

7.3 Economic Development Strategy

Executive Summary

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek endorsement of the:

- a. Economic Development Strategy (**Attachment 1**),
- b. Economic Development Action Plan 2023/24 - 2025/26 (**Attachment 2**), and
- c. Additional resources required to deliver core economic development programs.

The report also presents the 2023 Economic Development Strategy community consultation findings (**Attachment 3**).

Background

Broader context

The City of Boroondara's economy is shaped by its distinct 55 high streets and neighbourhood shopping centres. These precincts have experienced increasing pressures, in part due to the impact of changing shopping habits (such as towards online shopping) and responses and recovery to the global pandemic. More recently, the cost-of-living crisis, fuelled by international events and inflation, has provided further challenges for local shopping centres. The Economic Development Strategy (Strategy) and associated Economic Development Action Plan 2023/24 - 2025/26 (Action Plan) aim to enhance the health of the local economy.

Strategy development

At the 12 December 2022 Services Delegated Committee meeting, Councillors were presented with the draft Economic Development Strategy (formerly referred to as the Economic Development and Visitor Attraction Strategy) and draft Action Plan 2023/24 - 2025/26. At this meeting, Council resolved to undertake community consultation on the draft Strategy between 25 January and 10 March 2023. This consultation was the final step in a three-stage consultation process which included community consultation from December 2020 to April 2021 and a targeted stakeholder consultation undertaken from March to October 2021.

Delivering on the Boroondara Community Plan's Theme 6 - Local Economy

The Economic Development Strategy (the 'Strategy') is Council's key road map to delivering on the Boroondara Community Plan 2021-2031 Theme 6, Local Economy Strategic Objective to:

"...Support local businesses and enhance shopping precincts, fostering a strong economy and welcoming places for the community." (page 48)

The 2021 refresh of the Boroondara Community Plan 2021-2031 (BCP) identified Local Economy within the top three priority issues for our community (**Figure 1**). The importance of Local Economy to our community has risen since the 2017 BCP when it was the sixth ranked priority (**Figure 2**).

Strategy vision

In line with this Strategic Objective, the Strategy's vision is to:

- facilitate the maintenance and growth of a thriving economy and contribute to Boroondara's liveability.
- support and promote the municipality as a desirable destination for visitors through the growth of the visitor economy.

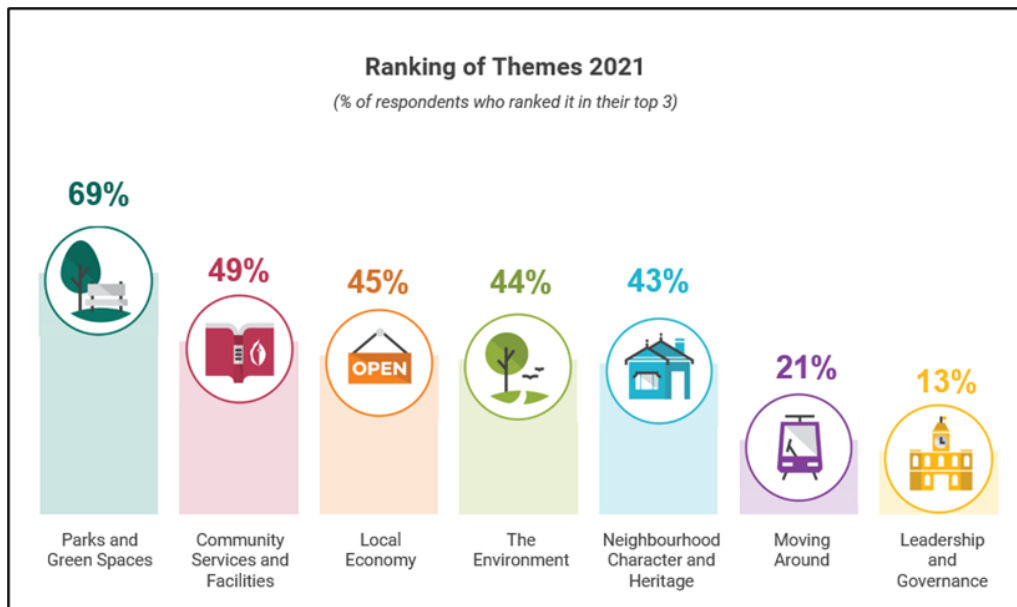


Figure 1: BCP 2021 Refresh - Theme rankings

(Source: Boroondara Community Plan Refresh 2021 Consultation results)

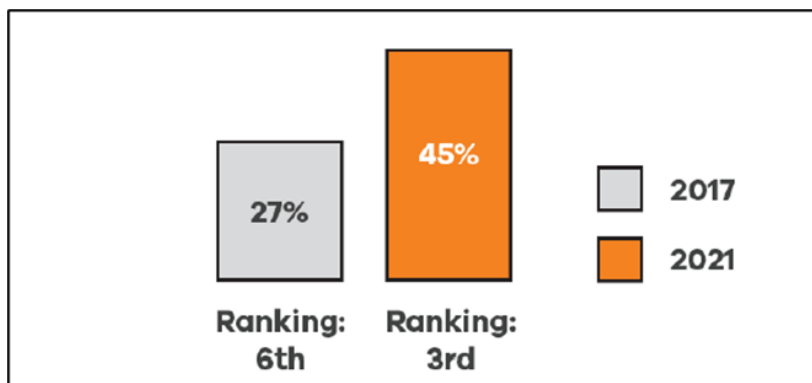


Figure 2: Local Economies Ranking - BCP 2017 to BCP refresh 2021

(Source: Boroondara Community Plan Refresh 2021 Consultation results)

Strategy priority areas

To deliver on this vision, the six-year Strategy identifies four priority areas:

- Priority 1 - Thriving Shopping Precincts
- Priority 2 - A Supported Business Community
- Priority 3 - A Sustainable, Circular and 'Smart' Local Economy
- Priority 4 - A Desirable Destination for Visitors.

Economic Development Strategy Action Plan

The six-year Strategy will be implemented through two three-year action plans. The first action plan period is proposed as 2023/24 - 2025/26. These actions complement Council's core economic development and business support programs (listed below). To ensure the actions remain relevant and respond to current and emerging issues and opportunities, a new action plan will be developed in 2026.

In response to community feedback, the Strategy (**Attachment 1**) and Action Plan (**Attachment 2**) were updated. Of note, the title of the strategy was simplified and a number of actions were added, consolidated, or amended.

Council's existing economic development core programs

Council currently delivers the following 14 economic development and business support programs (described in section 4 and **Table 2** of this report) which contribute to the delivery of the BCP's Theme 6 Local Economy. These programs also contribute to the realisation of the Strategy vision, and include:

1. Economic development program and policy development
2. Special Rate and Charge Schemes program (SR&CS)
3. Community Strengthening Grants (Vibrant Retail Precincts stream) program
4. Trader Association Liaison and Place-making Projects program
5. Business Support Service
6. Shopping Centre Improvement Program (SCIP)
7. Parklets program
8. Business Boroondara Events program
9. Economic participation program
10. Local business marketing and promotion program
11. Circular Economy program
12. Christmas in Boroondara program
13. Shopping Centre Activation program
14. Markets program.

Key Issues

Importance of the local economy to our community

The importance of the local economy to our community was highlighted in the recent findings from the 2023 Australian Liveability Census. *Place Score* surveyed more than 25,000 Australians to gauge overall liveability satisfaction and identify key attributes of each municipality. Boroondara ranked highest in Victoria and fourth nationally, with 'Local Business' its best performing attribute (**Table 1**). (Note: Place Score is an independent, for-profit social planning and data analysis company).

Ranking	Municipality	Best Performing Attribute
1	Boroondara	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Local businesses that provide for daily needs 2. Access to neighbourhood amenities 3. Landscaping and natural elements
2	Port Phillip	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Access to neighbourhood amenities 2. Connectivity 3. Spaces suitable for specific activities or special interests
3	Bayside	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Physical comfort 2. Access to neighbourhood amenities 3. Local businesses that provide for daily needs

Table 1: Melbourne's top three liveable local government areas and attributes

(Source: Place Score; The Age, 11 November 2023)

Consultation Findings

The third and final round of consultation on the Strategy occurred during January and March 2023. The consultation received 1,085 Engage Boroondara page visits, with 96 people providing contributions.

The Strategy was widely supported with approximately 79% of respondents providing positive and/or constructive feedback on the four proposed priorities of the draft Strategy. 'Thriving Shopping Precincts' was ranked most important by half of all respondents. A Community Engagement Summary is provided in **Attachment 3**.

Resourcing the Action Plan (2023/24 - 2025/26)

The six-year Strategy will be implemented through two three-year action plans. The first Action Plan (2023/24 - 2025/26) includes 24 actions (**Attachment 2**). These actions complement Council's existing economic development and business support programs identified above (and described in section 4 (**Table 2**) of this report).

Several actions will require additional resources (summarised in **Table 5**). Where this is the case, budget proposals will be submitted for consideration as part of the annual budget bid process where they can be considered against other priorities. Should these bids be unsuccessful, these actions will be reconsidered for possible inclusion in the subsequent Action Plan.

Resourcing core economic development programs

Since 2020 and the onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic, three of the 14 programs listed above (the Community Strengthening Grants, Parklet program, and Love Local Life website program), have been added to the team's core programming. Additional activity has generally increased in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and associated measures to support local businesses (both during and as part of recovery).

More generally, Council support for shopping centres and trader associations has also increased in recent years, through:

- the need for additional governance support and process improvements,
- increase in requests to support existing trader associations,
- support to establish new trader associations,
- investigations and project coordination responsibility for arts and placemaking projects and requests on Council land or assets
- demand for face-to-face business engagement, and
- support for major projects within shopping centres such as the Surrey Hills Level Crossing Removal Project (LXRP).

In addition, there has been community and organisational demand to broaden economic development programs into aspects of the local economy beyond a focus on shopping centres such as sustainability and circular economy initiatives, employment and training, and social and local procurement.

To resource the delivery of these additional responsibilities, respond to COVID-19 recovery, as well as increasing demand for trader support, three fixed-term roles were introduced into the Local Economies team from 2020. One of these roles has been partially funded by a Victorian Government Covid-19 grant. These contracted roles will conclude in June 2024 (2 roles) and December 2024 (1 role) and will impact the delivery of both core programs and the Strategy.

In order to respond to community feedback regarding the importance of local businesses and 'Thriving Shopping Precincts', and to ensure Strategy Priority areas can be delivered, additional ongoing resources (1.25 EFT) are requested from 1 January 2025 after the fixed-term roles cease.

The additional resources enable Council to deliver eight of 14 (57%) core programs (**Table 3**) and enhance the Local Economies' team capacity to deliver on key Action Plan items. The ongoing additional EFT costs would be \$95,778 in 2024/25 then \$1,761,571 over the remainder of the life of the Long Term Financial Strategy (refer **Table 6** and sections 4 and 6 of this report). In addition, the delivery of Strategy Action Plan items requiring additional project funding (**Table 5**) would be subject to the annual budget development process.

With the withdrawal of Covid-19 funding and the end of the fixed term contracts, there will be 2.8 EFT less staff within the Local Economies team. If the additional 1.25 EFT requested is approved there will still be 1.55 EFT less staff. In light of this, the following core programs will no longer be delivered, the implications of which are outlined in Section 4 (**Table 4**) of this report:

- Parklets program (relates to new parklets only)
- Shopping Centre Activation program.

Officers' recommendation

That Council resolve to:

1. Adopt the Economic Development Strategy (Attachment 1).
2. Endorse the Economic Development Action Plan 2023/24 - 2025/26 (Attachment 2).
3. Endorse funding for the additional resources required to deliver core economic development programs as described in Table 6 of this report.

Responsible director: Kate McCaughey, Director Community Support

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is present the findings of community consultation on the Economic Development Strategy and to seek endorsement of the:

- a. Economic Development Strategy (**Attachment 1**),
- b. Economic Development Action Plan 2023/24 - 2025/26 (**Attachment 2**), and
- c. Additional resources required to deliver core economic development programs.

2. Policy implications and relevance to community plan and council plan

The Boroondara Community Plan (BCP) 2021-31 articulates Council's vision for 'a sustainable and inclusive community.' The BCP sets the long-term strategic directions for Council and informs, annual commitments and strategic indicators, and Council strategies, plans, policies and actions.

'Local Economy' is one of the BCP's seven priority themes which is driven by the following strategic objective:

"Support local businesses and enhance shopping precincts, fostering a strong economy and welcoming places for the community." (page 48)

Our community said:

"We value our shopping strips, including places where we can shop, socialise and dine out close to home. We strive to support locally owned businesses and want to attract more diverse businesses to our neighbourhoods to enable us to live locally and contribute to a thriving local economy". (page 46)

The Strategy is informed by and reflects the overall vision and objectives of the BCP, including 'Local Economy' (Theme 6) and its five strategies.

The 2021 refresh of the Boroondara Community Plan 2021-2031 (BCP) identified Local Economy within the top three priority issues for our community (**Figure 1**). The importance of Local Economy to our community has risen since the 2017 BCP when it was the sixth ranked priority (**Figure 2**).

In addition to the BCP, the following Council strategies, plans and policies help to inform economic development and tourism locally, including:

- Climate Action Plan (2021)
- Placemaking Framework (2019)
- Camberwell Junction Structure and Place Plan (2022) (draft)
- Revitalising Glenferrie: Glenferrie Road Place Plan (2021) (draft)
- Revitalising Maling Road: Maling Road Place Plan (2020)
- Shopping Centre Improvement Plan (2011)
- Add life to your years – Healthy Ageing in Boroondara (2019)
- Children and Young People Action Plan (2021)
- Disability Action Plan (2018-2022)
- Multicultural Action Plan (2019-2023).
- Boroondara Planning Scheme - Local policies
- Boroondara Housing Strategy 2015
- Boroondara Neighbourhood Centres and Commercial Corridor Guidelines 2014

- Boroondara Open Space Strategy 2013.

In addition to the above, the Strategy was informed by the Boroondara Economic Development Strategy - Context Report (Attachment 4) and consultation feedback.

3. Background

The Economic Development Strategy (the 'Strategy') provides a six-year vision to facilitate the maintenance and growth of a thriving economy and contribute to Boroondara's liveability. It is also designed to support and promote the municipality as a desirable destination for visitors through the growth of the visitor economy.

The Strategy is guided by the following four priorities and strategic objectives:

- **Priority 1 - Thriving Shopping Precincts**
Activate and enhance shopping precincts across Boroondara to ensure they offer vibrant places to meet and be entertained, access to job opportunities and green spaces, as well as meet the diverse shopping, social and service needs of residents, workers, businesses, and visitors.
- **Priority 2 - A Supported Business Community**
Promote business growth and investment in Boroondara that capitalises on existing industry specialisations and achieves successful economic and employment outcomes.
- **Priority 3 - A Sustainable, Circular, and 'Smart' Local Economy**
Encourage a flourishing local economy that embraces innovative models of business and supplies sustainable goods and services to our community.
- **Priority 4 - A Desirable Destination for Visitors**
Support the growth of tourism and the visitor economy by attracting non-local (i.e., Melbourne residents from outside Boroondara), regional and interstate visitors and increasing visitor spend.

The six-year Strategy will be implemented through two three-year action plans. The Economic Development Strategy Action Plan (2023/24 - 2025/26) includes 24 actions (**Attachment 2**). These actions are in addition to a range of existing economic development and business support programs and services (**Table 2**). To ensure the actions stay relevant and respond to current and emerging issues and opportunities, a new action plan will be developed in 2026.

At the 12 December 2022 Services Delegated Committee meeting, Councillors were presented with the draft Strategy and draft Action Plan. At this meeting, Council resolved to undertake community consultation on the draft Strategy between 25 January and 10 March 2023.

This consultation (Stage 3) built on two previous stages of engagement activities as outlined in Section 5: Consultation/communication.

Prior to the commencement of consultation in January 2023, and following the release of 2021 Census data, statistical data within the draft Strategy was updated.

4. Outline of key issues/options

Importance of the local economy to our community

The importance of the local economy to our community was highlighted in the recent findings from the 2023 Australian Liveability Census. *Place Score* surveyed more than 25,000 Australians to gauge overall liveability satisfaction and identify key attributes of each municipality.

Boroondara ranked highest in Victoria and fourth nationally, with 'Local Business' its best performing attribute (refer **Table 1**). (Note: Place Score is an independent, for-profit social planning and data analysis company).

Council's existing economic development core programs

Council currently delivers 14 economic development and business support programs (**Table 2**) which contribute to the delivery of the BCP's Theme 6 Local Economy. A definitive list of activities and initiatives is provided in the Strategy (**Attachment 1, Strategy pp. 17-18**). These programs will also contribute to realisation of the Strategy vision.

Core Economic Development Programs	Description	Strategic Theme
1. Economic development program and policy development	Development, implementation, management and continuous improvement of economic development programs and policy. This includes both economic and land use policies and advocacy.	All themes
2. Special Rate and Charge Schemes program (SR&CS)	Management and administration of 8 schemes.	Thriving Shopping Precincts
3. Community Strengthening Grants (Vibrant Retail Precincts stream) program	Assessment, administration and responsibility for acquittal of Council grants to Trader Associations	Thriving Shopping Precincts
4. Trader Association Liaison and Place-making Projects program	Engagement and support activities including general trader association governance and support, place-making projects and major project engagement	Thriving Shopping Precincts
5. Business Support Service	In-person and digital resources to help new and existing local businesses to navigate permits and follow-up applications; as well as online resources about how to start or grow business.	A Supported Business Community
6. Shopping Centre Improvement Program	Delivers streetscape improvements to small and medium sized shopping centres (in addition to major activity centres which are the focus of Placemaking projects). Note: This program also umbrellas initiatives to improve transport, access, safety and parking in and around Boroondara's shopping precincts.	Thriving Shopping Precincts
7. Parklets program	Permit assessment/ approval, community consultation and coordination of parklet installations	Thriving Shopping Precincts

Core Economic Development Programs	Description	Strategic Theme
8. Business Boroondara Events program	Networking and capacity building events	A Supported Business Community
9. Economic participation program	Activities and partnerships relating to employment and training and local and social procurement	A Supported Business Community
10. Local business marketing and promotion program	Boroondara Life (marketing via Facebook and Instagram) and Love Local Life (website and business directory) to showcase local businesses and visitor attractions	A Supported Business Community
11. Circular Economy program	Sustainability programs for businesses	A Sustainable, Circular and 'Smart' Economy
12. Christmas in Boroondara program	Annual Christmas Decorations installations, storage and renewal	A Desirable Destination for Visitors
13. Shopping Centre Activation program	Initiatives, activations and promotion to attract people to centres	A Desirable Destination for Visitors
14. Markets program	Oversight, support and promotion of local markets, including farmers/ makers markets (x2), Camberwell Sunday Market and Camberwell Fresh Food Market	A Desirable Destination for Visitors

Table 2: Council's core economic development programs

Since 2020 and the onset of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, three of the 14 programs listed in **Table 2**, (Community Strengthening Grants, Parklets, and Love Local Life website programs), have been added to the team's core programming. Additional activity has generally increased in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and associated measures to support local businesses (both during and as part of recovery). Activities associated with these three additional programs includes:

- Community Strengthening Grants program:
 - Assessment, administration, and responsibility for acquittal of Trader Association grants. Since 2020, this has included small grants (10), annual grants (18) and triennial grants (14) under the 'Vibrant Retail Precincts' stream.
 - Event concierge support for trader associations delivering events on Council land which are funded by Council triennial grants.
 - Previously managed by Arts and Culture.
- Parklet program:
 - Assessment of parklet applications, community consultation and coordination of parklet installations (20 parklets)

- Originally a temporary 'outdoor dining program' funded through a COVID grant (0.8 EFT). This is now an ongoing Council program. Funding for this role ends 30 June 2024.
- Love Local Life website:
 - Portal for business promotion (currently featuring 671 businesses) across all 53 Shopping centres which is particularly beneficial to those without a digital presence.
 - This was a COVID initiative which has continued due to high business interaction and value to traders.

