and long-term financial sustainability. Technology investments are designed to support better service delivery, reduce manual processes, strengthen security, and help staff work more efficiently and effectively. While these initiatives are delivering operational efficiencies, employee costs are also influenced by factors such as award increases, growing service expectations, service demand growth and compliance obligations. Council remains focused on continuously improving productivity and identifying efficiencies through innovation, process improvement and the considered use of emerging technologies, including AI.
48i	9. Given that the council determined to eliminate its home & community services which were regarded very highly by the community and which provided excellent services, and given that the whole aged care in home services sector is in turmoil now, has there been any review of the \$1.4 million dollars in the budget spent on its aged care programme to determine if this is producing value for money.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Council's Positive Ageing service continues to respond to the needs of older people in Whitehorse. In 2025, the Connect and Support service had over 1800 points of contact with older people requiring support. Positive Ageing educational and capacity building events were attended by over 2000 people and resources developed (such as the carer's handbook, seniors' festival, newsletters) reached thousands of older people. The Positive Ageing team continue to evaluate its services to ensure value for money for the community.
48j	10. We also question the council's decisions, when millions have already been spent on the Morack Golf course and again there is a spend of around half a million dollars on course upgrades yet playgrounds throughout the municipality have relatively little spend on them. This is our future, facilities for children and even for older adults.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Morack Public Golf, following the recent redevelopment works, has exceeded expectations in relation to community engagement, attendance and positive financial return to Council. Future works relating to course condition improvements are needed to accommodate the increased demand without negatively impacting course condition and future community participation, with the financial benefit used to support community programs and services. Council is also currently reviewing the municipality-wide play space network through the Play and Social Recreation Action Plan to help guide future provision for a growing and diverse community.
49	Happy with the proposed budget apart from the \$8 million for land acquisition. I feel that the Council should be maintaining properly rather than buying more property	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. This allocation is not for general expansion of Council property but for targeted strategic acquisitions where there is a need (now or into the future) to secure land for community services, protecting future open space opportunities or avoiding higher long-term costs. Councils' strategic property framework guides decisions for acquisitions, disposal and development of strategic sites. The Proposed Budget also includes significant ongoing investment in asset renewal and maintenance, and together these approaches are required to responsibly manage Council's assets over the long term.



Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
50	FROM COMBINED RESIDENTS OF WHITEHORSE ACTION GROUP (CROWAG): This submission is on behalf of The Combined Residents of Whitehorse Action Group (CROWAG). CROWAG is a non-political, peak organisation in Whitehorse. It advocates for Whitehorse community and its well-being. CROWAG is made up of 13 affiliate resident groups and many individuals. We are grateful for the opportunity to make this submission on aspects of the proposed Budget.	
50a	STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1 - COMMUNITY 1. The upgrade/replacement of Blackburn library has been on the books for a number of years. There is an opportunity to consolidate and enhance a number of council community services located in Blackburn at the one location. The old garage site on the corner of Blackburn Road and Central road has been suggested. An alternative worthy of consideration is the Next Sense site located at 137 Blackburn Road that will likely come onto the market after the end of 2027.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Comments are noted. There are no immediate plans to consolidate this service into other community services located in Blackburn.
50b	STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2 - BUILT 2. The community has been seeking from council a more ambitious program for improving active transport. In light of the oil crisis Council should review upwards its expenditure on active transport infrastructure which provides a cheaper and healthier alternative to driving while keeping cars off our roads.	Action: An additional allocation of \$150,000 to be added to the existing \$850,000 budget allocation in the 2027/28 capital works plan for the provision of active transport infrastructure, for a total budget allocation in 2027/28 of \$1,000,000. Council is delivering the recommendations and actions through its current Cycling strategy such as the Easy Ride Routes project over the past several years. Council officers are taking a strategic approach to managing cycling and safe cycling connection throughout the City in alignment with its cycling strategy. <i>An Integrated Transport Strategy (which will include Active Transport Actions such as low cost treatments that will improve cycling connections) is currently being developed and is expected to be completed at the end of 2026. The implementation of an Integrated Transport Strategy is subject to future budget funding allocations. There will be an action plan developed as part of the Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy that will identify future projects.</i>
50c	3. In light of the increase in Electric Vehicle (EV) take up council should investigate the feasibility and cost/benefit of installing public EV chargers at strategic council facilities such as council facilities such as carparks, libraries, parks, community facilities.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Council has selected Energy Australia to investigate the installation of EV charging infrastructure at 6 selected Council owned sites. They are currently working through power provisioning and other technical matters to establish final feasibility. It is expected that these sites will come into service over the course of 2027. Given the costs involved in the setup and power costs, these sites will be on a user pays basis at appropriate market rates for the charging speeds provided. Evaluations and options will be reported back to Council for consideration.