More generally, Council support for shopping centres and trader associations has also increased in recent years, through:

- the need for additional governance support and process improvements (further highlighted by the recent internal audit on special rate and charge schemes),
- increase in requests to support existing trader associations,
- support to establish new trader associations,
- investigations and project coordination responsibility for arts and placemaking projects and requests on Council land or assets including for example:
 - Greythorn statues project,
 - Hartwell mural project,
 - Ashburton Village Ashy Dasher mural project,
 - Greythorn mosaic columns project,
 - Kew planter boxes project,
 - North Balwyn Village Gateway signage project,
 - Melton Ave and Myrniong St, Burwood Village bollard and signage projects,
- demand for face-to-face business engagement, and
- support for major projects within shopping centres such as the Surrey Hills Level Crossing Removal Project (LXRP), Glenferrie Road Tram Works, and North-East Link Program (NELP).

In addition, there has been community, sector and organisational demand to broaden economic development programs into aspects of the local economy beyond a focus on shopping centres in the following areas:

- sustainability and circular economy (including to deliver the Go Full Circle program),
- employment and training, including for those experiencing barriers, and
- social and local procurement.

Resourcing existing economic development core programs

To resource the delivery of these additional responsibilities, respond to COVID-19 recovery, as well as increasing demand for trader support, three fixed-term roles were introduced into the Local Economies team from 2020. One of these roles has been partially funded by a Victorian Government Covid-19 grant.

These contracted roles will conclude in June 2024 (2 roles) and December 2024 (1 role) and will impact the delivery of both core programs and the Strategy Action Plan.

To respond to community feedback regarding the importance of local businesses and 'Thriving Shopping Precincts', and to ensure Strategy Priority areas can be delivered, additional ongoing resources (1.25 EFT) are required from 1 January 2025, after the fixed-term roles cease.

The additional resources mean Council's economic development service would emphasize and promote Thriving Shopping Precincts, including the Local Business Marketing and Promotion program to raise the profile of Council's 53 shopping centres to drive visitation. This would allow Council to respond to the:

- growing importance of Local Economy to the community (now the third highest priority in the BCP),
- challenging retail landscape and need to support our shopping centres, and high streets in the wake of COVID-19 with associated changes in retail patterns and a downturn in economic conditions, and
- need for Council to continue to meet community expectations and support local businesses to grow and thrive.

The additional resources enable Council to deliver eight of 14 (57%) core programs (**Table 3**), partially deliver a further four core programs, and enhance the Local Economies' team capacity to deliver on key Action Plan items.

Fully delivered	Partial, reduced, or alternate delivery	Not delivered
Special Rate and Charge Schemes program (existing schemes only)	Economic development program and policy development	Parklets program (new parklets)
Community Strengthening Grants Program (Vibrant Retail Precincts stream)	Trader Association Liaison and Place-making Projects program	Shopping Centre Activation program
Business Boroondara Events Program	Economic participation program	
Local business marketing and promotion program (Love Local Life & Boroondara Life)	Circular Economy program	
Christmas in Boroondara program		
Markets program		
Business Support Service		
Shopping Centre Improvement Program		

Table 3: Delivery of core economic development programs (with proposed additional 1.25 EFT)

With the withdrawal of Covid-19 funding and the end of the fixed term contracts, there will be 2.8 EFT less staff within the Local Economies team. If the additional 1.25 EFT requested is approved there will still be 1.55 EFT less staff. In light of this, the following core programs will no longer be delivered, the implications of which are outlined in Section 4 (**Table 4**) of this report:

- Parklets program (relates to new parklets only)
- Shopping Centre Activation program.

The ongoing additional EFT costs would be \$95,778 in 2024/25 then \$1,761,571 over the remainder of the life of the Long Term Financial Strategy (refer **Table 6** and section 6 of this report).

Core Program / Action	Implication of non, partial or alternate delivery
Economic development program and policy development	Alternate delivery: Increased outsourcing of policy development.
Trader Association Liaison and Place-making Projects	Reduced or partial delivery: Face-to face-engagement would be limited and engagement related to non-Council major infrastructure would not occur as a business engagement service.
Economic participation program	Reduced or partial delivery: The following existing activities would be delivered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local and social procurement • Local jobs and training
Circular Economy program	Reduced or Partial delivery: The sustainability team will lead sustainable business initiatives with Local Economies playing a supporting role.
Parklets program	Non delivery: No new parklets - this includes assessment of new parklet applications, community consultation and coordination of parklet installations. Local Economies will continue to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • manage compliance with existing permits and • assess and issue permit renewals for existing permit holders.
Shopping Centre Activation program	Non delivery: The following activities would not be delivered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacant shop front activation initiatives • Investigating up to 4 locations in open spaces/parks in Boroondara for use as pop-up food / beverage carts or trucks. • Promote and highlight shopping precincts, as well as significant parks and gardens in Boroondara such as Maranoa Botanic Gardens.

Table 4: Implications of partial or non-delivered core programs (even with proposed additional 1.25 EFT)

Strategy Action Plan and associated resourcing

As outlined above, the six-year Strategy will be implemented through two three-year action plans. In response to community feedback during stage 3 of the Strategy's consultation, some amendments were made to the 2023/24 - 2025/26 Action plan.

The first Action Plan (2023/24 - 2025/26) includes 24 actions (**Attachment 2**). An operational review, in anticipation of the Strategy endorsement, was undertaken in January 2024. This review considered the implementation of the Action Plan and identified several actions which will require additional resources (**Table 5**). Where this is the case, it is proposed that budget proposals are submitted for consideration as part of the annual budget bid process where they can be considered against other priorities.

To ensure the actions remain relevant and respond to current and emerging issues and opportunities, a new action plan will be developed in 2026.

Since the draft Strategy was developed, new Council strategies and plans have been developed (or are in the process of being developed), or existing ones have been refreshed. As a result of this, and in response to community feedback during stage 3 consultation, some actions within the Action Plan have been consolidated or updated.

Action	Description
Action 2	Review Council's Shopping Centre Improvement Plan (SCIP) 2011.
Action 4	Support local businesses to develop unique and marketable visitor offerings including investigation of a city-wide gift card program.
Action 6	Strengthen and streamline governance and reporting practices and processes related to special rate and charge schemes for marketing and business development of shopping precincts, including implementation of actions from the 2023 internal audit report regarding the special rate and charges schemes.
Action 7	Promote Boroondara as a visitor destination.
Action 8	Provide support to shopping precincts to diversify their business mix and attract investment through a range of methods, including the development of investment prospectuses.
Action 9	Pilot a two-year Shopping Precincts Events Program to encourage visitor attraction and build on industry-specific strengths of local areas (food, music, fashion, etc) and/ or local seasonal opportunities.

Table 5: Strategy actions requiring additional resources

5. Consultation/communication

Consultation

Three stages of extensive, strategic consultation, involving large numbers of key stakeholders and the wider community, informed the development of the Strategy and Action Plan:

- Stage 1: Community consultation (December 2020 and April 2021)
- Stage 2: Targeted key stakeholder consultation (March - October 2021)
- Stage 3: Consultation on the draft Strategy (25 January and 10 March 2023).

Following endorsement of the draft Strategy for consultation by Council (CB&D 12 December 2022), the third and final stage of community consultation was undertaken between 25 January and 10 March 2023.

The purpose of the consultation was to confirm the draft Strategy's four priorities resonated with the local community and to determine whether there was anything missing in the draft Strategy which might inform future actions to facilitate economic development and visitor attraction in Boroondara.

The third and final round of the draft Strategy's consultation employed a multi-channel approach (i.e., digital, printed and in-person approaches). Businesses, traders' associations, residents, community organisations and groups, as well as visitors to Boroondara were invited to provide feedback on the draft Strategy via the [Engage Boroondara](#) platform by:

- Ranking the four priorities of the draft Strategy in order of importance to them, and
- Providing comments on the draft Strategy and priorities.

During the Stage 3 consultation period, the Engage Boroondara webpage promoting the consultation attracted 1,085 page visits by 950 people, with 96 people providing contributions. Officers note this conversation rate is typical for a consultation page for municipal-wide strategies. A community engagement summary outlining the key findings and Council's responses is provided in **Attachment 3**.

Approximately 79% of respondents provided positive and/or constructive feedback on the four proposed priorities of the draft Strategy, with 'Thriving Shopping Precincts' ranked most important by half of respondents.

Communication

Any change to the current suite of programs offered by Local Economies will be communicated to stakeholders.

A communications plan will be developed to ensure consistent messaging to the business community to manage expectations.

6. Financial and resource implications

Three fixed-term roles were introduced into the Local Economies team from 2020 to resource the delivery of COVID-19 responses and recovery, as well as increasing demand for trader support. One of these roles has been partially funded by a Victorian Government Covid-19 grant. These contracted roles will conclude in June 2024 (2 roles) and December 2024 (1 role) and will impact the delivery of both core programs and the Strategy.

To respond to community feedback regarding the importance of local businesses and 'Thriving Shopping Precincts', and to ensure Strategy Priority areas can be delivered, additional ongoing resources (1.25 EFT) are requested from 1 January 2025, after the fixed-term roles cease.

These additional resources (1.25 EFT) are requested to be allocated ongoing within Council's Long Term Financial Strategy. Based on current rates, this would equate to \$95,778 in 2024/25 then \$1,761,571 over the remainder of the life of the Long Term Financial Strategy (**Table 6**).

Role	EFT	Cost	
		2024/25	2025/26 - 2033/24
Band 8	0.25	\$ 37,713*	\$ 438,834*
Band 6	1.0	\$ 58,065*	\$ 1,322,737*
Total	1.25	\$ 95,778*	\$ 1,761,571*

Table 6: Cost of additional resource

(*based on current assumptions)

Please note, the delivery of Strategy Action Plan items outlined in **Table 5** will require additional project funding and will be subject to the annual budget development process.

7. Governance issues

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

The officers responsible for this report have no direct or indirect interests requiring disclosure.

No officers involved in the preparation of this report have a general or material conflict of interest requiring disclosure under chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Boroondara City Council.

The recommendation contained in this report is compatible with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006 as it does not raise any human rights issues.

8. Social and environmental issues

The Strategy has been developed with a view to maintaining and enhancing the existing health of the local economy, with a focus on recovery and resilience building in light of the challenging economic context. The Strategy recognises the key role the local economy plays in contributing to the liveability and community wellbeing enjoyed by the Boroondara community as a whole and the potential to grow the visitor economy by creating a desirable destination for visitors.

9. Evaluation and review

As outlined in the Strategy section 'Monitoring and Evaluation of the Strategy', Council will implement, monitor and evaluate the priorities in the Strategy and actions outlined in the Action Plan (**Attachment 2**) to be undertaken by Council to facilitate economic development and tourism in Boroondara.

The Strategy will be reviewed every six years to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the local community and is aligned to the BCP, government priorities, along with the trends, opportunities and challenges faced by Boroondara's economy and community, including business stakeholders.

A new Action Plan will be developed in 2026 to ensure the actions stay relevant and respond to current and emerging issues and opportunities.

10. Conclusion

Consultation feedback received between 25 January - 10 March 2023 indicated there is general support for the Strategy, with the majority of comments and suggestions relating to the four priorities and strategic objectives/focus areas.

The Strategy will guide Council's actions over the coming years to boost economic development, liveability and visitation in Boroondara, ensuring increased opportunities for businesses, workers, residents and visitors to enjoy all it has to offer.

To maintain key levels of service and enable the delivery of most actions within the Action Plan, additional resources (1.25 EFT) are required. This will ensure Council can fully deliver 57% of core programs and enhance the Local Economies' team capacity to deliver on key Action Plan items. This will support and strengthen Boroondara's *Thriving Shopping Precincts*, the focus of which the community have told us is the most important priority for the Local Economy.

**Manager &
report officer:**

Michelle Forster, Manager Liveable Communities

Economic Development Strategy



BOROONDARA



Economic Development Strategy (February 2024)



Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners



The City of Boroondara acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and original custodians of this land. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.



“Support local businesses and enhance shopping precincts, fostering a strong economy and welcoming places for the community”.

Boroondara Community Plan 2021-2031

About this document

The City of Boroondara’s Economic Development Strategy (the Strategy) is founded on four key priorities, strategic objectives and associated actions to support and facilitate the maintenance and growth of a thriving economy and contribute positively to Boroondara’s liveability.

Informed by extensive research, economic and trends analysis impacting our economy and findings from engagement with local businesses, industry, stakeholders, and the wider community, the Strategy:

- Sets out the vision for a strong economy and outlines how this will positively contribute and impact our community
- Defines Council’s future key priorities, strategic objectives and associated actions
- Provides an overview of Council’s existing business support framework
- Identifies the challenges and opportunities facing our local economy – including external trends, influences and the impact and ongoing effects of COVID-19
- Provides an overview of the City of Boroondara’s economy, and
- Outlines how we will monitor and evaluate our Strategy.



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Executive summary

The City of Boroondara's Economic Development Strategy (the Strategy) outlines a vision, key priorities and associated strategic objectives to be delivered through an annual set of actions to support and facilitate the maintenance and growth of a thriving economy and contribute positively to Boroondara's liveability.

Boroondara's economy is comprised of 26,160 registered businesses, 98% of which are considered 'non-employing' or 'small businesses'.¹

The key industry sectors contributing to the business base include:

- Professional, Scientific & Technical Services – 5,163 businesses (20%)
- Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services – 4,577 (17%)
- Health Care & Social Assistance – 3,328 (13%)
- Construction – 2,705 (10%)
- Financial & Insurance Services – 2,177 (8%)
- Retail Trade – 1,579 (6%)²

Boroondara's businesses and markets are important contributors to the maintenance and growth of the local economy given the role they play in providing employment, promoting local consumption (including resident and visitor spend), generating economic output, enhancing local amenity and driving business and/or residential investment and growth.

With almost 850,000 visitors in 2019³, the Boroondara visitor economy also generates considerable economic benefit to the area (5,781 jobs or 7% of total) and total output (\$983 million or 4% of total).

In addition to four markets, there are 53 shopping strips across the municipality with the main activity centres at Camberwell Junction, Glenferrie Road in Hawthorn and Kew Junction. These centres attract local and visitor spending, provide local

¹ Counts of Australian Businesses, Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), June 2022.

² Counts of Australian Businesses, Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), June 2022.

³ This figure is relatively high when compared to other ISEMP Councils, with Boroondara receiving almost the same rates of visitation as Stonnington (860,000) and greater levels of visitation than the municipalities of Bayside (560,000) and Glen Eira (460,000).



employment opportunities, primarily through retail, hospitality and/or professional services and perform an important role as social and community hubs.

Approximately a quarter (27%) of Boroondara's employed residents work within the municipality, with the same amount (27%) of Boroondara residents working in the Melbourne CBD.

Key local economic drivers and strengths

Boroondara's key local economic drivers and enablers are its diverse 53 shopping precincts and four markets, which attract local and visitor spending, provide local employment opportunities, primarily through retail, hospitality and/or professional services and perform an important role as social and community hubs.

As home to a large proportion of well-regarded public and independent schools, Swinburne University and a highly professional resident base and local workforce, the municipality is also an education and professional services hub, supported by a well serviced public transport network which provides easy access to the CBD and surrounding inner suburbs. Boroondara is also well serviced by public health facilities (including The Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre at The Austin Hospital, Kew) and private hospitals (including St Vincent's Private and Epworth Hawthorn) as well as allied health practices, which help contribute to liveability, health and wellbeing outcomes.

These strengths, coupled with other competitive advantages such as Boroondara's highly valued parks, gardens and open spaces and heritage character, facilitate and enhance the sustainability and growth of the local economy. In so doing, they play an important role in maintaining and supporting resident liveability and wellbeing, as well as retaining and/or attracting new residents, businesses, workers and visitors.

Boroondara Economic Snapshot 2021/22

 **\$12.4b**
Gross Regional Product

 **26,160**
Registered businesses

 **81,609**
Local jobs

Trends shaping this Strategy

The Strategy has been developed in the context of the role of economic development in Council's broader scope of work and strategic objectives.

The Strategy takes into consideration a range of external factors influencing economic development in Boroondara, including:

- the impact of COVID-19 and the importance of providing businesses with targeted support to promote recovery and resilience moving forward



- skills shortages in key industries
- the rise in remote and flexible work arrangements
- the increase in online shopping and the changing role of shopping precincts
- growing demand for health and aged-care services and
- the rise in business adoption of technology and environmentally sustainable practices.

The development of the Strategy has been informed by independent research and analysis on the economic and demographic context of Boroondara, as well as extensive consultations with diverse stakeholders.

Community feedback

Consultations highlighted the importance of Council providing a range of support to local businesses, particularly those operating in industries impacted negatively by COVID-19, as well as leveraging local assets such as parks, heritage assets, markets and events to facilitate visitation and spending. The results also indicated the value the community places on local shopping precincts, with ongoing investment in their maintenance and development and increased retail diversity being considered a high priority. The importance of building industry capacity to implement environmentally sustainable business practices and assist in the transition to a circular economy was also prevalent.

Our key priorities

In response, the Strategy is underpinned by four, key priorities to provide a foundation for the creation of vibrant, engaging precincts and destinations, and promote and positively influence Boroondara's economy.

- **Priority 1 - Thriving Shopping Precincts**
- **Priority 2 - A Supported Business Community**
- **Priority 3 - A Sustainable, Circular and 'Smart' Local Economy**
- **Priority 4 - A Desirable Destination for Visitors**

These priorities represent focus areas which are supported by strategic objectives and complemented by actions as economic drivers. The Action Plan outlines the specific actions we will take in 2023/2024, with annual action plans being developed for future years.



Council's Role in Economic Development

Local governments play a key role in facilitating economic development by attracting businesses and residents to municipalities. They aim to achieve this through strategic long-term actions and plans⁴.

A wide range of factors influence and contribute to the economic development of a municipality, many of which are beyond the direct influence or control of local government⁵.

A council's role in relation to local economic development is informed by the *Local Government Act 2020* which sets out the following overarching governance principles:

- priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations
- the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted
- the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making
- innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued
- collaboration with other councils and governments and statutory bodies is to be sought.

Council also has roles and functions under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* as both the planning authority and responsible authority for the Boroondara Planning Scheme. The Scheme contains planning policies and provisions at the State, Regional and Local levels relating to land use and development and contains specific policy relating to economic development and tourism.

These policies and provisions may also relate to the land zoning (whether land can be used for certain commercial or industrial purposes), building heights and setbacks, as well as special planning controls relating to neighbourhood character, heritage, vegetation protection and flooding.

⁴ Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) - 8 March 2018

⁵ Ibid



Local government also has several specific powers to help facilitate economic development. These include entrepreneurial powers, the power to sell or lease land, declare and defer special rates and charge schemes and enter into contracts, which may also be subject to specific conditions and limitations⁶.

The City of Boroondara works in partnership with the Victorian and Australian Governments to create an enabling local environment which facilitates and promotes economic growth. Council is well positioned to do so due to knowledge of, and relationships with a diverse range of stakeholders in the local community, including local businesses.

Council is responsible for the delivery of the Strategy in the capacity of coordinator, enabler and facilitator. Council plays an important role in the economy and the community because of its everyday engagement with local businesses, business associations and residents and its links to other agencies, service providers and tiers of government.

While Council will lead on the delivery of a range of actions, some will require Council partnering with, and/or advocating to, external stakeholders to support economic development and social outcomes.

The Strategy will be reviewed every five years to ensure Council continues to meet the needs of the local community and is aligned to government priorities, along with the trends, opportunities and challenges faced by Boroondara's economy.

⁶ Ibid



Policy Context

Economic prosperity is important on both a national and local scale, enabling communities to improve their economic future⁷.

The purpose of economic development is ideally to deliver positive economic, social and environmental outcomes for the local community.

There are several key local, regional, state, federal and international strategies and plans considered relevant to economic development and visitor attraction in Boroondara.

Local

- Boroondara Community Plan 2021–31
- Healthy Ageing in Boroondara 2019
- Arts Plan 2015–2018
- Children and Young People in Action Plan 2021
- Climate Action Plan 2021
- Disability Action Plan 2018–2022
- Camberwell Junction Structure and Place Plan 2022 (draft)
- Glenferrie Road Place Plan 2021 (draft)
- Maling Road Place Plan 2020
- Multicultural Action Plan 2019–2023
- Shopping Centre Improvement Plan 2011
- Placemaking Framework 2019
- Boroondara Planning Scheme - Local policies
- Boroondara Housing Strategy 2015
- Boroondara Neighbourhood Centres and Commercial Corridor Guidelines 2014
- Boroondara Open Space Strategy 2013

Regional

- Inner Metropolitan Melbourne Local Jobs Plan 2021
- Inner Metropolitan Partnership – COVID Recovery 2021
- Inner Metropolitan Partnership Priorities
- Inner South East Metropolitan Land Use Framework Plan 2017–2050

⁷ VAGO 2018



- Inner South East Metropolitan Partnership Regional Framework 2020
- Inner South East Metropolitan Region: Five-year Plan for Jobs, Services and Infrastructure 2018–23
- Melbourne East 2020 Regional Plan
- Plan Melbourne 2017–2050
- Strategy for a Vibrant Local Economy in the Inner South East Region 2020
- Boroondara Planning Scheme - Regional policies

State

- Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) Strategic Plan 2021–2025
- DJSIR Visitor Economy Recovery and Reform Plan 2021
- Invest Victoria International Investment Strategy
- Recycling Victoria: A New Economy 2020
- The Victorian Government's circular economy policy and plan, Recycling Victoria: a new economy 2020
- Victorian Budget 2022/23 Budget Paper 2: Strategy and Outlook
- Victorian Visitor Economy Masterplan Directions Paper 2022
- Victoria's Mental Health and Wellbeing Workforce Strategy 2021–2025
- Victorian Department of Education and Training Strategic Plan 2021–2025
- Victoria's Infrastructure Strategy 2021–2051
- Creative State 2025
- Victorian Skills Authority Victorian Skills Plan for 2022 into 2023
- Boroondara Planning Scheme - State policies

Federal

- Australia 2030: Prosperity Through Innovation Strategy 2017
- Australia's Long Term Emissions Reduction Strategy 2021
- Australia's Tech Future 2018
- Digital Transformation Strategy 2019
- Global Innovation Strategy 2016
- National Waste Policy and Action Plan 2019
- Smart Cities Plan 2016
- Federal Government Budget 2022–23 Budget Paper 1: Strategy and Outlook
- Australian Jobs and Skills Summit Issue Paper 2022
- Thrive 2030: The Re-imagined Visitor Economy Strategy 2022–2030
- National Reconstruction Fund 2022



International

- UN Sustainable Development Goals

Economic development is broadly informed by these strategies. The objective of local economic development is more than increased business activity and jobs growth, with a growing focus on improving the quality of life for all those who live, work, study in or visit an area, in a way that is environmentally sustainable.

At a macro-economic level, relevant economic development key strategies and policies from the Australian and Victorian Government, and local government regional forums identify current and future focus areas, implications, and opportunities which can influence economic growth within our city. These focus areas have helped inform the priorities and strategic direction of the Strategy.

A summary of relevant policy documents is provided in the Boroondara Economic Development Strategy Context Report.

State and Federal Policy Context

The Australian Government and the Victorian Government set out the broad policy and strategic context in relation to economic development. Strategies and policies aim to drive outcomes supporting consumers, employment, investment, education, tourism, innovation and sustainability outcomes.

Government has focused on economic recovery and growth by supporting local job creation, precinct activation and inclusive communities. The following demonstrates the key focus areas for economic development at a state and federal level, the subsequent policy responses and initiatives, as well as the implications for the Boroondara economy and community.

This helps to identify the policy context for Boroondara to inform the development of the Strategy and future directions for the local economy. Key trends have also been examined in this section and include⁸:

- Workforce shortages;
- Cost of living pressures;
- Tourism development and visitor attraction;

⁸ These macroeconomic trends, as well as other external economic influences, are provided in greater detail in the 'External Trends and Influences' section.



- Circular economy;
- COVID-19 recovery; and
- Technology and innovation.

Note: this includes recent trends which have impacted the national, state and local economies over the past 12-18 months.

Workforce Supply and Challenges for Key Sectors

Demand for workers significantly increased following the easing of public health restrictions in the second half of 2021, with the Australian and Victorian Governments focusing on building the skilled workforce supply to meet the needs of industry now and into the future.

The 2022-23 federal budget allocated \$2.8 billion for training the next generation of apprentices and \$2.2 billion to supporting Australian industries and universities to develop innovative companies and products. The reopening of international borders will continue to encourage skilled migration to address workforce shortages. Additionally, the 2022 federal Jobs and Skills summit brought together unions, employers, civil society and government, to address key workforce challenges. This will help support the government to focus on maintaining full employment, growing productivity, boosting job security, lifting participation, skills and training and delivering jobs for the industries of the future.

The Victorian Skills Authority's Victorian Skills Plan for 2022 into 2023 estimates Victoria will need an additional 373,000 workers across 13 key industries by 2025 and identifies actions for the Victorian Government to undertake to address priorities in skills provision. The Strategy recommends all levels of government partner with industry, employers, unions, training providers and learners to deliver these actions.

The Victorian Government is also aware of the significant workforce challenges facing the education system as population growth increases and international students continue to return to schools, TAFEs and universities. As outlined in the Department of Education and Training Strategic Strategy (2021-25), relevant state initiatives designed to overcome these challenges include:

- Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership, providing advanced professional learning for Victorian teachers and educational leaders.
- The Victorian Skills Authority, which will deliver a range of initiatives to strengthen the quality of teaching and training and improve pathways for skilled workers.



- The Free TAFE program, which is playing an important role in providing a pipeline of essential healthcare workers, such as nurses.
- The Victorian Higher Education State Investment Fund, providing significant investment in Victoria's universities to boost productivity and drive innovation.

The health sector is also experiencing labour shortages, which is impacting service provision. In response, Health Victoria is currently developing a Health Workforce Strategy which will outline the approach to long term workforce recovery, development, and growth, and identify immediate actions to support the state's health workforce. Additionally, the Victorian Government's Pandemic Repair Plan includes more than \$12 billion for the health system, improving emergency response and supporting healthcare workers following the impacts and disruptions of the pandemic.

Understanding and capitalising on government measures to combat labour shortages will be crucial to supporting Boroondara's economy, particularly the key sectors of healthcare, education and training, and retail trade which are top employing industries in the municipality and are experiencing workforce challenges.

Cost of Living Pressures

Australia has been affected by global inflationary pressures such as elevated oil prices and supply chain disruptions, with inflation expected to remain moderate and largely reflect domestic labour conditions in the medium-term. The Australian Government aims to address pressures on cost of living through a temporary and targeted cost of living package. This includes a \$420 cost of living tax offset for low- and middle-income earners, and a \$250 cost of living payment for eligible Australian pensioners, welfare recipients, veterans and concession card holders.

Current economic conditions impacting consumer and business sentiment – as well as local consumption rates – should be considered when identifying potential support mechanisms and future opportunities for economic development in Boroondara.

Tourism Development and Visitor Attraction

The Australian Government's THRIVE 2030 Strategy and Action Plan sets a long-term goal for the visitor economy to grow to \$230 billion by 2030, which will be achieved through workforce growth, enhancing visitor infrastructure and investing in high-quality tourism products.

In addition, the Victorian Government, Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) has released a Visitor Economy Recovery and Reform Plan with



the aim of growing and rebuilding the domestic visitor economy. The Plan outlines several funding opportunities provided by the Victorian Government, including funding for products and infrastructure, industry strengthening, destination marketing and events.

The State Visitor Economy Masterplan is currently being developed to support the tourism sector and its communities to recover and flourish now and into the future. The Victorian Government has also funded Regional Tourism Boards to develop and implement tailored local workforce plans and projects to help create a thriving visitor economy that supports increased visitation to the state.

The 2022-23 State Budget also outlines \$246 million to help the tourism, creative and major event industries bounce back from the impacts of the pandemic, including international marketing campaigns, business event attraction and an events recovery and support program.

The Australian and Victorian Government tourism strategies should help inform future directions and initiatives to support Boroondara's visitor economy, particularly infrastructure investment and workforce attraction. There is also an opportunity to capitalise on existing funding and programs to help support event development and growth, which is a key factor for local visitation and visitor spend.

Circular Economy

Australia has committed to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050 and is on track to exceed the 2030 target with a reduction in emissions of up to 35 per cent projected by 2030. Emissions reductions targets will be achieved through driving down technology costs, enabling infrastructure deployment at scale, and adopting circular economy practices. Australia's strategic waste policy is now underpinned by circular economy principles, with targets to ban the export of some waste products, reduce total waste, increase the average rate of waste recovery and increase the use of recycled products by government and industry. The Australian Government supports the implementation of better waste management plans by state and territory governments, business and industry.

In addition, the State Climate Change Strategy (2021) provides a roadmap to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. To achieve the emissions reduction targets, the Victorian Government has outlined emissions reduction objectives for each sector. This includes actions for energy, waste, industrial processes and product use, transport and community.



Subsequently, this has facilitated a major shift in the delivery of economic development practices towards a circular economy model. This is reflected in the Victorian Government's 10-year circular economy policy to set Victoria up for a more sustainable future. The circular economy seeks to reduce the environmental impacts of production and consumption, avoid waste with good design and effective recovery of materials which can be reused. It seeks to transform a linear economy mindset – take, use and throw away – and foster new ways of working to deliver new businesses, jobs, growth and improved environmental and social outcomes.

From 1 February 2023, the Victorian Government is banning the sale and supply of single-use plastic, this will include plastic items made from conventional, degradable and compostable materials, including bioplastics.

Council's Climate Action Plan (2021) helps support key circular economy initiatives such as energy efficiency and circular economy.

COVID-19 Recovery

Australian and Victorian Government support is crucial in assisting ongoing business recovery following the previous and ongoing impacts of COVID-19. Economic development will play a role in supporting future economic recovery at the local level, particularly for the hard-hit sectors of retail, hospitality, tourism and creative industries.

Technology and Innovation

Enhancing innovation, productivity and the technological capability of the Australian economy is a key objective of the Australian Government. The Australia 2030: Prosperity Through Innovation Strategy (2017) details the five strategic policy imperatives for achieving Australia's economic aspirations: education, industry, government, research and development and culture and ambition. Federal-level strategies also recognise the importance of Australia's industry, science and research collaboration, and technological and digital transformation.

Supporting small businesses to adopt digital technology and train and upskill employees with new tax incentives is a key economic development objective of the 2022-23 federal budget.

Given Boroondara's highly educated workforce, large proportion of small businesses and specialisation in professional services, economic development initiatives should consider opportunities in emerging and innovative industries. This could include start-ups, digital enterprises and entrepreneurship.



Local Context

Local strategies prepared by Council help to identify local priorities and context to inform economic development and tourism directions.

The Boroondara Community Plan's Vision is a critical document that articulates Council's priorities for *a sustainable and inclusive community*, with a specific objective to support local businesses, enhance shopping precincts and foster a strong economy and welcoming places for the community.

Boroondara's economic development strategies primarily focus on promoting local retail and shopping precincts, improving infrastructure and streetscapes and supporting local traders and businesses. These objectives are supported through Council's Placemaking Framework (2019), Shopping Centre Improvement Plan (2011) and various Place Plans for activity centres.

Council's Climate Action Plan (2021) helps support key circular economy initiatives such as energy efficiency and circular economy. This plan aims to achieve sustainable economic growth in Boroondara, in line with federal and state objectives, which will have implications for local economic development practices and future investments.

Regional Context

At a regional level, Boroondara is part of Metropolitan Melbourne's Inner South-East Partnership (ISEP), which is one of the six Metropolitan Partnerships established by the Victorian Government. The Partnership's vision is for a thriving and connected region that meets the needs of its diverse community, and it helps frame economic and community priorities.

At a regional level, economic development activities focus on social connection, vibrant economies, transport connectivity, sustainable environments and affordable housing. These objectives are delivered through activities such as business support, investment facilitation, place activation, skills and knowledge development, information and networking and grants. The Strategy for a Vibrant Local Economy in the Inner South East Region (2020) identified opportunities to expand and enhance these activities by taking a regional view about what and how economic development activities are pursued.



Our Strategy for a Strong Economy

The City of Boroondara's Economic Development Strategy is informed by and reflects the vision of Council's key strategic document - the Boroondara Community Plan (BCP) 2021 - 2031.



Figure 1 Boroondara Community Plan 2021 - 2031 Framework

The Strategy for economic development in Boroondara is strongly influenced by the community's voice to foster a strong **local economy**.

Theme 6, Local Economy is one of 7 key themes in the BCP (Figure 1) driven by the strategic objective to “**support local businesses and enhance shopping**”



precincts, fostering a strong economy and welcoming places for the community”.

This strategic objective is supported by the following five strategies, which will help frame the future strategic directions and opportunities for Boroondara.

- 6.1 Local retail precincts provide a gathering point for residents and attract shoppers through supporting initiatives which encourage a range of businesses needed by the community.
- 6.2 Local traders and businesses are supported by providing training and upskilling initiatives to maintain and increase viable businesses.
- 6.3 Shopping centres and strips are hubs of community activity through activating local shopping precincts.
- 6.4 Shopping centres are clean, well-maintained and inviting, through revitalising infrastructure and streetscapes and proactive renewal and maintenance.
- 6.5 Local visitation is increased through showcasing and promoting local shopping and attractions.

The Strategy’s four Economic Development key priorities below strongly supports and aligns with Theme 6 of Council’s BCP and the overall planning framework.

- Priority 1: Thriving shopping precincts
- Priority 2: A supported business community
- Priority 3: A sustainable, circular and 'smart' local economy
- Priority 4: A desirable destination for visitors

Our community said:

“We value our shopping strips, including places where we can shop, socialise and dine out close to home. We strive to support locally owned businesses and want to attract more diverse businesses to our neighbourhoods. This will allow us to live locally and contribute to a thriving local economy.”

Boroondara Community Plan 2021-2031 - community feedback



Supporting our Local Economy

The City of Boroondara facilitates, promotes and enables aspects of economic development in Boroondara. While business, industry and higher tiers of government often drive economic development, Council influences the 'enabling environment' for prosperity. This includes the provision of services, infrastructure and support mechanisms required to facilitate economic activity.

Council contributes to economic development holistically by:

- developing and implementing a vision for the local economy;
- maintaining local planning policies that are supportive of business innovation, investment and appropriate industry growth;
- maintaining and advocating for local infrastructure, such as transport networks;
- ensuring availability of appropriately zoned commercial land;
- improving the amenity of streetscapes, particularly in key business areas;
- providing community services and facilities;
- maintaining 'lifestyle' attributes including the City's high-quality parks, wide, tree-lined streets and pedestrian pathways, extensive cycling paths and recreational facilities; heritage character and arts and cultural services;
- supporting and promoting businesses and key stakeholders within the business community, including traders' associations;
- promoting the area as a location to visit, invest and do business in;
- building capacity of local businesses and industry through the delivery of educational and professional development workshops, the facilitation of networking and dissemination of information;
- enabling sustainability and circular economy programs and services for business;
- profile and celebrate businesses demonstrating leadership in the implementation of environmental sustainable practices within their operations;
- advocating on behalf of the business community to relevant bodies including other levels of government for support and investment;
- partnering with relevant bodies, including Victorian and Australian Governments, community organisations and groups and other local councils to deliver initiatives which facilitate economic growth;
- sharing and collecting data to identify opportunities, challenges and trends; and,
- establishing marketing and business development funds within key shopping precincts.



A detailed overview of the City of Boroondara's precincts, visitor economy and economic and demographic profile is outlined in the Boroondara Economic Development Strategy Context Report.

The City of Boroondara has a dedicated Local Economies team responsible for delivering a comprehensive suite of ongoing programs, services and projects which align to the expressed needs of key stakeholders within Boroondara's business community.

Economic data and market research

- Continuous local business needs analysis
- Online economic data and analysis via Economy ID (an external economic modelling and analysis service)
- Pedestrian counters in key shopping centre locations to track visitation

Programs and initiatives

- Environmentally sustainable/circular economy activities
- Vacant shop front activation initiatives
- Annual city-wide Christmas in Boroondara program
- Placemaking projects and activities in Boroondara's public spaces and shopping centres to increase social interactions, economic viability and enhance the health and wellbeing of our community
- Business support activities to advance local businesses' uptake and use of digital technology
- 'Buy Local' campaigns
- Outdoor trading initiatives, including the annual parklet program across Boroondara
- Local markets support including the Boroondara Farmers' Market, the Hawthorn Maker's Market and the Camberwell Sunday Market in partnership with relevant stakeholders
- Camberwell Fresh Food Market in conjunction with a commercial managing agent.

Grants and permits

- Business support and assistance in applying for permits and setting up a new business (the Business Support Service)



- Grants programs to businesses and traders' associations to fund a range of activities including events, including Council's Community Grants program (annual, bi-annual and triennial grants), Vibrant Retail Precincts stream
- Grant information for business from other sources

Former COVID-19 business recovery and support

- COVIDSafe Business Concierge Program
- Face to face business engagement
- COVID-19 advice and support as required

Marketing, business advice and support

- Training workshops and events, networking opportunities and mentoring services
- Regular Business Boroondara e-newsletter
- Advice and support to traders' associations and groups (levied and non-levied), including assistance to establish new traders' associations
- Special rate and charge scheme programs to optimise business development and marketing in key shopping centres
- Advice and support to traders' associations on proposed initiatives on Council land and/or assets in shopping precincts, including murals and arts installations to reflect the area's unique strengths and enhance its sense of 'place'
- Profile and celebrate businesses demonstrating leadership in the implementation of environmental sustainable practices within their operations
- A dedicated Business Hub on Council's website providing information on support and resources available to business
- Love Local Life website and directory (consumer and business subscriber base)
- Boroondara Life Facebook and Instagram channels to showcase local businesses and visitor attractions
- Collaborate and network with other local governments and regional networks/groups on strategic initiatives
- Information and support to businesses impacted by major infrastructure projects
- Graffiti management program in shopping precincts in partnership with local traders' associations on the basis of a 50:50 co-contribution.



Our Future Priorities

Independent economic analysis and research along with findings from consultations identified four key priorities for Council in facilitating a vibrant local economy and driving positive social outcomes for residents, workers, students and visitors into the future.

The priorities focus on maximising Boroondara's competitive advantages and opportunities, while addressing and responding to challenges and external trends.

It should be noted that while Council is able to lead the planning and delivery of several actions designed to facilitate economic development, visitor attraction and social outcomes in Boroondara, there are some instances where Council's role is primarily to advocate to, or partner with, relevant external stakeholders.

Key Priorities and Strategic Objectives

The four, key priorities and strategic objectives below focus on creating thriving and engaging shopping precincts, a supported and resilient business community, an enabling environment which promotes 'smart' ways of working and sustainable business practices and a culture of buy and support local, and desirable tourism opportunities and destinations for metro Victorian and national visitors.

1. Thriving shopping precincts

Activate and enhance shopping precincts across Boroondara to ensure they offer vibrant places to meet and be entertained, access to job opportunities and green spaces, as well as meet the diverse shopping, social and service needs of residents, workers, businesses and visitors.

2. A supported business community

Promote business growth and investment in Boroondara that capitalises on existing industry specialisations and achieves successful economic and employment outcomes.

3. A Sustainable, Circular and 'Smart' Economy

Enable a flourishing local economy that embraces innovative models of business and supplies sustainable food and services to our community.

4. A desirable destination for visitors



Support the growth of the visitor economy by attracting non-local (i.e., Melbourne residents from outside Boroondara), regional and interstate visitors and increasing visitor spend.



Priority 1: Thriving shopping precincts





Strategic objective 1

Activate and enhance shopping precincts across Boroondara to ensure they offer vibrant places to meet and be entertained, access to job opportunities and green spaces, as well as meet the diverse shopping, social and service needs of residents, workers, businesses and visitors.

Focus areas for action

Create a unique 'Sense of Place'

Activity centres and shopping precincts are activated and lively destinations.

Encourage diverse retail, hospitality and personal service sectors

Diverse retail, hospitality and personal services will help provide amenity, generate output and create local jobs.

Support and enable traders' associations to activate and enhance shopping precincts

Leverage traders' associations to help activate shopping precincts, deliver events, drive visitation and encourage local consumption.