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Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
50d	STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4 - NATURAL 4. The energy crisis should see Council increasing the rate of replacement to electric vehicles in its fleet.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Council is developing a <i>Corporate Emissions Reduction Plan</i> that will guide the approach to emissions reductions from Council operations, including fleet. Council currently has a number of electric vehicles and hybrid vehicles in its fleet. Emissions reduction is a consideration at the time of fleet changeover, noting that for many items of Council's fleet (for example trucks), suitable electric alternatives are not viable at this time. As the availability of electric vehicles matures, Council will make the switch when appropriate.
50e	5. Council consider funding potential cost/benefits of the tree canopy monitoring tool InCanopy. Council must ensure it is on target to meet its urban tree canopy cover, detailed in the Urban Forest Strategy. It also must use the most cost effective and best technology available to manage the tree canopy, including efficient compliance and enforcement for illegal tree removal (aligns also with Strategic Direction 5 Governance.)	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Council officers have investigated InCanopy. Council currently undertakes Lidar capture every 4 years to measure canopy changes. This methodology is considered best practice as the data source is consistent and repeatable which provides the most accurate information. The data sets used by InCanopy are different and may not provide the most accurate data through the States Coordinated Imagery Program (CIP) that can vary in quality, season, and technology depending on when and why they were originally captured. Council also utilises aerial imagery provided regularly through Nearmaps to assess tree compliance. Council's next Lidar data capture is scheduled for 2027/28 financial year subject to budget endorsement.
50f	6. With the introduction of SLO11 and SLO12 to protect and enhance Gardiners and Koonung Creek corridors Council must produce a resident information brochure and develop web site information on the new guidelines and objectives of the change. The brochure must be delivered to residences within the 50m and 200m buffer areas in the new overlays. This is an important public education step that will help retain existing vegetation and canopy trees in line with council's policies.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Introduction of Significant Landscape Overlays (SLO) 11 and SLO12 was introduced by the State government via Amendment VC278 and came into operation on 20 January 2026. The amendment applied SLOs to 17 waterways within the Yarra (Birraring) and Waterways of the West catchments to preserve the unique landscape character, cultural values, amenity and ecological health of each waterway. The State government undertook community engagement ahead of the proposed controls being introduced. This included letterboxing affected areas and a web based survey on the planning controls being contemplated. It would be reasonable to promote the new controls via Council's web site. Production and distribution of a brochure by Council is not budgeted for, however, as a State-led initiative, Council could advocate to the Department of Transport and Planning's Planning for Waterways program to undertake further notification to properties in these corridors.
50g	7. We support the commitment to make land purchases annually for open space and encourage sites that make Whitehorse more permeable for walkers and cyclists to access parks and linear reserves from neighbourhood centres and residential streets.	Comments are noted. Council acknowledges the importance of ongoing land acquisition to help meet the open space needs of the growing community. Council also recognises the value of improving walking and cycling connections between neighbourhoods, parks and linear reserves to support a more connected and accessible open space network. Strategic planning work, including the recently adopted Whitehorse Open Space Strategy 2025, will continue to help guide future land acquisition and connectivity opportunities across the municipality. An <i>Integrated Transport Strategy</i> (which will include Active Transport Actions) is currently being developed and is expected to be completed at the end of 2026. The implementation of an Integrated Transport Strategy is subject to future budget funding allocations. The new strategy will aim to provide transport system choices that are sustainable, safer and reliable that better connect people to places.
50h	8. We support the street tree planting program and encourage council to continue.	Comments are noted. Program is continuing in 2026/27