Facilitate investment in the maintenance, renewal and further development of shopping precincts to support resident liveability

In collaboration with other levels of government and industry peak bodies, advocate for investment in local shopping precincts to ensure they remain a key driver of economic, tourism and social activity.

Enable a diverse range of quality housing options within shopping precincts to allow for the needs of a diverse range of workers

Consider future housing needs as part of Council's Housing Strategy review and update and future Activity Centre Structure Plans.

Boroondara's shopping precincts are key drivers of local residential and business amenity, facilitating a range of economic and social benefits for the municipality. These include:

- supporting local businesses and employment across the municipality
- providing key retail, hospitality and personal services to meet the needs of residents, workers and visitors



- contributing to local consumption and business activity
- supporting a 'live local' environment
- promoting community engagement through public spaces and events
- attracting private and public investment into the City
- attracting visitation and spending.

Boroondara currently has 11 incorporated Traders' Associations, eight of which have a special rate and charge scheme in place to support marketing and business development activities. The trader associations are a highly effective mechanism in supporting and empowering businesses to work together for the betterment of their shopping centres. The associations also deliver significant community benefit through the delivery of a range of events, festivals and activations. They also leverage Council grants and information and collaborate on key projects enabling strong lines of communication between Council, other levels of government and local small businesses.

COVID-19, along with the growth of the digital economy has contributed to increased flexibility in many occupations, with 'telecommuting' and 'teleworking' work practices as well as hybrid working arrangements (i.e., working from home and the office) becoming more commonplace. These changes have contributed to the shift towards heightened 'localism' whereby people increasingly undertake many of their daily activities - working, shopping and socialising - local to where they live.

A key focus for Council is to continue to invest in, as well as support the maintenance, development, enhancement, activation and promotion of Boroondara's shopping precincts and other commercial centres. This is achieved through the development and implementation of a range of plans and strategies as well as diverse support services spanning across all Council directorates including the following:

- Oversight and administration of special rate and charge schemes in eight key shopping centres
- Development of Place Plans and Structure Plans to guide the development of specific commercial areas and networks
- Development and implementation of Shopping Centre Improvement Plans in specific shopping precincts
- Proactive maintenance schedules.

The facilitation of innovative approaches to activating these precincts such as outdoor dining initiatives, footpath trading and festival and event support which also facilitate the growth of the area's night-time economy.



Ongoing Council support will continue to be strategic and directed at improving the amenity and liveability of shopping precincts. This includes fostering a 'sense of place' which establishes each precinct as a unique destination. This will involve Council continuing to adopt a placemaking approach whereby a holistic vision is developed in consultation with key stakeholders to inform the delivery of economic, social, cultural and public realm initiatives. This will enable positive social and economic outcomes and facilitate the development of unique, vibrant and memorable places where people feel a sense of belonging.

Ongoing business support programs and projects will be aimed at streamlining Council processes and permits for business, promoting a 'live local' culture, activating and promoting shopping centres and supporting businesses and traders' associations.

Annual action plans support this priority and strategic objective. These actions are in addition to a range of existing programs and services Council delivers to facilitate economic development and visitor attraction to support the local business community.



Priority 2: A supported business community





Strategic objective 2

Promote business growth and investment in Boroondara that capitalises on existing industry specialisations and achieves successful economic and employment outcomes.

Focus areas for action

Create a conducive environment for 'Small' and 'Home-Based' businesses

Support the small business community to enable business development and growth without impacting residential amenity.

Encourage business investment and attraction

Facilitate the development of a diverse business mix in Boroondara through supporting existing businesses and attracting new ones to the municipality.

Promote business recovery and resilience

Support business recovery and resilience and build business capacity to respond to a changing environment through the provision of business support services, including information, training and resources.

Assist to facilitate employment and training outcomes

In partnership with relevant stakeholders, enable the delivery of employment and training outcomes for Boroondara's businesses and job seekers through a range of networking and promotional activities, and the development of information and resources.

Boroondara's economy is comprised of 26,160 registered businesses, 98% of which are considered 'non-employing' or 'small businesses.' Council's core role in economic development and visitor attraction is to create a thriving and productive environment for these businesses through providing business support, promoting business growth and facilitating business attraction.

The key industry sectors contributing to the business base include:

- Professional, Scientific & Technical Services – 5,163 businesses (20%)
- Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services – 4,577 (17%)
- Health Care & Social Assistance – 3,328 (13%)
- Construction – 2,705 (10%)



- Financial & Insurance Services – 2,177 (8%)
- Retail Trade – 1,579 (6%)⁹

These industries are important contributors to the maintenance and growth of Boroondara's economy given the role they play in providing employment, promoting local consumption (including resident and visitor spend), generating economic output, enhancing local amenity and driving business and/or residential investment and growth.

There is an opportunity for Council to advocate to and collaborate with employment providers and learning institutions to support the attraction of new workers and support industries that are currently experiencing workforce shortages impacting their ability to remain viable. These industries include health care and social assistance, hospitality and retail.

In addition, Council plays a role in the creation of a conducive and supportive environment through the provision of:

- training and networking activities
- business mentoring
- promotional opportunities through Council's channels to showcase businesses to local consumers and visitors
- buy local campaigns which encourage local businesses and residents to purchase products and services from local suppliers.

These activities are particularly important as several small to medium businesses (and home-based businesses) are expected to grow in Boroondara, with smaller businesses typically requiring additional support as they lack the resources to maximise growth opportunities.

Business growth is expected to be driven by professional and financial services, which comprise almost one-fifth of the business base and are a key area of strength for Boroondara. Several Professional and Financial Services businesses are mostly located in existing activity centres and commercial corridors, where there is increasing competition for land from residential development. To ensure employment and economic growth can be realised in future, it will be an important consideration for Council to:

⁹ Counts of Australian Businesses, Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), June 2022.



- retain Commercial 2 zoned land to ensure ongoing and future opportunities for commercial and office uses within the municipality free of residential encroachment
- plan for appropriate levels of intensification of employment uses in Commercial 2 zoned land, supported by investment in local infrastructure and clear policy guidance
- plan for employment uses to be delivered on Commercial 1 zoned land, either through a mix of uses or as dedicated employment developments (retail and/or office)
- limit 'residential-only' developments in activity centres to ensure capacity remains to achieve economic objectives, floor space demand and centre functions,
- invest in centre improvements to attract business investment and activity to ensure Boroondara's centres have a competitive advantage, and
- investigate options to incentivise landlords to maintain and/or upgrade building facades and shop fronts in key shopping centres.

Crucial to sustaining and growing Boroondara's economy will be supporting key business sectors (e.g., retail, personal services and hospitality). Assisting these businesses to adapt to consumer trends and a changing business environment will also be important. As such, business support will focus on activities which assist to develop capabilities and resilience to overcome changes in the market.

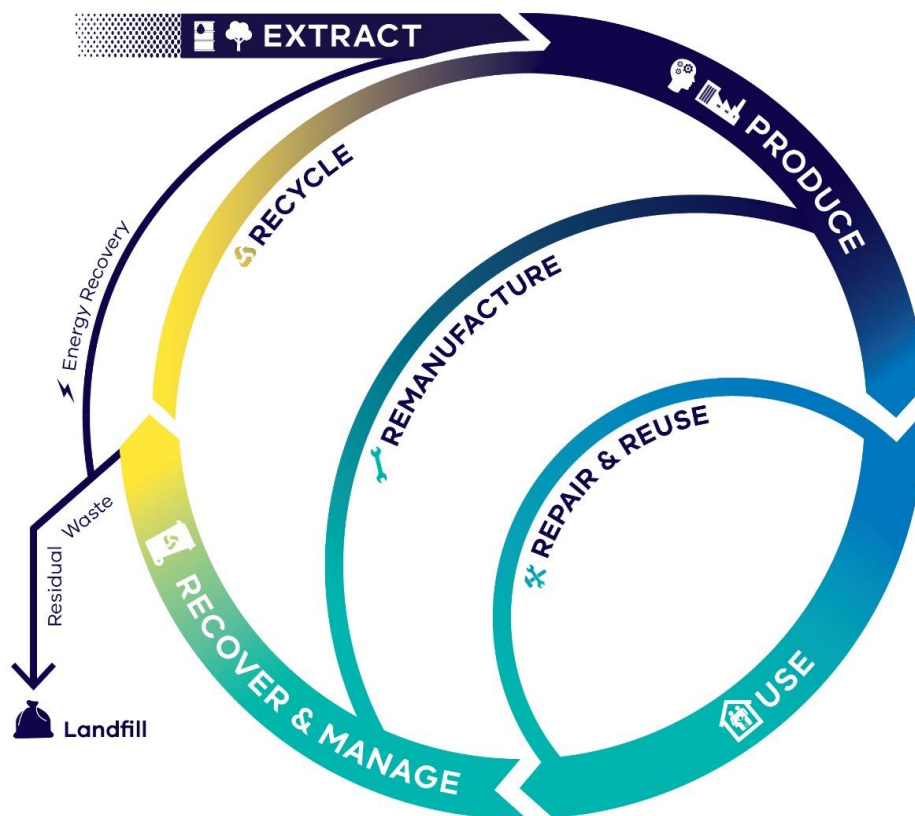
Council will continue to focus on activities such as face to face business engagement and outreach, the delivery of information to businesses on market conditions and trends, best practice and innovative business models to respond to change along with ongoing training opportunities aimed at upskilling the capability of businesses to survive and thrive in a changing business environment.

Annual action plans support this priority and strategic objective. These actions are in addition to a range of existing programs and services Council delivers to facilitate economic development to support the local business community.



Priority 3: A sustainable, circular and 'smart' local economy

A circular economy for Victoria





Strategic objective 3

Encourage a flourishing local economy that embraces innovative models of business and supplies sustainable goods and services to our community.

Focus areas for action

Support a future-focused 'smart' economy

Promote Boroondara as a place for the establishment of emerging 'preneur', start up and 'smart' businesses.

Support the development of a sustainable and circular 'green economy'

Support and promote 'green' business practices to create a more environmentally sustainable economy.

Facilitating the development of a sustainable, circular and 'smart' local economy is key to enhancing the efficiency and future growth of Boroondara's business base and economy more generally. This is driven by:

- the ongoing advancements in technology to facilitate evidence-based decisions and investments
- the improved efficiencies and reductions in waste through sustainable business practices
- circular economy opportunities to re-use waste (i.e., outputs) as a resource (i.e., inputs)
- government policy drivers for environmentally sustainable practices and achieving waste reduction goals.

Boroondara is well placed to use new technologies and facilitate businesses to become more environmentally sustainable and transition to a circular economy, which could benefit the local community and economy more broadly. Opportunities exist to leverage the education and research role of Swinburne University, partner with government and industry providers as well as the highly skilled local professional service sectors, to facilitate the development of a more sustainable and 'smart' local economy.

More specifically, creating an innovative and sustainable economy aligns to the current Federal Government's National Reconstruction Fund (NRF), a \$15 billion fund to finance projects that diversify and transform Australia's industry and economy. The NRF will assist to create more sustainable and high-value jobs for all Australians in a range of priority areas including renewables and low emissions



technologies; medical science; transport; agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors; and defence capability. In working with industry to develop co-investment plans that identify high level investment opportunities, the NRF will assist Australian industry become more productive, take advantage of opportunities in a net zero economy and address supply change vulnerabilities.

Leveraging new and emerging technologies to support a smarter economy has begun with Council's Transforming Boroondara program to improve customer experiences and service delivery across Council, making it easier and more convenient for all customers including businesses to get the information and services they need. Embracing businesses using digital platforms or marketplaces (referred to as the gig economy) across health, transport, accommodation, education and hospitality and piloting custom initiatives such as smart parking, smart bins, e-charging stations and visitor counting devices, are designed to improve operational efficiencies for the community, address key issues (using an evidence base), improve Council's decision-making and enhance service delivery to strengthen a future focussed local economy.

In addition, Council, the community and industry has expressed the desire to grow the economy in a sustainable manner to minimise the impact to the environment. Key drivers in addition to consumer demand include local (as well as state and national) policies and plans – such as Boroondara's recently adopted Climate Action Plan 2021 – that seeks to reduce the City's environmental footprint. Opportunities identified for 'green' business practices include promotion of renewable energy, reduction of waste to landfill and circular economy practices that design out waste and pollution, keep products and materials in use for longer and positively impact the natural environment.

Council will focus on opportunities to engage with businesses to leverage new and emerging 'smart' technologies through education and capacity building to take up these new age trends to enable business efficiency and effectiveness and promote business growth.

Annual action plans support this priority and strategic objective. These actions are in addition to a range of existing programs and services Council delivers to facilitate economic development and support the local business community.



Priority 4: A desirable destination for visitors





Strategic objective 4

Support the growth of tourism and the visitor economy by attracting non-local (i.e., Melbourne residents from outside Boroondara), regional and interstate visitors and increasing visitor spend.

Focus areas for action

Enhance visitor amenity, infrastructure and services

Enhance the visitor experience and provide opportunities to generate increased visitor spend.

Support activation of key tourism assets

Leverage and enhance the City's assets to drive visitation.

Enhance the marketing and promotion of Boroondara as a visitor destination

Deliver initiatives that position Boroondara as a desirable visitor destination.

Maintain and diversify the events calendar

Provide a diverse calendar of community and visitor events to help promote Boroondara and increase visitor activity.

Growing the visitor economy is critical for economic growth, as it stimulates business investment, promotes local consumption and supports new local jobs. The benefits from tourism are derived from visitor spend, which flows through the economy and impacts a range of sectors including retail, service sectors, hospitality and transport.

The Boroondara visitor economy currently generates economic benefit (4% of total output) and supports local jobs (7% of total). Visitor spend is driven by the high-quality visitor amenity and access to retail and food offerings (via the shopping precincts), as well as events and markets.

To support ongoing economic growth, a priority for Council is to grow the value of the visitor economy. This is achieved by establishing the municipality as a desirable destination for visitors, which will increase visitation and maximise spend opportunities in Boroondara. Target markets identified include visitors from outside the municipality who can contribute to local consumption, including visitors based in Melbourne, Regional Victoria and beyond.



Development of the visitor economy requires a collaborative approach between Council, industry peak bodies, tourism operators and the private sector, focusing on:

- enhancing visitor amenity to maximise spend opportunities
- enhancing the night-time economy in key precincts
- activating key tourism assets to attract visitors and enhance the visitor experience
- attracting interest from the film and advertising sector for use of locations
- continuing and diversifying the delivery of events and markets.

Although development of the visitor economy requires private sector investment, Council will focus on support which includes advocacy, investing in Council-owned assets and continued marketing and promotion of the City's attractions, including shopping destinations, markets, recreational, arts and cultural activities and events and heritage attractions.

Annual action plans support this priority and strategic objective. These actions are in addition to a range of existing programs and services Council delivers to facilitate economic development and support the local business community.



Boroondara's Competitive Advantage

Council's role in economic development is as a conduit to business, connecting and supporting businesses to respond to challenges and opportunities for future growth.

Analysis of Boroondara's strengths, challenges, external trends and influences have informed the Strategy's priorities, strategic objectives and actions.

The 2023/24 action plan responds to the identified strengths and challenges outlined below.

Strengths

- Unique shopping precincts, many represented by strong traders' associations
- Localism
- Strategic location
- Professional service industries
- Education, research, health and innovation hub
- Events and markets
- Heritage
- Green open spaces

Challenges

- Transition of retail
- Movement and access
- Building back the economy post-pandemic
- Workforce shortages

External trends and influences

- Remote and flexible working arrangements
- Workforce shortages
- Co-working
- Environmental sustainability and circular economy
- Transition of the retail industry
- The 'gig' economy
- Growing demand for health care
- Global economic uncertainty
- Rising inflation and cost of living pressures
- Construction trends
- Housing market



- Adopting technological advancements and innovation
- COVID-19 impacts and business recovery

Boroondara’s key competitive advantage, leverages from the strengths of its strong economy (Table 1), while responding to its challenges (Table 2).

Key Strengths

Table 1: Boroondara’s Economy - Key Strengths

Strengths	Overview
Unique Shopping Precincts	<p>With 53 shopping precincts, including major activity centres and neighbourhood centres across the municipality, Boroondara provides a unique shopping and retail experience. These are key assets for Boroondara, which provide a distinct and local ‘village’ environment and drive local consumption, employment and business investment.</p> <p>The City’s shopping precincts are a particular strength of Boroondara, some of which are considered to be the best across Melbourne and interstate. They are a driver of local residential and business amenity and underpin Boroondara’s unique lifestyle offering including a range of entertainment and hospitality options. This lifestyle also attracts visitors from across Melbourne, Victoria and interstate. Boroondara can capitalise on this advantage, to retain local consumer expenditure and attract increasing numbers of visitors, by ensuring our shopping precincts are beautiful, well maintained, activated and engaging.</p>



Strengths	Overview
Localism	<p>New ways of working (particularly working from home) have refocused the community on our local neighbourhoods, services and shopping centres as places to complement our social, recreational and work lives.</p> <p>Planning outcomes are enhanced when our neighbourhoods are viewed holistically and those that live there are engaged in identifying their priorities for improvement and development with council. Boroondara is adopting a place-based approach referred to as Placemaking to create areas which are unique, relevant and “sticky”. This results in attracting and inspiring use and visitation, upholding their point of difference and reflecting the history, values and needs of the local communities that surround them.</p> <p>Great local places such as shopping and commercial precincts will thrive and compete as they attract residential, commercial, social and cultural engagement and investment and have meaning to those they service. Overseas research has also identified opportunities for ageing populations living near high streets to play an active role in re-invigorating local shopping precincts.¹⁰</p>
Strategic Location	<p>Boroondara is strategically located to the eastern edge of the Melbourne CBD, with high levels of connectivity through road, train and tram networks. This provides an advantage for many residents who commute to the Melbourne CBD for work, as well as lifestyle advantages through access to key services and amenity.</p> <p>In addition, Boroondara is a ‘gateway’ to the eastern suburbs, which provides access to labour and enhances connectivity for residents.</p>

¹⁰ Royal Institute of British Architects (Building Futures think-tank), *Silver Linings: The Active Third Age and the City*, 2015.



Strengths	Overview
Professional Service Industries	<p>Boroondara has a large business base, driven by professional and financial services requiring highly skilled and technical labour.</p> <p>Given Boroondara's strategic location in inner eastern metropolitan Melbourne (providing central access to other municipalities), as well as the qualified and educated resident workforce, the municipality is attractive to businesses providing highly technical and consultative services. These industries are usually located within commercial precincts as well as conducive to operating as home-based businesses attracted by the lifestyle amenity. They offer employment and a diversity of locally based service offerings.</p>
Education, Research, Health and Innovation Hub	<p>Boroondara includes one of the highest concentrations of public and private schools, which is a key driver for resident attraction, provides local employment opportunities and contributes to a highly educated population. The presence of Swinburne University delivers education and training opportunities and contributes to innovation and research within Boroondara.</p> <p>The Health Care and Social Assistance sector is the largest employer in relation to Full Time Equivalent jobs in 2021. These jobs are supported by public health facilities (including The Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre at The Austin Hospital, Kew) and private hospitals (including St Vincent's Private and Epworth Hawthorn) as well as allied health practices. These provide important services including to the disability and ageing population as well as those travelling from outside the municipality to access quality care.</p> <p>These are important assets that could be a significant driver of future research and innovation, facilitate industry collaboration (including co-location of aligned industry sectors) and provide further opportunities for growth and partnership with the education, research and health care industry.</p>
Events and Markets	<p>Boroondara provides a diverse range of events (including local events facilitated by Traders Associations) and markets to appeal to residents and attract visitors. These contribute to local consumption, drive tourism activity and showcase Boroondara as a desirable destination.</p>



Strengths	Overview
Heritage	Boroondara has a rich and diverse heritage and culture, which is exemplified by historic buildings, neighbourhood character, commercial building façades, monuments and plaques. This provides Boroondara with a unique value proposition which should be preserved and activated to make it a desirable and attractive destination for residents, workers and visitors.
Green Open Spaces	<p>Boroondara is well-served by green open spaces (with 264 parks and gardens).</p> <p>These are important assets for several reasons, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides natural amenity which contributes to liveability and attracts visitors • contributes to recreation activities (e.g., cycling, walking trails, etc.) that supports community engagement and wellbeing • provides infrastructure to support Boroondara's heritage, including plaques and memorials • increases awareness of the surrounding environment and promotes sustainability.



Key Challenges

Table 2: Boroondara's Economy - Key Challenges

Challenges	Overview
Transition of Retail	<p>Retail is a key industry sector for Boroondara, contributing to local business activity, supporting local jobs and driving local consumption. It also provides important community benefits by providing local amenity and services.</p> <p>The retail sector has undergone significant transition in recent years, given the rise of online retailing as well as competition from large scale shopping centres, which has seen a decline in local employment and increases in shopfront vacancies.</p> <p>It will be important to support the retail sector to ensure it continues to generate positive economic and social outcomes for Boroondara.</p>
Movement and Access	<p>Movement and access have been identified by stakeholders as challenges for accessing and visiting local shopping precincts which can impact the level of trade and local consumption.</p> <p>Key issues include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Busy roads and traffic around major activity centres (e.g. Camberwell, Kew and Glenferrie Road Hawthorn) impacts access for residents, workers and visitors. • Parking availability, which can limit access and dwell time at shopping precincts. This can impact customers as well as workers of local businesses, who require longer-term parking options. • Traffic and parking around major train stations. • Opportunity for greater active transport including bicycle access, walkability and pedestrian access around activity centres. • Ensuring adequate public transport provision and access. <p>These issues impact local business activity at shopping precincts and influence shoppers, visitors and workers.</p>



Challenges	Overview
Building back the economy post-pandemic	<p>Although, compared to other municipalities, Boroondara was less impacted by COVID-19, the pandemic has presented significant challenges, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promoting business recovery for 'hard-hit' businesses that are consumer facing and other essential services impacted due to lockdowns. • supporting the rise in flexible and remote working and the subsequent increase in 'working from home' arrangements • facilitating the transition of many small businesses seeking to re-locate out of the CBD and City fringe areas, to be able to work closer to home. • fostering the growth in 'living locally' where residents are increasingly meeting daily needs – including purchasing goods, accessing services, participating in leisure/recreation activities – within their local community. • building the resilience of businesses to adapt to a changing work environment and shifting consumer preferences. <p>The recovery from COVID-19 provides ongoing opportunities for innovative policies and initiatives to support future growth and economic development. Council will adopt a collaborative approach with business and community sectors to help realise these opportunities and promote ongoing recovery.</p>



Challenges	Overview
Workforce shortages	<p>Boroondara, like many inner metropolitan council areas, has experienced workforce shortages in key service sectors, particularly during the height of the pandemic, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Care (including Aged Care and Community Services such as NDIS). Growing demand for health care and community services has led to industry shortages. Without attracting sufficiently skilled workers, these shortages are likely to increase given the ageing of the population, which could impact service provision in Boroondara. • Hospitality The COVID-19 restrictions on travel and international border closures significantly reduced the hospitality workforce. Many existing staff have moved to more less affected industries, which has been accentuated by the loss of the migrant workforce. • Construction and Trades The demand for construction workers, including tradespeople, has increased given the expected dwelling and population growth in Boroondara, as well as major projects within Boroondara. This has increased the need for skilled workers to fulfill the demand and meet existing and future needs. <p>It will be important to advocate for and collaborate with relevant stakeholders to promote sufficient availability of skilled labour to meet industry needs and ensure key services are provided to residents.</p>



External Trends and Influences

A range of external macroeconomic trends influence state and national economies. These trends, as well as the implications for Boroondara have been considered in developing the Strategy and are summarised below.

COVID-19 Impacts and Business Recovery

COVID-19 had a significant impact on the global and national economy, as restrictions on business and travel impacted local communities and businesses. At the height of the pandemic (2020-2022), Victoria continued to adapt its COVID-19 response and recovery efforts.

Industries that are consumer facing and rely on population movements (i.e., retail, food and hospitality) have been significantly impacted in terms of loss of revenue and staff and may require more intensive business support. In addition, essential services – such as health and education – have been substantially affected in terms of operations (e.g. remote learning, delaying elective surgeries) and staff shortages. In particular, higher education (i.e. Swinburne University) has been impacted by a lack of international students over the course of the pandemic.

However, many industries in metropolitan areas have been less affected than others (particularly those not reliant on travel) such as professional and financial services.

Boroondara's economy was less affected by restrictions due to its business mix and was therefore well placed to recover from the impacts of COVID-19, compared to other municipalities. However, targeted support was still required for businesses from hard hit industries in Boroondara (i.e., hospitality, retail, personal services) and other essential services (i.e. health, education) impacted due to lockdowns.

Remote and flexible working arrangements

COVID-19 accelerated the rise of remote working, particularly for employees working in traditional 'office-based' industries (including professional and financial services), who now have greater flexibility to work outside the office environment. In addition, it provides opportunities for businesses to re-locate outside the CBD to areas closer to the business owners' place of residence. This could see businesses moving to Boroondara as more residents work remotely from home – due to flexible working arrangements – and the local population increase during work hours, impacting demand for business spaces/facilities as well as local consumption patterns.



This will likely have a significant impact on the Boroondara workforce, as professional and financial services are two of the largest employing sectors and could provide a more flexible working environment for employees. This will increase the average job containment rate, which can generate local consumption and also grow the demand for supporting facilities and infrastructure.

Workforce shortages

State-wide skills shortages exist in key industries such as hospitality, construction, childcare, community and aged care sectors. This is driven by a combination of increasing demand, lack of relevant employee skills/training and COVID-19 border closures depleting the migrant workforce. Ongoing workforce shortages in these sectors may adversely impact the operations of local businesses in these industries and affect the ability to provide quality core services for residents, workers and visitors.

Boroondara's service industries are experiencing workforce shortages, particularly aged care providers and hospitality. It will be important for these industries to access skilled labour to provide key services for residents.

Co-working

Three in five Australian workers (62%) see a hybrid model as their ideal arrangement, incorporating a mix of working from home and the workplace.¹¹ The advent of hybrid working, the significant number of home based businesses, the fact 98% of the business base in Boroondara is 'non-employing' or 'small' (i.e., less than 20 employees), as well as impacts such as the re-location of businesses away from the CBD and a growing start-ups sector heralds an opportunity for temporary business spaces and local co-working facilities. Benefits of enabling opportunities for collaboration and shared facilities are the maintenance and attraction of business locally and supplying fertile ground for shared resources, ideation and innovation.

Environmental Sustainability and Circular Economy

The recent adoption of Council's Climate Action Plan (2021) will contribute to Council playing an increased role in supporting businesses to become more environmentally sustainable and transition to a circular economy. Both the Victorian and Australian Governments have committed to reducing emissions by legislating a long-term target for emission reductions. Businesses are also transitioning to more environmentally

¹¹ Australia towards 2031 report: McCrindle Research Pty Ltd



sustainable practices and adopting circular business models to attract and retain the increasing number of consumers and staff who value sustainability and reducing their carbon footprint, as well as reduce business costs.

Transition of the retail industry

Retail spend can provide economic stimulus through direct expenditure and job creation, making it critical to local economic growth. The prevalence of online retailing, combined with the recent COVID-19 restrictions on trade and population movement has led to the decline in in-store retail. There has also been an increase in 'service-based' businesses operating in shopping precincts across metropolitan areas (e.g., hairdressers, accountants, gyms etc.), which has contributed to the reduction in traditional retail stores.

In addition, retail businesses now interact with consumers across multiple channels and mediums, including online advertising, in-store 'experiences' and social media engagements. This is becoming a core aspect of retail marketing to build the customer base and engender consumer loyalty.

The retail industry is an important driver of Boroondara's economy, as it supports a large proportion of local jobs and businesses, whilst playing a core role in the success of its shopping precincts and adding to the liveability of the city.

The 'Gig' Economy

'The gig economy' refers to contract, temporary and freelance work, which has grown in popularity in recent years. Whilst there are clear examples of the gig economy across platforms such as Uber, Airbnb and Airtasker, it has also extended into roles such as administration, hospitality, marketing and graphic design. It is predominantly underpinned by advancements in technology but is also driven by workers seeking flexibility, employer preferences, as well as the growing demand for niche skills, particularly across technology and creative industries.

The gig economy has accelerated since COVID-19, as many workers were required to seek additional sources of income and consumers were required to have goods and services home-delivered. As such, it is increasingly viewed as a 'full-time' job for workers and an integral part of daily life for those seeking services.¹²

¹² <https://www.forbes.com/sites/rebeccahenderson/2020/12/10/how-covid-19-has-transformed-the-gig-economy/?sh=229ce0156c99>



Growing demand for health care

Health care is the highest employing industry in Boroondara, and also a major driver of regional export value. Between 2016 and 2021, the number of jobs in the Health Care and Social Assistance industry increased by 1,730 and the value of regional exports generated by the sector annually increased by \$18 million.

As the population ages, there is expected to be growing demand for health care across Victoria and Australia, which will significantly increase health care spending, demand for services and future workforce needs.

This growth applies to Boroondara, with significant increases in the '65 years and over' cohort and this will likely increase the importance of local hospitals and allied health practices, as the need for health services and facilities increases, potentially influencing future health planning and development.

Global economic uncertainty

COVID-19 contributed to global supply shortages and commodity price volatility, which have since been exacerbated by the Russia-Ukraine war, lockdowns in China and flooding events across the east coast of Australia. The trajectory and duration of these events remain unpredictable, leading to global economic uncertainty in the short term. Consumer confidence has also fallen recently amid this economic climate, as well as due to rising interest rates¹³.

In the long term, the current price trends of energy and other commodities are expected to ease, and businesses will be able to invest to expand their capacity to respond to supply in a timely way¹⁴. There is an opportunity for Council to support business resilience during periods of economic uncertainty, and to provide strategic and policy support for diversification of the Boroondara economy.

Rising inflation and cost of living pressures

Price pressures from global oil, new dwelling purchases and tradable goods have led to an end to the low inflation period that endured for so long. Increased cost of daily essentials and basic services, and reductions in real incomes are a threat to residents' overall liveability and confidence levels. PWC's Victoria City Pulse (2022) revealed just 40% of Victorians feel financially secure. Inflation is expected to

¹³ RBA Statement on Monetary Policy, May 2022 – Economic Outlook

¹⁴ Ibid



continue into the future, however the response from government, business and households is uncertain given the historically high levels of employment.

Consumer sentiment has the potential to affect business activity in Boroondara in the short term. To support businesses' ongoing ability to respond to economic shocks, there is an opportunity for council to:

- Provide continued business support;
- Offer incentives to attract new businesses to the region; and
- Implement measures to create a more productive business environment.

Construction trends

Despite a record pipeline of construction expected in the residential sector¹⁵, dwelling investment has more recently been constrained due to a nation-wide shortage of construction materials and skilled labour.

However, these supply issues are expected to gradually abate, allowing the elevated pipeline to be worked through¹⁶. Interest rate increases are expected to soften demand but also increase the number of insolvencies in the residential building sector.

A modest decline in the Australian non-residential building sector is expected to continue over the next three years¹⁷. Offices, tourism, and retail continue to be the most impacted by the pandemic with construction activity in these sectors significantly lower than long term averages¹⁸.

Arcadis' Australian Construction Market View (2022) predicts that from 2023 onwards, material and energy cost increases will ease, whilst labour shortages in the building sector are likely to become the defining challenge of the decade.

Construction and property are two of Boroondara's largest industries, in terms of both employment and output. Given the uncertainty currently faced in this sector, industry diversification is important to avoid over-exposure to 'shocks' and achieve sustainable growth.

¹⁵ Australian Commonwealth Budget 2022/23 Budget Paper No. 1 Strategy and Outlook

¹⁶ Victorian Budget 2022/23 Budget Paper No. 2 – Strategy and Outlook

¹⁷ Australian Construction Industry Forum Forecasts, May 2022

¹⁸ Arcadis Australian Construction Market View, 2022



Housing market

In the March 2022 quarter, Greater Melbourne's house sales volume trended down by 42.5% and the average days on market for a house increased by 12 days to 50 days. Similarly, the sales volume for apartments in Greater Melbourne decreased 36.2% in the same period¹⁹. Interest rate increases, negative net migration and rising construction costs (for new developments) are driving these trends²⁰. An expected further interest rate increase is anticipated to dampen house prices and demand for new housing in 2022-23²¹.

It will be important to consider different types of housing to support residents during periods of housing market decline. A key objective of Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 is to facilitate the provision of and to increase the supply of affordable housing. Council will continue to support the delivery of a diverse range of housing types, including affordable and higher density housing, directed towards areas that are well located in relation to existing infrastructure, jobs, services and public transport such as activity centres, commercial corridors and some main roads, balanced with the commercial function of these areas.

Adopting technological advancements and innovation

As technology continues to evolve, Local Governments should ensure their operations and processes remain in lockstep with technology and digital infrastructure to improve:

- Efficiency through automation of routine processes
- Decision making through data collection and analytics, and
- Business and community access to information.

In relation to economic development, relevant opportunities include:

- Businesses accessing information via online portals (e.g. Google, LinkedIn, Facebook)
- Making data available via an Application Programming Interface (API) to local businesses and community members
- Online business engagement through portals such as Customer Relationship Management systems, and

¹⁹ Knight Frank Australian Residential Review, Q2 2022

²⁰ NAB Quarterly Australian Residential Property Survey Q2, 2022

²¹ Victorian Budget 2022/23 Budget Paper No. 2 – Strategy and Outlook



- Encouraging better approvals processes through the availability and access of information and concierge services.

Boroondara City Council already deliver many of these services and have implemented these processes across departments. Council should continue supporting innovative processes underpinned by technology to support and attract businesses, workers and investors through communication, engagement, information sharing, networking and collaboration.



Developing the Strategy

Engagement framework

Council developed an engagement framework underpinned by five key steps.

The engagement framework included staged consultations across the whole of council and community, business and industry stakeholders, and the Victorian and Australian governments as well as extensive economic analysis and research. The outcome of the analysis highlighted key priorities which informed the creation of the Strategy.

1. Review existing data and other relevant Plans

Review qualitative and quantitative data and Council BCP consultations.

2. Undertake economic research and analysis

Economic research and analysis on Boroondara's economy including an independent review.

3. Undertake consultations

Council and government representatives, business and stakeholder consultations to inform the new Strategy.

4. Develop a background report

Review findings of the consultations, economic analysis, research and develop the background report.

5. Develop a vision, key priorities, strategic objectives and actions

A customer centric and whole of Council customer engagement and interaction approach.

Customer Experience Improvement Strategy ²²(2014)

²² Strategic initiative 3.2: Improved whole-of-Council customer engagement and interaction approach



Following the engagement framework above, the following outcomes were achieved in each of the five steps.

Review and analysis

- 5,070 comments about our local economy, collected from 4,723 community members during the BCP consultation (between December 2020 and April 2021)
- Boroondara Conversations workshops with 149 participants
- BCP workshop with young people
- BCP workshop with local business owners
- Local and regional plans and strategies
- Previous Economic Development and Tourism Strategy

Economic research and analysis – Independent review

- Economic performance
- Demographic and socio-economic
- Competitive advantages and drivers of recent growth
- Employment workforce
- Visitor economy
- Impact of COVID-19

Consultations to inform the Strategy (March - October 2021)

- 10 Boroondara traders' associations²³
- 227 Boroondara's main industry and home-based businesses
 - 34 businesses (4 focus groups and workshops)
 - 191 survey respondents
 - 2 one-on-one interviews
- 4 local and regional stakeholders
- One-on-one interviews with Council officers and executives across 15 relevant departments

²³ At the time of consultation, there were 10 traders' associations



Background report informed by economic analysis and consultation key outcome priorities

- Community
- Activity Centres and Shopping Precincts
- Business Development and Support
- Workforce Development
- Environmental Sustainability
- Tourism

Create the Strategy

- 5,535 engagements
- Priority themes identified
- Extensive economic analysis and research



Summary of Consultations

Community consultations were undertaken between November 2020 and April 2021 to refresh the Boroondara Community Plan 2021 -2031 (BCP). This provided Council with the opportunity to hear directly from the community to ensure the updated BCP 2021 - 2031 responds to emerging trends, demands and changes to community priorities since 2017.

In addition, a holistic consultation process was undertaken, including a combination of surveys, focus groups, workshops and targeted one-on-one interviews with the following stakeholder groups between March and October 2021:

- Boroondara's Traders' Associations
- Local small business owners and operators (representing Professional and Financial Services, Health care; and Property businesses)
- Large employing businesses/organisations (with head offices in Boroondara)
- Local partners and representatives from relevant regional networks/partnerships and Victorian and Australian governments
- Community members, and
- Council officers and departments.

Summary of Key Findings

Findings from community consultations for the Boroondara Community Plan

Feedback on what matters to residents and the community more generally, including businesses, focused on the following points (refer to Figure 2 below):

- **'Your Local Shops and Businesses'** was the third ranked theme for Council to focus on over the next 10 years
 - 45% of survey respondents put 'Your Local Shops and Businesses' as a top 3 priority for Council (18% increase since 2017, ranking third in 2021 from sixth in 2017).
- **'Having shops nearby'** (8% in 2021) and 'supporting local business and employment' (6% in 2021) were topics which mattered the most to people under this theme.



Figure 2 BCP consultation findings on local businesses and shopping centres



Findings from industry consultations

The following topics are a summary of key consultation findings (March and October 2021) from Boroondara's businesses; local business owners and operators, traders' associations, industry stakeholders, local partners and representatives from relevant regional networks/partnerships and Council officers across several departments. These findings provide insight on what is important to Boroondara's business community.

Consultation key outcome priorities:

- Activity Centres and Shopping Precincts
- Business Development and Support
- Workforce Development
- Environmental Sustainability, and
- Tourism.



Monitoring and Evaluation of the Strategy

Council will implement, monitor and evaluate the priorities in the Strategy and actions outlined in the Action Plan 2023/24 - 2025/26.

The Strategy provides a six-year vision to facilitate the maintenance and growth of a thriving economy and contribute to Boroondara's liveability. It is also designed to support tourism through the growth of the visitor economy, including the promotion of Boroondara as a desirable destination for visitors. The Strategy will be reviewed every six years to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the local community and is aligned to the BCP, government priorities, along with the trends, opportunities and challenges faced by Boroondara's economy and community, including business stakeholders.

The Strategy will be delivered through implementation of:

- **The Strategy's Action Plan:** An Action Plan that sets out a series of actions for each key priority outlined in this Strategy.
- **BCP 2021-2031:** Council's 10 year vision underpinned by 7 key themes, one of which is 'Local Economy' (Theme 6) that aspires to foster a strong local economy.

The Action Plan is a three-year implementation plan for delivering the Strategy. A new Action Plan will be developed in 2026 to ensure the actions stay relevant and respond to current and emerging issues and opportunities.

The Strategy will be monitored through quarterly and annual progress reports. Key tools to measure progress include, but are not limited to:

- City of Boroondara Annual Community Satisfaction survey
- Local Government Performance Reporting Framework
- Australian Business Register (ABR) data
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census data
- Tourism Research Australia
- Business Participant Feedback Surveys
- Google analytics
- Pedestrian counters.



Further Information

For all queries or feedback regarding the Strategy, please contact the responsible department below.

Contact

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Free interpreting service: (03) 9278 4002

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Acronyms and Glossary

Acronyms

ABR Australian Business Register

BCP Boroondara Community Plan

ISEMP Inner South-East Metropolitan Partnership

IVS International Visitor Survey

NVS National Visitor Survey

SEIFA Socio-Economic Index for Areas

SME Small to Medium Enterprises

TRA Tourism Research Australia

VAGO Victorian Auditor-General's Office

Glossary of Terms

Circular Economy

Refers to an economy in which all the elements in the production cycle are reused or recycled, so that there is no or minimal pollution or waste.

Daytrip Visitor

Those who travel for a round trip distance of at least 50 kilometres, are away from home for at least four hours, and who do not spend a night away from home as part of their travel. Same day travel as part of overnight travel is excluded.

Economic Output

The gross revenue generated by businesses/organisations in each of the industry sectors in a defined region. Gross revenue is also referred to as total sales or total income.