2026-27 Proposed Budget

Community Engagement Feedback



Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
50i	STRATEGIC DIRECTION 5 - GOVERNANCE 9. Emergency services are critical to the Whitehorse community. The SES need facilities that are fit for purpose. Council needs to provide resources that assist in the SES finding suitable base in Whitehorse.	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. The SES provides a valuable service to Whitehorse residents and the work of the volunteers is highly regarded. The SES is a State Government agency funded by the State. Council currently supports the SES by hosting the current SES facility at the Whitehorse Operations Centre. As the SES is a State agency, there is no funding in the proposed Council budget for the SES service. The SES and Council staff have held a number of meetings regarding future sites and Council staff understand that the SES continues to seek a new location.
50j	10. In light of the oil crisis and the increase in inflation the assumptions around the projected CPI at around 2.5% seem to put in doubt expenditure and revenue projections. Will these be reviewed ahead of a vote by council on the proposed budget?	Officer recommendation: No change to Proposed Budget 2026/27. Council acknowledges the uncertainty in the current global economic environment, including ongoing inflationary pressures. The assumptions underpinning the four year budget, are based on the best available information at the time of preparation and reflect responsible budgeting practices. While the four year budget will not be revised at this stage, Council will continue to monitor economic conditions and update its forecasts as more information becomes available. This approach ensures Council can respond to changes over time through its ongoing financial management processes.

2026-27 Proposed Budget

Community Engagement Feedback



Response #	FEEDBACK	OFFICER RESPONSE
51	Mayor, Councillors and Mr McMillan The Middle East crisis is having a major economic impact on our Whitehorse Community. But you can make a meaningful difference! The current Easy Ride Network has stalled; only 8 of the 19 routes have been implemented, since 2016 (when the Whitehorse Cycling Strategy was completed). The key element of the ERR Network is Sharrow Linemarking of the various routes. Completing the ERR Network will get more people out of their car, riding a bicycle and saving money. My report 'The Energy Crisis; Make Active Transport Happen' discusses how you can make a REAL difference to our community. In 2023, I prepared an earlier report prior to Whitehorse's review and evaluation of Easy Ride Routes. It discussed key elements that are fundamental to any review to inform further implementation of the full network, and also ways to encourage increased cycling. Many of Whitehorse's current Councillors had not been elected to Council, and thus would not have seen the following report - which is relevant to our current issue of progressing cycling in Whitehorse. I hope that you will read my report 'The Energy Crisis: Make Active Transport Happen' - and positively support our Whitehorse community with real measures to encourage more cycling and thus lower their household costs.	Action: An additional allocation of \$150,000 to be added to the existing \$850,000 budget allocation in the 2027/28 capital works plan for the provision of active transport infrastructure, for a total budget allocation in 2027/28 of \$1,000,000. An evaluation was carried out following implementation of Council's 8 Easy Ride Routes (ERRs). The evaluation involved a multicriteria assessment with quantitative and qualitative analysis, seeking to assess the ERRs from the perspective of 'interested but concerned' bike riders. The analysis was guided by the five best practice cycle planning and design principles of safety, directness, cohesion, attractiveness and comfort. There will be an action plan developed as part of the Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy that will identify future projects. To capitalise upon the demonstrated interest in cycling in Whitehorse and to help increase rates of cycling on the ERRs network, the evaluation recommended that bike-friendly infrastructure beyond wayfinding, decals and sharrows be implemented throughout the existing ERRs. It was recommended that identified infrastructure and wayfinding issues on the existing ERRs be addressed, before considering adding more ERRs to the cycling network. As such, Council officers are currently investigating improvements and addressing the wayfinding issues of the existing ERR routes. Officers are also investigating and preparing designs for cycling connections between ERRs and the Strategic Cycling Corridor networks in Whitehorse. An <i>Integrated Transport Strategy</i> (which will include Active Transport Actions) is currently being developed and is expected to be completed at the end of 2026. The implementation of an Integrated Transport Strategy is subject to future budget funding allocations. The new strategy will aim to provide transport system choices that are sustainable, safer and reliable, that better connect people to places. There will be an action plan developed as part of the Whitehorse Integrated Transport Strategy that will identify future projects.