Employment

Represents the number of people employed by businesses/ organisations in each of the industry sectors in a defined region. Employment data presented in this report is destination of work data. That is, no inference is made as to where people in a defined region reside.

Gig Economy

Refers to contract, temporary and freelance work, which has grown in popularity in recent years.

Gross Regional Product

The total value of final goods and services produced in the region over the period of one year.

Imports

Sales of goods and services from industries located outside the City of Boroondara boundaries to resident households, businesses and other organisations within the area.

Inner South-East Partnership

A regional partnership including Bayside, Boroondara, Glen Eira and Stonnington City Councils. The partnership engages with local communities to inform its advice to the Victorian Government on the key priorities, recognising local communities are in the best position to understand the challenges and opportunities faced by the region.

International Visitor

A person is defined as an international visitor to Australia if they are currently a resident overseas, have been in Australia for less than one year and are aged 15 years or over.

Local Sales

Measure of the output of local industries that is sold locally. This includes sales to local consumers, businesses and other organisations. Local sales is equal to total output minus total exports.



Non-employing Business

A type of business with no employees. This may include a range of entity types, such as non-employing sole traders or any other businesses without employees.

Overnight Visitor

People aged 15 years and over who undertake an overnight trip of one night or more and at least 40 kilometres away from home are referred to as overnight visitors. Only those trips where the respondent is away from home for less than 12 months are in scope of the NVS.

Regional Exports

The value of goods and services exported outside of the defined region that have been generated by businesses / organisations in each of the industry sectors within the region.

SEIFA

Developed by the ABS, this measures the relative level of socio-economic advantage and disadvantage for a defined area. The index score is based on a weighted combination of census variables that reflect disadvantage (e.g., income, education, employment, etc.), which is then standardised around the national average score of 1,000. A higher score on the index reflects a lower level of disadvantage. Therefore, a score above 1,000 indicates a lower level of disadvantage relative to the national average, while a score below 1,000 indicates a higher level of disadvantage relative to the national average.

Small to Medium Enterprises

For statistical purposes, the ABS defines a business entity employing less than 20 employees as Small to Medium Enterprise.

Key data sources

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)

ABS Census data is Australia's largest statistical collection, which helps estimate Australia's population, dwellings and demographic characteristics. It is based on responses received from private dwellings and individuals. The Census, which is conducted every five years, provides information for the entire country, including small geographic areas and small population groups.



Economy ID

Economy ID industry structure and industry sector profiles uses results from the ABS Census, as well as a National Accounts regional econometric model developed by National Economics (NIEIR). This model is based on replicating the outputs of the National Accounts framework for local areas such as LGAs, using a range of data sources to model the accounts to show local trends.

Profile ID

Profile ID analyses and converts raw ABS Census data into a demographic profile to inform Council, community groups, investors, business, students and the general public. The Profile ID data for Boroondara provides a demographic analysis based on results from the 2016, 2011, 2006, 2001, 1996 and 1991 Censuses of Population and Housing. The profile is updated with population estimates when the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) releases new figures.

REMLAN Economy Profile

REMLAN Economy provides data into the performance of key sectors of the economy, which is provided by state, region and municipal areas. This is underpinned by the latest data from the ABS and includes estimates of employment, output, wages & salaries, imports, exports and gross regional product for 114 industries. The information is drawn from numerous ABS sources, including Census data, National Input Output Tables and Gross State Product.

Tourism Research Australia (TRA)

TRA provides statistics and research on both international and domestic tourism within Australia, including the value of tourism. This is based on two major surveys – for domestic and international visitors measuring the contribution of tourism and provides input into visitor spend for Australia's regions and smaller statistical areas.

Victoria in Future (VIF)

Victoria in Future is the official Victorian Government projection of population and households. Projections are based on trends and assumptions for births, life expectancy, migration, and living arrangements across all of Victoria. This report is released annually, with government agencies, planners and demographers using the adopted growth rates to forecast population and housing growth. VIF provides information for the state, municipal areas and smaller statistical areas.

Economic Development Strategy Action Plan 2023 - 2026

The Action Plan 2023 - 2026 ('Action Plan') outlines key projects and other initiatives to facilitate economic development and visitor attraction opportunities identified in the Economic Development Strategy ('Strategy'). The Action Plan groups initiatives under both the Boroondara Community Plan (BCP) theme and each of the Strategy's four priority areas.

The Action Plan is a three-year implementation plan for delivering the Strategy. The Action Plan includes 24 actions which will be delivered over the first three years of the Strategy. A new Action Plan will be developed in 2026. This will ensure the actions stay relevant and respond to current and emerging issues and opportunities. Some actions led by the Liveable Communities department will require additional resourcing beyond 2023-24. This is noted in the Action Plan where relevant.

Council's role in the delivery and implementation of the proposed actions can range as follows:

- **Lead role** - is the responsible Council department leading the action.
- **Support role** - is a collaboration of Council departments, government and industry stakeholders which support the actions. Council may also advocate and influence project delivery and decision making by representing key stakeholders.

These actions are in addition to a range of existing Council programs and services supporting economic development and the local business community.

No.	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe for delivery (FY)	Resources required	BCP Theme and Strategy
1	Establish an operational Cross-Council Shopping Precincts Coordination Group to plan, communicate and coordinate activities, works and emerging issues across Boroondara's 53 shopping centres.	Lead: Liveable Communities (Local Economies) Support: Capital Projects, Civic Services, Strategic and Statutory Planning, Traffic and Transport, Arts and Culture, Facilities, Waste and Infrastructure, Customer and Communication	2023/24 - 2024/25	Current operational budget	Theme 6 Strategy 6.1, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5
2	Review Council's Shopping Centre Improvement Plan (SCIP) 2011.	Lead: Liveable Communities (Local Economies) Support: Capital Projects	2023 - 2024 2024 - 2026	Current operational budget Subject to additional budget	Theme 1 and 6 Strategy 1.1, 1.6, 6.4
3	Promote the social and economic benefits of being an accessible and inclusive business for employees and customers with disability.	Lead: Liveable Communities (Local Economies) Support: Community Planning and Development, Customer and Communication	2023 - 2024 2024 - 2026	Current operational budget	Theme 1 and 6 Strategy 1.1, 1.2, 6.1, 6.6

No.	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe for delivery (FY)	Resources required	BCP Theme and Strategy
4	Support local businesses to develop unique and marketable visitor offerings including investigation of a city-wide gift card program.	Lead: Liveable Communities (Local Economies) Support: Strategic and Statutory Planning	2023 - 2024 2024 - 2025	Current operational budget Subject to additional budget	Theme 6 Strategy 6.2
5	Explore partnerships and networking opportunities to deliver employment and training outcomes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve coordination between local training and education providers, job service providers, industry and relevant state and federal government employment programs to facilitate employment and training outcomes, including those facing barriers and address workforce shortages amongst local businesses. Facilitate the delivery of a disability inclusive employment pilot program with relevant partners which places local people with disability into meaningful employment with local businesses. 	Lead: Liveable Communities (Local Economies) Community partners: Local training and education providers, job service providers, Local Jobs Program (Inner Metropolitan Melbourne Region), other state and federal programs facilitating employment outcomes and Traders' Associations.	2023 - 2024 2024 - 2026	Current operational budget	Theme 1, 6 and 7 Strategy 1.2, 1.5, 1.7, 6.2, 7.3

No.	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe for delivery (FY)	Resources required	BCP Theme and Strategy
6	Strengthen and streamline governance and reporting practices and processes related to special rate and charge schemes for marketing and business development of shopping precincts, including implementation of actions from the 2023 internal audit report regarding the special rate and charges schemes.	Lead: Liveable Communities (Local Economies)	2023 - 2024 2024 - 2026	Current operational budget Subject to additional budget	Theme 6 and 7 Strategy 6.1, 6.3, 6.5, 7.7
7	Promote Boroondara as a visitor destination, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigating up to 4 locations in open spaces/parks in Boroondara for use as pop-up food / beverage carts or trucks. Promote and highlight shopping precincts, as well as significant parks and gardens in Boroondara such as Maranoa Botanic Gardens. 	Lead: Liveable Communities (Local Economies) Support: Customer and Communication, Civic Services, Strategic Communications, Environmental Sustainability and Open Spaces, Transformation and Technology, Strategic and Statutory Planning	2024/25 - 2025/26	Subject to additional budget	Theme 2 and 6 Strategy 2.1, 2.3, 6.1, 6.3, 6.5
8	Provide support to shopping precincts to diversify their business mix and attract	Lead: Liveable Communities (Local Economies)	2024/25 - 2025/26	Subject to additional budget	Theme 6 Strategy 6.2, 6.4

No.	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe for delivery (FY)	Resources required	BCP Theme and Strategy
	investment through a range of methods, including the development of investment prospectuses.	Support: Statutory and Strategic Planning			
9	Pilot a two-year Shopping Precincts Events Program to encourage visitor attraction and build on industry-specific strengths of local areas (food, music, fashion, etc) and/ or local seasonal opportunities.	Lead: Liveable Communities (Local Economies) Support: Arts and Culture, Traffic and Transport, Civic Services, Strategic and Statutory Planning Community partners: Traders' associations, local community organisations and groups, state and federal government, local businesses, schools, universities	2024/25 - 2025/26	Subject to additional budget	Theme 1 and 6 Strategy 1.1, 1.6, 6.1, 6.3, 6.5
10	Explore ways to connect older residents and seniors groups with their local shops and cafés, including shopping precinct tours which promote Council's health priorities, and/or with a focus on those who accept the seniors card discount.	Lead: Liveable Communities (Active Ageing team) Support: Liveable Communities (Local Economies)	2023 - 2024	Current operational budget	Theme 1 and 6 Strategy 1.1, 1.2, 1.6, 6.1, 6.3, 6.5

No.	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe for delivery (FY)	Resources required	BCP Theme and Strategy
11	Attract ‘satellite’ events of larger Melbourne signature activities, shows and festivals, film and television to be delivered on Council land and in Council facilities to drive visitation and spending to Boroondara.	Lead: Arts and Culture Support: Liveable Communities, Environmental Sustainability and Open Spaces, Customer and Communication, Civic Services	2023/24 - 2025/26	Current operational budget	Theme 1 and 6 Strategy 1.1, 1.3, 6.3, 6.5
12	Facilitate initiatives which support businesses to transition to a circular economy and become more sustainable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage businesses to consider circular economy approaches through actions in the updated Boroondara Circular Economy Strategy (to be presented to Council for consideration in the Financial Year 23/24). Develop and promote programs and events which assist businesses to reduce the environmental impact of their operations and transition to a circular economy such as reducing waste to landfill, 	Lead: Environmental Sustainability and Open Spaces Support: Liveable Communities (Local Economies) Community partners: state and federal government, community organisations, other Councils, businesses, traders' associations	2023 - 2024 2024 - 2026	Current operational budget Government grants	Theme 3 and 6 Strategy 3.1, 3.3, 6.2

No.	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe for delivery (FY)	Resources required	BCP Theme and Strategy
	<p>improved energy and water efficiency, adoption of renewable energy sources and social/sustainable procurement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide businesses with support and resources to reduce and replace the use of single use plastics in operations with reusable alternatives in line with the State Government's ban on Single Use Plastics introduced in early 2023. 				
13	Develop an approach to electric vehicle charging that supports our local economy and facilitates increased visitation.	<p>Lead: Environmental Sustainability and Open Spaces</p> <p>Support: Liveable Communities</p>	2023/24 - 2025/26	Current operational budget	Theme 3 and 6 Strategy 3.1, 3.3, 6.4
14	<p>Support and/or implement a series of initiatives to improve transport, access, safety and parking in and around Boroondara's shopping precincts, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of parking strategies based on adopted parking studies 	<p>Lead: Traffic and Transport</p> <p>Support: Civic Services, Facilities Waste and Infrastructure, Capital Projects, Environmental Sustainability and Open Spaces, Strategic and</p>	2023/24 - 2025/26	Current operational budget	Theme 5 and 6 Strategy 5.1 - 5.6, 6.4

No.	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe for delivery (FY)	Resources required	BCP Theme and Strategy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of Council's Integrated Transport Strategy (as it relates to shopping centres), • Undertake traffic management measures in neighbourhood shopping centres to improve amenity, safety and access, • Advocate for public transport improvements which enhance accessibility and quality of routes servicing activity centres • Provide better active transport links to shopping precincts, including provision of new and upgraded off-road paths, on-road cycling infrastructure and improved wayfinding as identified in the Boroondara Bicycle Strategy and Implementation Plan • Upgrades to public spaces, footpaths, lighting and other pedestrian improvements to prioritise and improve walkability and access within activity centres. 	Statutory Planning, Local Economies			
15	Implement the Shopping Centre Improvement Program which delivers streetscape improvements	Lead: Capital Projects	2023/24 - 2025/26	Current operational budget	Theme 1 and 6 Strategy 1.1, 1.6, 6.4

No.	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe for delivery (FY)	Resources required	BCP Theme and Strategy
	to small and medium sized shopping centres (in addition to shopping centres which are the focus of Placemaking projects).	Support: Liveable Communities, Capital Projects, Traffic and Transport, Environmental Sustainability and Open Spaces.			
16	Review Council's proactive maintenance inspections program and level of service for shopping precincts not represented by a traders' association.	Lead: Facilities Waste and Infrastructure	2023/24 - 2025/26	Current operational budget	Theme 6 Strategy 6.4
17	Plan for the economic vibrancy, future growth and public investment of Boroondara's network of activity centres and shopping centres through the coordination and delivery of the following complementary planning and placemaking projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a new Boroondara Activity Centre Strategy to guide future development and economic activity in centres across the municipality Promote economic vitality and prioritise public investment in these centres 	Lead: Strategic and Statutory Planning Support: Liveable Communities; Capital Projects, Arts and Culture, Traffic and Transport, Civic Services. Community partners: traders' associations.	2023/24 - 2025/26	Current operational budget	Theme 1 and 6 Strategy 1.1, 1.4, 1.6, 6.1, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5

No.	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe for delivery (FY)	Resources required	BCP Theme and Strategy
	by progressing a draft long-term placemaking strategy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a new Structure & Place Plan for Camberwell Junction precinct. Continue to implement placemaking projects in Maling Road and Glenferrie precinct to support the revitalisation of these important centres. 				
18	Involve children, young people and their families in placemaking projects through engagement and activation opportunities.	Lead: Strategic and Statutory Planning Support: Health and Wellbeing Services	2023/24 - 2025/26	Current operational budget	Theme 1 and 6 Strategy 1.1, 1.6, 6.1, 6.3, 6.5
19	Develop the Customer Account Login facility feature providing a personalised, accurate, data driven, valuable and secure experience where business customers and residents can easily: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make requests and amend supporting information and data View and update their account information 	Lead: Transformation and Technology Support: Liveable Communities and Customer and Communication	2024/25 - 2025/26	Current operational budget	Theme 6 and 7 Strategy 6.2, 7.6, 7.7

No.	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe for delivery (FY)	Resources required	BCP Theme and Strategy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> View their service history and payments information with Council Subscribe to receive alerts, notifications, reminders and confirmations Notify Council of a change Understand, request progress updates and requirements. <p>The Customer Account Login will be accessible through the Council website and via mobile.</p>				
20	<p>Facilitate increased local job outcomes, including for those facing barriers to employment through increased local and social procurement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Council's procurement policy to include a focus on social and local procurement and promote to key internal and external stakeholders. Investigate opportunities to support the local social enterprise/inclusive enterprise sector. 	<p>Lead: Chief Finance Office (Procurement)</p> <p>Support: Liveable Communities, Environmental Sustainability and Open Spaces, Health and Wellbeing Services</p> <p>Community partners: Local businesses</p>	2023/24 - 2025/26	Current operational budget	Theme 1, 6 and 7 Strategy 1.2, 1.5, 6.2, 7.2

No.	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe for delivery (FY)	Resources required	BCP Theme and Strategy
21	<p>Encourage ongoing provision of commercial floorspace in commercial zones consistent with their purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support re-purposing of existing commercial floorspace to support new commercial uses. • Implement the relevant planning strategies with respect to Boroondara's network of activity centres and protect valued employment land in the Commercial 1 Zone from conversion to residential uses. • Support ongoing investment in infrastructure associated with commercial land to support employment generating uses in the commercial zones. • Further investigate the existing supply of commercial land in Boroondara and its capacity to accommodate future economic demand and 	<p>Lead: Statutory and Strategic Planning</p> <p>Support: Liveable Communities</p>	2023/24 - 2025/26	Current operational budget	<p>Theme 6</p> <p>Strategy 6.4</p>

No.	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe for delivery (FY)	Resources required	BCP Theme and Strategy
	employment generating development.				
22	Facilitate employment and training opportunities for young people: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with and support community partners to help facilitate and link young people with employment opportunities. • Explore opportunities and pathways to engage young people in working for Council. 	Lead: (a) Health and Wellbeing Services and (b) People, Culture and Development Support: (a) Liveable Communities and (b) Health and Wellbeing Services and Liveable Communities Community partners: Inner Eastern Local Learning and Employment Network, JobCo, employment agencies, businesses.	2023/24 - 2025/26	Current operational budget	Theme 1 Strategy 1.2, 1.5
23	Explore opportunities to use smart technologies and internet of things (IoT) to support Boroondara's business community and facilitate vibrant shopping precincts.	Lead: Transformation and Technology Support: Liveable Communities	2023/24 - 2025/26	Current operational budget	Theme 6 and 7 Strategy 6.4, 7.7
24	Advocate to the Victorian and Australian Government to invest in activity centres in the areas of infrastructure and placemaking to	Strategic and Statutory Planning; Liveable Communities; Capital Projects, Arts and Culture,	2023/24 - 2025/26	Current operational budget	Theme 1, 6 and 7 Strategy 1.1, 1.6, 6.4, 7.5

No.	Action	Responsibility	Timeframe for delivery (FY)	Resources required	BCP Theme and Strategy
	facilitate improved economic and social outcomes.	Traffic and Transport, Civic Services, Strategic and Statutory Planning			

Economic Development Strategy Community Engagement Summary

Public consultation: 25 January - 10 March 2023

Local Economies



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Executive Summary

The draft Economic Development Strategy ('the draft Strategy') outlines priorities, strategic objectives and actions to support and facilitate the maintenance and growth of a thriving economy in Boroondara. The Strategy will contribute positively to Boroondara's liveability and help grow the visitor economy into the future, ensuring the area remains a great place to live, operate a business, work, study and play.

The draft Strategy is informed by and aligned to the overall vision of the Boroondara Community Strategy (BCP) 2021-31, including 'Local Economy' (Theme 6) and its five strategies.

Two stages of community consultation informed the development of the draft Strategy prior to the third and final stage of consultation between 25 January - 10 March 2023.

Findings from the Stage 3 consultation are the subject of this report.

During the Stage 3 consultation, key stakeholders including businesses, traders' associations, residents, visitors, community organisations and groups as well as visitors to Boroondara were invited to provide feedback on the draft Strategy via the [Engage Boroondara](#) platform by:

- Ranking the four priorities of the draft Strategy in order of importance to them:
 - Priority 1: Thriving and Engaging Activity Centres and Shopping Precincts
 - Priority 2: A Productive and Supported Business Community
 - Priority 3: An Environmentally Sustainable, Circular and Smart Economy
 - Priority 4: A Desirable Destination for Visitors
- Contributing comments on the draft Strategy and priorities.

The majority of the 96 respondents to the survey on Engage Boroondara were residents (76%), followed by owners/operators of a business (10%). Just over half of respondents were female (51%) and most were born in Australia and local to Boroondara, with one-fifth living in Hawthorn and just under half aged between 50 - 69 years.

Of those that responded to the survey, 43 respondents provided feedback which included comments, suggestions or concerns relating to the draft Strategy or specific locations within Boroondara (Surrey Hills, Canterbury, Camberwell and Glenferrie). Feedback was also received via email. **Appendix 1** includes details of this feedback and Council's response.

The majority of feedback received indicated general support for the draft Strategy, with most comments and suggestions relating to the four priorities and strategic objectives/focus areas.

Half of the respondents ranked 'Thriving and Engaging Activity Centres and Shopping Precincts' as the most important of the draft Strategy's four priorities. In addition, just under half of the comments and suggestions related to this priority, with feedback including the importance of providing ongoing maintenance, enhancements and activations; a diverse range of services and products, as well as areas where people can meet; more green spaces; and more outdoor dining to facilitate increased vibrancy and visitation to shopping precincts. Increased support to, as well as activation and promotion of the Union Road, Surrey Hills shopping precinct was also highlighted by a number of respondents.

'A Desirable Destination for Visitors' was another topic raised by approximately one-third of respondents. Most feedback relating to this area highlighted Council's role in leveraging Boroondara's parks, walking trails, history, heritage character and shopping precincts to attract visitors as well as improving how public spaces, including parks and carparks are utilised for markets and community events.

The importance of streets which are pedestrian friendly and well serviced by a range of transport modes was also raised, along with a small number of concerns about the perceived lack of car parking, including restrictions as well as the 40km/h speed limits zones.

'A Productive and Supported Business Community' was another key topic, with respondents highlighting the role of Council in attracting and supporting local businesses, along with assisting the growing number of employees working from home and those facing barriers to employment.

Facilitating 'Environmental Sustainability and the Circular Economy' was also highlighted by respondents as a key factor to consider when developing Boroondara's economy into the future.

Introduction

Purpose of the report

The purpose of this report is to summarise the findings of the Stage 3 consultations undertaken between 25 January and 10 March 2023 to develop the draft Strategy. The report provides an overview of both the engagement activities undertaken to promote the consultation and the feedback received.

Background

The draft Strategy outlines priorities, strategic objectives and actions to support and facilitate the maintenance and growth of a thriving economy in Boroondara. The proposed Strategy will contribute positively to Boroondara's liveability and help grow the visitor economy into the future.

The draft Strategy is informed by and aligned to the overall vision of the Boroondara Community Strategy (BCP) 2021-31, including 'Local Economy' (Theme 6) and its five strategies. In addition to the BCP, there are also several Council strategies, Strategies and policies which inform economic development and visitor attraction locally, including:

- Boroondara Community Strategy 2021–31
- Healthy Ageing in Boroondara 2019
- Arts Strategy 2015–2018
- Children and Young People in Action Strategy 2021
- Climate Action Strategy 2021
- Disability Action Strategy 2018–2022
- Camberwell Junction Structure and Place Plan 2022 (draft)
- Glenferrie Road Place Strategy 2021(draft)
- Maling Road Place Strategy 2020
- Multicultural Action Strategy 2019–2023
- Shopping Centre Improvement Strategy 2011
- Placemaking Framework 2019
- Boroondara Planning Scheme - Local policies
- Boroondara Housing Strategy 2015
- Boroondara Neighbourhood Centres and Commercial Corridor Guidelines 2014
- Boroondara Open Space Strategy 2013.

Prior to the consultation between 25 January - 10 March 2023, two stages of community consultation had informed the development of the draft Strategy and the following four key priorities and strategic objectives:

- Priority 1 - Thriving and Engaging Activity Centres and Shopping Precincts. Activate and enhance shopping precincts across Boroondara to ensure they offer vibrant places to meet and be entertained, access to job opportunities and green spaces, as well as meet the diverse shopping, social and service needs of residents, workers, businesses and visitors.

- Priority 2 - A Productive and Supported Business Community. Promote business growth and investment in Boroondara that capitalises on existing industry specialisations and achieves successful economic and employment outcomes.
- Priority 3 - An Environmentally Sustainable, Circular and 'Smart' Local Economy. Encourage a flourishing local economy that embraces innovative models of business and supplies sustainable goods and services to our community.
- Priority 4 - A Desirable Destination for Visitors. Support the growth of the visitor economy by attracting non-local (i.e., Melbourne residents from outside Boroondara), regional and interstate visitors and increasing visitor spend.

Stage 1:

Stage 1 involved community consultations between December 2020 and April 2021, including a review of:

- 5,070 comments about our local economy, collected from 4,723 community members during the BCP consultation,
- Boroondara conversations workshops with 149 participants,
- BCP workshop with young people, and
- BCP workshop with local business owners.

During Stage 1, feedback on what matters to residents and the community more generally, including businesses, focused on the following points:

- 'Your Local Shops and Businesses' was the third ranked theme for Council to focus on over the next 10 years
- 45% of survey respondents put 'Your Local Shops and Businesses' as a top 3 priority for Council (18% increase since 2017, ranking third in 2021, up from sixth in 2017).
- 'Having shops nearby' (8% in 2021) and 'supporting local business and employment' (6% in 2021) were topics which mattered the most to people under this theme.



Figure 1: What matters to the community - local shops and businesses

Source: BCP consultation findings on local businesses and shopping centres 2021

Stage 2:

Stage 2 occurred between March - October 2021 and involved consultations with:

- Boroondara's 10 traders' associations through a focus group (please note that since this consultation, there are now 11 traders' associations in Boroondara),
- Boroondara's businesses (the majority representing Boroondara's main industry sectors by number of registered businesses: Professional, Scientific and Technical Services; Financial and Insurance Services; Retail Trade which includes hospitality/food retailing; Health Care and Social Assistance) through:
 - four focus groups, including one specifically focused on home-based businesses, involving 34 businesses in total,
 - two online surveys, with 191 responses in total, one of which was focused specifically on understanding business involvement and interest in initiatives to become more environmentally sustainable,
- local partners and representatives from relevant regional networks/partnerships across Victorian and Australian Government, including the Local Jobs Program of Inner Melbourne Employment Region (Department of Education, Skills and Employment), the Inner South-East Metropolitan Partnership (Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions) and the Department of Transport, along with Swinburne University through one-on-one interviews, and
- staged consultations across the whole of Council through one-on-one interviews. Key areas included Arts and Culture, Community Planning and Development, Library Services, Health and Wellbeing Services, Asset and Capital Planning, Capital Projects, Environmental Sustainability and Open Spaces, Facilities, Waste and Infrastructure, Traffic and Transport, Civic Services, Statutory and Strategic Planning, Placemaking, Transformation and Technology and the Chief Financial Office.

Key priorities identified for Boroondara's business community and local economy more generally during Stage 2 consultations were:

- Activity Centres and Shopping Precincts;
- Business Development and Support;
- Workforce Development;
- Environmental Sustainability; and,
- Tourism.

Stage 3:

The third and final stage of community consultation to develop the draft Strategy was undertaken between 25 January and 10 March 2023. Engagement activities undertaken during this stage of consultation, along with the feedback provided, are summarised in the following pages, with a summary of respondents' comments and Council's response outlined in Appendix 1.

Engagement activities

The draft Strategy was available for public consultation between 25 January and 10 March 2023.

To ensure a broad cross section of the community was reached, the consultation was promoted via a variety of channels to a diverse group of stakeholders.

Across all channels, the community was invited to provide feedback on the draft Strategy via the [Engage Boroondara](#) platform which included key information on the draft Strategy, the survey and contact details for further questions. Instructions on how to access translation and interpreting service was also included. A hard copy of the survey on Engage was available at Council's Camberwell Customer Service office.

The purpose of the consultation was for Council to confirm if the draft Strategy's four priorities resonated with the local community and to determine whether there was anything missing in the draft Strategy which might inform future actions to facilitate economic development and visitor attraction in Boroondara (beyond FY 23/24).

Key stakeholders targeted for the consultation included businesses, traders' associations, residents, visitors, community organisations and groups and visitors to Boroondara.

Respondents were invited to rank the four priorities of the draft Strategy in order of importance to them. They were also given the opportunity to provide comments on the draft Strategy and priorities. Key demographic information was also asked of respondents, including their relationship to Boroondara (for example - whether they were a resident, business manager/owner, visitor, student, involved in a traders' association), as well as their age, location and country of birth.

The consultation was promoted on a number of Council channels, including:

- February and March Boroondara Bulletin (both print and online)
 - 75,000 printed copies distributed each month - 72,000 to letterboxes, with a further 3,000 distributed via post, libraries and customer service centres,
 - eDM (Electronic Direct Mail) delivered to 38,000 subscribers;
- Social media (both City of Boroondara and Boroondara Life (Local Business) channels):
 - City of Boroondara:
 - Posts on Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram (total 34,130 people reached), generating over 800 clicks to the Engage webpage.
 - Boroondara Life (Local Business)
 - 1 post on Facebook (total 10,692 people reached);
- A range of Council eDMs targeting different segments of Boroondara's community (including local businesses, community organisations/groups as

well as residents with interests in environmental sustainability, community development, arts and business); and

- Council's website.

To ensure the local business community were informed of the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft Strategy, Boroondara's 11 traders' associations were supplied with a 'communications pack' containing assets they could use to promote the draft Strategy to the businesses/traders within their shopping precincts. This included suggested key messages and images to include on their website, and in social media posts and emails.

Those that had contributed to the preliminary consultations to inform the draft Strategy were also notified of the public consultation.

Short video interviews ('vox pops') were also developed of five business owners/managers who each spoke to one of the draft Strategy's four priorities. This content was disseminated on social media and email to raise the profile of the consultation. The social media posts featuring the video interviews had 1,942 views.

Participants

During the consultation period, the Engage webpage promoting the consultation attracted 1,085 page visits, with 96 people providing contributions.

Key demographics of survey respondents are depicted in Figures 2-5 below. In summary:

- The majority (76%) were residents, followed by owners/operators of a business (10%). The remainder were mainly visitors to Boroondara or involved in a local traders' association, and
- Just over half of respondents were female (51%) and most were born in Australia and local to Boroondara, with one-fifth living in Hawthorn and just under half aged between 50 - 69 years.

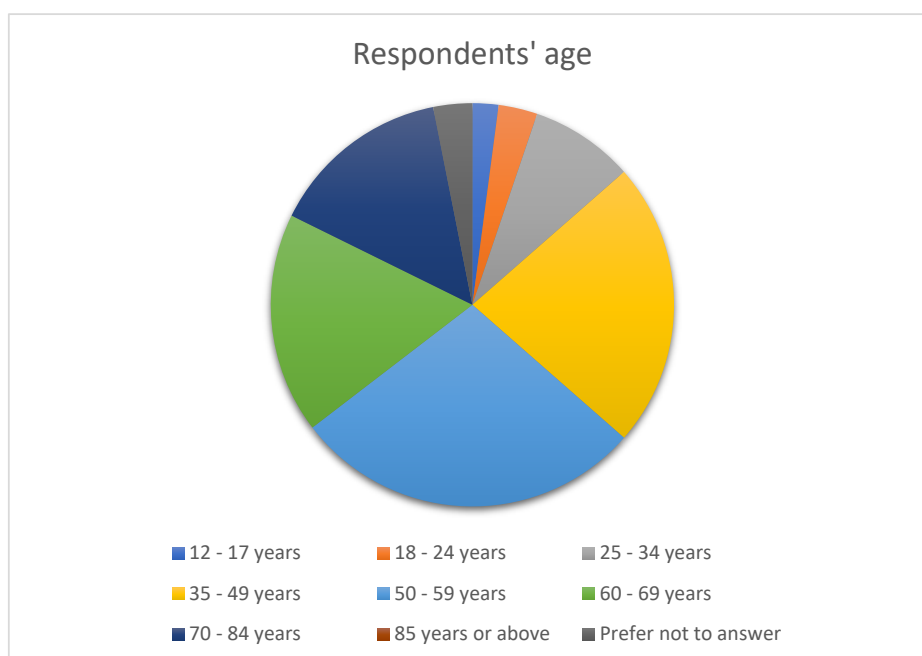


Figure 2: Age of survey respondents

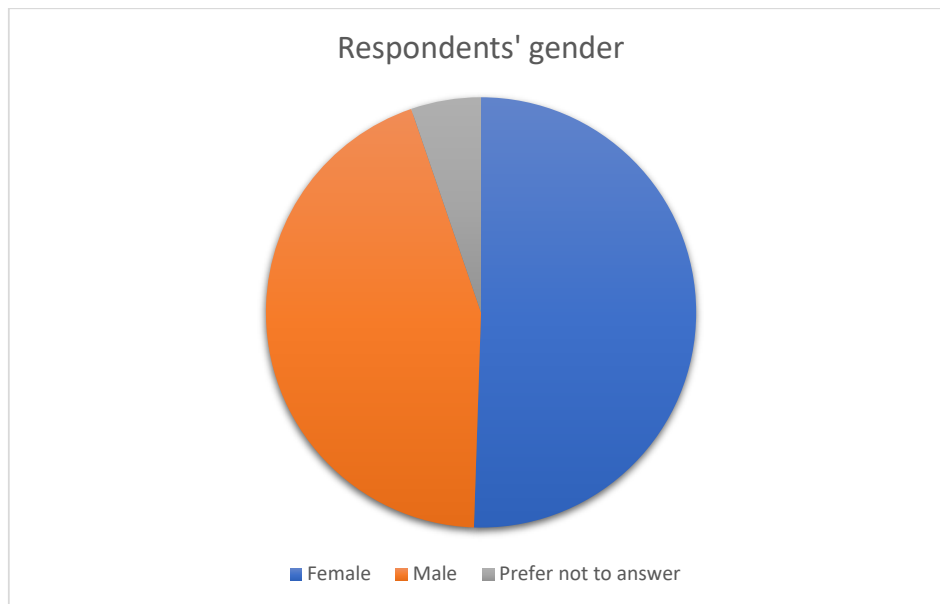


Figure 3: Gender of survey respondents

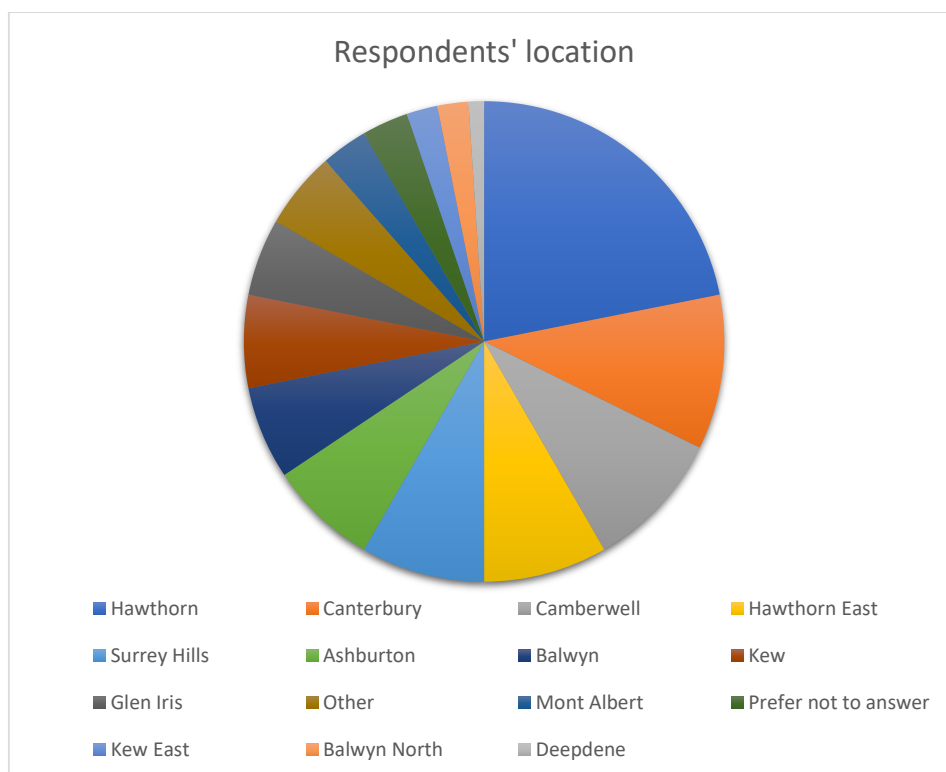


Figure 4: Location of survey respondents

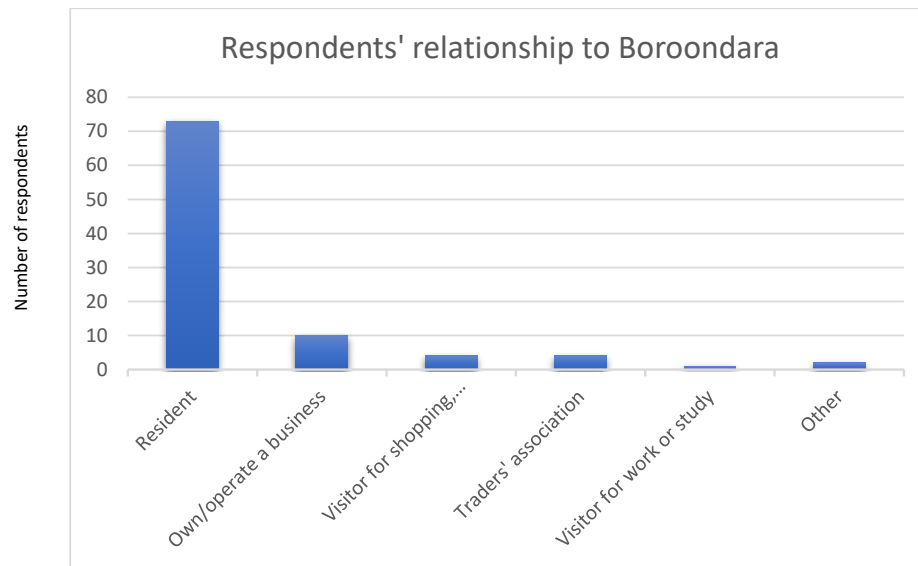


Figure 5: Relationship respondents have to Boroondara

Findings

During the consultation period, feedback was provided by the community, including businesses and traders' associations via Engage Boroondara and email.

The survey on Engage was completed by 96 people.

Ranking of the draft Strategy's four priorities

As shown in Figure 6, when asked to rank the four priorities of the draft Strategy in order of importance to them, half of the respondents (48) indicated 'Thriving and Engaging Activity Centres and Shopping Precincts' was the most important. Just over one-fifth of respondents (20) rated 'An Environmentally Sustainable, Circular and Smart Economy' as number one, with the same number of respondents (14) each rating 'A Desirable Destination for Visitors' and 'A Productive and Supported Business Community' as the most important.

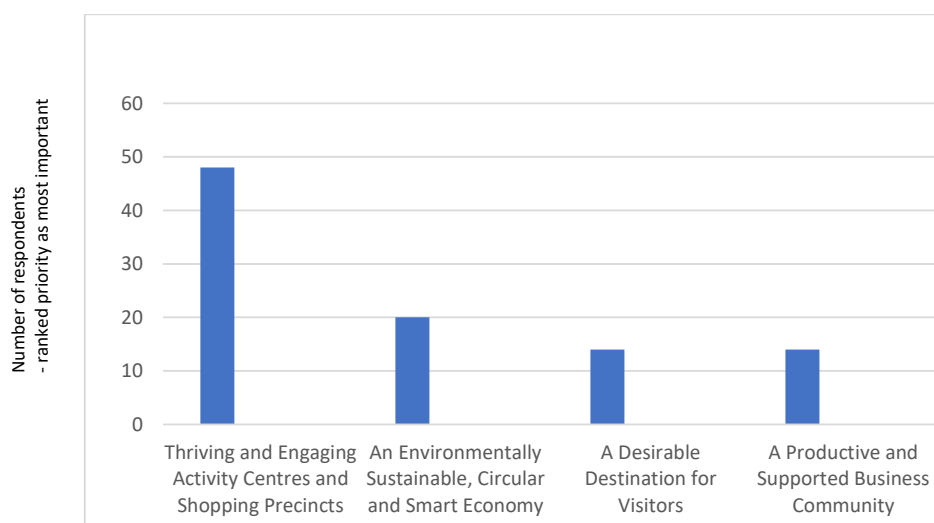


Figure 6: Ranking of the draft Strategy's four priorities

Summary of feedback provided in comments

Of those that responded to the survey, 43 respondents provided feedback which included comments, suggestions or concerns relating to the draft Strategy or specific locations within Boroondara (Surrey Hills, Canterbury, Camberwell and Glenferrie). Feedback was also received via email. Appendix 1 includes details of this feedback and Council's response. Table 1 below outlines the number of comments in relation to each general topic and Table 2 below summarises the sentiment of these comments.

Table 1: Number of comments for each general topic

Topics comments related to	Number of comments in relation to this topic
Thriving and Engaging Activity Centres and Shopping Precincts	21
A Desirable Destination for Visitors	14
A Productive and Supported Business Community	7
An Environmentally Sustainable and Circular Economy	6

Table 2: Sentiment of comments

Type of comment	Number of comments
Constructive/positive comments related to the Strategy's four proposed priorities	34 comments
Neutral comments, out of scope comments or concerns about specific locations (Surrey Hills, Canterbury, Camberwell Junction and Glenferrie)	8 comments
Negative comment related to the Strategy's four proposed priorities	1 comment
Total	43 comments

As shown in Table 2, the majority of feedback received indicated general support for the draft Strategy and its priorities, with most comments and suggestions relating to the four priorities and strategic objectives/focus areas, as shown in Table 1.

The following two quotes are indicative of this sentiment:

All of the 4 key priorities are important. It was hard to rank them as each is critical. I applaud the council for engaging in this process.
-Business owner, Ashburton

These are appropriate priorities to support and grow the economic success of Boroondara. It is also vital that there is a clear plan and vision so businesses, existing and new, can work towards the same goals.
-Traders' association

The negative comment about the Strategy stated that none of the priorities are of importance to ratepayers in Boroondara and made reference to rates being too high and their concerns about the presence of graffiti.

Just under half of the comments and suggestions related to 'Thriving and Engaging Activity Centres and Shopping Precincts (21 respondents).' In some instances, feedback provided by respondents covered a number of areas, including the importance of providing ongoing maintenance, enhancements and activations (9 respondents); a diverse range of services and products, as well as areas where people can meet (3 respondents); more green spaces (2 respondents); and more

outdoor dining areas (2 respondents) to facilitate increased vibrancy and visitation. Increased support to, as well as activation and promotion of the Union Road, Surrey Hills shopping precinct was also suggested (4 respondents).

To have an engaging precinct, we need diversity. The shopping strips need to have something that lures people to the space, not just food outlets. It also needs more cultural areas where people can meet.

-Resident, Mont Albert

'A Desirable Destination for Visitors' was another topic raised by approximately one-third of respondents (14 respondents). Several suggestions were put forward within this topic, including opportunities to better leverage Boroondara's parks, walking trails, history, heritage character and shopping precincts to attract visitors (5 respondents) and improve how public spaces, including parks as well as carparks are utilised for markets and community events (3 respondents).

A Desirable Destination for Visitors is key to making the other 3 priorities successful. Boroondara's destinations have so much to offer tourists whether they live in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia or overseas. The Yarra walks, our heritage streets and neighbourhoods, our parks, shopping strips, restaurants.

-Resident, Camberwell

By creating a sustainable, exciting shopping/event/arts destination people will come and businesses will be supported.

-Business owner, Surrey Hills

Another topic raised was the importance of streets which are pedestrian friendly, and well serviced by walking, cycling and public transport routes, in order to create and maintain thriving precincts which are desirable to visitors (7 respondents).

Dedicated, safe and connected active transport infrastructure - is critical to attracting visitors and locals to activity areas - as are pedestrian only/priority shopping areas and high quality landscapes.

-Resident, Canterbury

Traffic congestion, the perceived lack of car parking, including restrictions as well as the 40km/h speed limits zones were raised as impediments to a thriving local economy with a strong visitor base (4 respondents).

Creating an enabling environment for 'A Productive and Supported Business Community' was also a key issue (7 respondents). Within this, feedback from respondents raised a number of points, including Council's role in attracting and supporting local businesses (4 respondents) and assisting the growing number of employees working from home (3 respondents), including those who face barriers to employment (2 respondents).

Supporting local businesses is the most important element to ensure a vibrant and successful community.

-Resident, Camberwell

Another key topic was the importance of 'An Environmentally Sustainable and Circular Economy' (6 respondents).

A base in sustainability is the most important area to focus on. People will always find a way to make their business run but might not always prioritise the planet and people over profit.

-Resident, Hawthorn East

Appendix 1: Council's response to feedback on the draft Strategy

The following is a summary of feedback received via Council's Engage platform and direct email during the consultation period. The feedback is themed according to the four priorities of the Strategy.

Thriving Shopping Precincts

Just under half of the comments and suggestions related to 'Thriving Shopping Precincts (21 respondents).' Feedback on this topic included the importance of the following in facilitating increased vibrancy and visitation, with some respondents noting one or more of the following:

- Provide ongoing maintenance, enhancements and activations (9 respondents)

Council's response

In recognition of the important role shopping centres play in our community, Council invests in, as well as supports their maintenance, development, enhancement, activation and promotion through the development and implementation of a range of plans and strategies as well as diverse support services spanning all Council directorates. This includes but is not limited to the following:

- Oversight and administration of eight special rate and charge schemes in eight key shopping centres which facilitate marketing and business development
- Development of the Maling Road Place Plan, the draft Glenferrie Place Plan and the draft Camberwell Junction Structure and Place Plan to create and improve public spaces for people to stay, play and belong
- Development of Structure Plans to guide the development of specific commercial areas and networks
- Development and implementation of Shopping Centre Improvement Plans in specific shopping precincts
- Proactive maintenance including cleaning.

In addition, Council undertakes the following:

- Liaises with, and provides support to, traders' associations to optimise business development and marketing in key shopping precincts, and assist applications for permits and grants to deliver events and other activities.
- Provides advice and support to trader groups to incorporate (leading to the creation of new traders' associations)

- Delivers the annual City-wide Christmas decorations in Boroondara program.
- Provides a range of grants to fund the delivery of events and festivals
- Promotes the 53 shopping precincts within Boroondara on Council's website
- Investigates and delivers initiatives to activate vacant commercial properties in shopping precincts, such as the Bare to Beautiful vacant shopfront and Street Sounds music programs.

Strategic objectives, focus areas and actions

The following strategic objectives and focus areas, as well as actions within the draft Strategy indicate the importance Council places on this topic:

Priority 1: Thriving shopping precincts

Strategic objective 1:

Activate and enhance activity centres and shopping precincts across Boroondara to support diversity of uses and meet the needs of residents, businesses, workers and visitors.

Focus areas for action:

- Create a unique 'Sense of Place'
- Encourage diverse retail, hospitality and personal service sectors
- Support and enable traders' associations to activate and enhance shopping precincts
- Facilitate investment in the maintenance, renewal and further development of shopping precincts to support resident liveability.

Relevant actions within:

- BCP Theme 1: Community, Services and Facilities
 - BCP Theme 2: Parks and Gardens
 - BCP Theme 6: Local Economy
 - BCP Theme 7: Leadership and Governance.
- Diverse range of services and products, as well as areas where people can meet (3 respondents)

Council's response

The Maling Road Place Plan, the draft Glenferrie Place Plan and the draft Camberwell Junction Structure and Place Plan include a focus on facilitating increased retail diversity to enhance vibrancy and attract increased visitation, as well as creating memorable places and spaces for people to meet and recreate.

The last round of community engagement in relation to the draft Glenferrie Place Plan took place in March/April 2023 for the purposes of Council gaining: (a) feedback on the need to relocate carparking from the street to a nearby location and (b) an understanding on community preferences for how this relocation should be undertaken. This draft Plan will undergo a final round of updates to reflect community feedback and Council adoption prior to its adoption in the second half of 2023.

To date, two rounds of community consultation have shaped the draft Camberwell Junction Structure and Place Plan's strategies and objectives as well as recommended initiatives and actions. This draft Plan is currently being finalised and is expected to be shared with the community for feedback and direction in the second half of 2023.

In partnership with relevant external stakeholders such as Rotary, Council also supports and promotes Boroondara's markets – Camberwell Sunday Market, Hawthorn Craft Market, Camberwell Fresh Food Market and Boroondara Farmers Market - which provide a diverse range of products and services to the local community.

Council also undertakes a range of activities to showcase and promote the diverse range of products and services offered by businesses in Boroondara, including through the delivery of the:

- Boroondara Love Local Life website/directory which lists the diverse range of products and services provided by local businesses
- Boroondara Life social media channels
- Boroondara Business e-newsletter.

A range of Council grants, both one off and recurrent, are provided to traders' associations and other community organisations, including Neighbourhood Houses to fund the delivery of events and festivals and other initiatives which facilitate social connections.

Strategic objectives, focus areas and actions

The following strategic objectives and focus areas, as well as actions within the draft Strategy indicate the importance Council places on this topic:

Priority 1: Thriving shopping precincts

Strategic objective 1:

Activate and enhance activity centres and shopping precincts across Boroondara to support diversity of uses and meet the needs of residents, businesses, workers and visitors

Focus areas for action:

- Encourage diverse retail, hospitality and personal service sectors.

Priority 2: A supported business community

Strategic objective 2:

Promote business growth and investment in Boroondara that capitalises on existing industry specialisations and achieves successful economic and employment outcomes.

Focus areas for action:

- Encourage business investment and attraction
- Facilitate the development of a diverse business mix in Boroondara through supporting existing businesses and attracting new ones to the municipality.

Relevant actions within:

- BCP Theme 1: Community, Services and Facilities
- BCP Theme 2: Parks and Gardens
- BCP Theme 6: Local Economy

- More green spaces (2 respondents)

Council's response

The Maling Road Place Plan and the draft Glenferrie Place Plan include a focus on planting new street trees and landscaping to improve the overall amenity of the street, as well as provide additional shade. The draft Camberwell Junction Structure and Place Plan includes a focus on investing in the environment and landscaping to create a green and inviting precinct that will attract people to live and work.

The last round of community engagement in relation to the draft Glenferrie Place Plan took place in March/April 2023 for the purposes of Council gaining: (a) feedback on the need to relocate carparking from the street to a nearby location and (b) an understanding on community preferences for how this relocation should be undertaken. This draft Plan will undergo a final round of updates to reflect community feedback and Council adoption prior to its adoption in the second half of 2023.

To date, two rounds of community consultation have shaped the draft Camberwell Junction Structure and Place Plan's strategies and objectives as well as recommended initiatives and actions. This draft Plan is currently being finalised and is expected to be shared with the community for feedback and direction in the second half of 2023.

Council has recently undertaken several projects to add greenery into our shopping precincts, such as at Highfield Road/ Hunter Road shops in Camberwell and at Yerrin St/Whitehorse Road in Balwyn. We will continue to create more spaces for trees and gardens where we can in our shopping areas. This includes an additional six trees along Union Road, Surrey Hills as part of upgrades to the Surrey Hills Shopping Centre which commenced mid 2023.

Council is working towards increasing the number of street trees from 66,000 up to 80,000 by 2030 to grow our urban forest. We are also working on developing an Urban Greening Strategy which will be likely available for community consultation mid 2023.

When undertaking shopping centre improvement works, Council endeavours to increase greenery (including trees and/or garden beds). Site conditions, including built form, as well as the need to provide for car and pedestrian access influence how much greenery can be installed.

One of the five key themes of Council's Climate Action Plan, which aims for Council to be net carbon neutral by 2022 and for Boroondara to be net carbon neutral by 2035, is biodiversity and trees. Among other things, the Climate Action Plan gives significant consideration to how we can protect our existing canopy cover and improve on current levels. Relevant actions within BCP Theme 6: Local Economy.

- More outdoor dining areas (2 respondents)

Council's response

The Maling Road Place Plan, the draft Glenferrie Place Plan and the draft Camberwell Junction Structure and Place Plan include a focus on facilitating more and improved outdoor dining opportunities.

Council's recent adoption of the Outdoor Trading Policy and Parklet Guidelines will also assist to facilitate further outdoor dining spaces in Boroondara.

Strategic objectives, focus areas and actions

The following strategic objectives and focus areas, as well as actions within the draft Strategy indicate the importance Council places on this topic:

Priority 1: Thriving shopping precincts

Strategic objective 1:

Activate and enhance activity centres and shopping precincts across Boroondara to support diversity of uses and meet the needs of residents, businesses, workers and visitors.

Focus areas for action:

- Create a unique 'Sense of Place'
- Activity centres and shopping precincts are activated and lively destinations.

Priority 4: A desirable destination for visitors

Strategic objective 4:

Support the growth of the visitor economy by attracting non-local (i.e., Melbourne residents from outside Boroondara), regional and interstate visitors and increasing visitor spend.

Focus areas for action:

- Enhance visitor amenity, infrastructure and services
- Enhance the visitor experience and provide opportunities to generate increased visitor spend.

Relevant actions within BCP Theme 6: Local Economy.

- Increased support to, as well as activation and promotion of the Union Road, Surrey Hills shopping precinct (4 respondents)

Council's response

In the lead-up to, as well as during the works to remove the level crossing in Surrey Hills, Council offered a range of supports to the traders located in Union Road, Surrey Hills. This included:

- Providing advice and support to apply for Council grants, as well as information about other available grants
- Facilitating the development of the Union Road Surrey Hills Traders' Association, as well as providing ongoing support to the president and the committee
- Providing information and support to traders impacted by the works, including weekly to fortnightly visits (from February 2023) to check-in regarding any support they might need and to assist with any issues they are experiencing (where Council can influence)
- Advocating to the Level Crossing Removal Project (LXRP) authority (state government) on behalf of the traders, including regularly meeting with LXRP representatives to pass on feedback and requests.

As part of Council's regular Shopping Centre Improvement Program (SCIP) works, upgrades to the Surrey Hills Shopping Centre commenced from mid-2023 (when the LXRP's major works were completed and access was available). Community members were initially informed and consulted about the upgrades in 2019, however works were put on hold due to the planned level crossing removal works. The upgrades aim to improve the Centre's appearance and include refreshing the footpaths, garden beds, and forecourt of the Surrey Hills Neighbourhood Centre, creating a more pedestrian-friendly environment. We are also planting six new trees and installing furniture along Union Road.

Strategic objectives, focus areas and actions

The following strategic objectives and focus areas, as well as actions within the draft Strategy indicate the importance Council places on this topic:

Priority 1: Thriving shopping precincts

Strategic objective 1:

Activate and enhance activity centres and shopping precincts across Boroondara to support diversity of uses and meet the needs of residents, businesses, workers and visitors.

Focus areas for action:

- Create a unique 'Sense of Place'
- Encourage diverse retail, hospitality and personal service sectors
- Support and enable traders' associations to activate and enhance shopping precincts
- Facilitate investment in the maintenance, renewal and further development of shopping precincts to support resident liveability.

Priority 2: A supported business community

Strategic objective 2:

Promote business growth and investment in Boroondara that capitalises on existing industry specialisations and achieves successful economic and employment outcomes.

Focus areas for action:

- Promote business recovery and resilience

Relevant actions within BCP Theme 6: Local Economy.

A Desirable Destination for Visitors

'A Desirable Destination for Visitors' was another topic raised by approximately one-third of respondents (14). Several suggestions were put forward within this theme, with some respondents providing feedback on a range of areas, as outlined below.

- Opportunities to better leverage Boroondara's parks, walking trails, history, heritage character and shopping precincts to attract visitors (5 respondents)

Council's response

Council has a number of strategies and plans in place and undertakes a range of activities to highlight and showcase its unique assets and features, including its parks, walking trails, heritage character and shopping precincts.

The Maling Road Place Plan, the draft Glenferrie Place Plan and draft Camberwell Place Vision include a focus on promoting and showcasing Boroondara's well known and loved shopping precincts, as well as preserving and enhancing the heritage features within each one to reinforce the existing sense of place, history and community.

Council supports Boroondara's six historical societies, many of which organise events, displays and talks which showcase and promote local history.

Boroondara Open House Melbourne provides residents and visitors with the opportunity to visit Boroondara's diverse range of iconic and historical buildings, including the Hawthorn Arts Centre, Kew Court House, local churches, Hawthorn former tram depot and Villa Alba Museum.

Council offers a myriad of resources on its website for those interested in Boroondara's history, local events, along with 26 parks and gardens, including:

- Guides to help residents learn about the history of their house, family and local area
- Information on local parks and walking trails, including those of historical significance, some of which are further promoted on external websites
- A listing/directory, promoting events, festivals, exhibitions, programs and other initiatives delivered by Council, residents and community organisations.

Strategic objectives, focus areas and actions

The following strategic objectives and focus areas, as well as actions within the draft Strategy indicate the importance Council places on this topic:

Priority 4: A desirable destination for visitors

Strategic objective 4:

Support the growth of the visitor economy by attracting non-local (i.e., Melbourne residents from outside Boroondara), regional and interstate visitors and increasing visitor spend.

Focus areas for action:

- Enhance visitor amenity, infrastructure and services
- Enhance the visitor experience and provide opportunities to generate increased visitor spend.
- Support activation of key tourism assets
- Leverage and enhance the City's assets to drive visitation.
- Enhance the marketing and promotion of Boroondara as a visitor destination
- Deliver initiatives that position Boroondara as a desirable visitor destination.

Relevant actions within:

- BCP Theme 1: Community, Services and Facilities
- BCP Theme 2: Parks and Green Spaces
- BCP Theme 5: Moving Around
- BCP Theme 6: Local Economy

Feedback on this topic will also inform the development of future Council departments' business plan actions beyond FY 2023/24 and will be subject to Council's annual budget processes.

- Improve how public spaces, including parks as well as carparks are utilised for markets and community events (3 respondents)

Council's response

Council's Placemaking Framework outlines our approach to improving public spaces and how we can enhance the utilisation of Boroondara's key activity centres and shopping precincts.

The Maling Road Place Plan, draft Glenferrie Place Plan and draft Camberwell Junction Structure and Place Plan outline how Council, often in partnership with other stakeholders, *will re-imagine and activate spaces to create vibrant, memorable and social places and precincts where people feel a sense of belonging*. This has been evident through a range of activations through

Glenferrie and Maling Roads, some of which have been funded by Council, including the annual AutoClassico car show and Kristkindl events, and other pop-up initiatives such as decals on the pavement.

By providing funding and a range of in-kind supports, Council also facilitates the delivery of a range of activations delivered by traders' associations in public spaces, including seasonal events such as Halloween and Easter Egg hunts as well as the Surrey Hills Music Festival, Ashburton Festival and Glenferrie Festival.

Council's regular Shopping Centre Improvement Works Program outlines Council's approach to improving shopping centres in Boroondara, including how the assets within centres are utilised.

Council also utilises public land and carpark spaces to deliver a number of regular initiatives in partnership with external stakeholders, such as the Boroondara's Farmers Market and the Camberwell Sunday Market.

Council's Street Sounds program which involves performers and roving musicians performing across Boroondara's public spaces to create a sense of vibrancy and attract visitation is also another example of how Council uses public spaces.

When Council creates a new public space, consideration is given during the planning stage to how it can be utilised for events and other activations.

Feedback on this topic will also inform the development of future Council departments' business plan actions beyond FY 2023/24 and will be subject to Council's annual budget processes.

Strategic objectives, focus areas and actions

The following strategic objectives and focus areas, as well as actions within the draft Strategy indicate the importance Council places on this topic:

Priority 4: A desirable destination for visitors

Strategic objective 4:

Support the growth of the visitor economy by attracting non-local (i.e., Melbourne residents from outside Boroondara), regional and interstate visitors and increasing visitor spend.

Focus areas for action:

- Enhance visitor amenity, infrastructure and services
- Enhance the visitor experience and provide opportunities to generate increased visitor spend.
- Support activation of key tourism assets
- Leverage and enhance the City's assets to drive visitation.

- Enhance the marketing and promotion of Boroondara as a visitor destination
- Deliver initiatives that position Boroondara as a desirable visitor destination.

Relevant actions within:

- BCP Theme 1: Community, Services and Facilities
- BCP Theme 5: Moving Around
- BCP Theme 6: Local Economy

A number of respondents raised the impact of the following in relation to 'Thriving Shopping Precincts' and 'A Desirable Destination for Visitors':

- Importance of streets which are pedestrian friendly and well serviced by a range of transport modes, including walking, cycling and public transport routes (6 respondents)

Council's response

The Maling Place Plan, the draft Glenferrie Road Place Plan as well as the draft Camberwell Junction Structure and Place Plan outline actions planned by Council to improve the accessibility of Maling, Glenferrie and Burke Roads, including making them more inviting to pedestrians and cyclists and advocating to state government to improve public transport. For instance, one of the key projects in the Maling Road Place Plan includes improvements to the walkability and amenity of the street with generous footpaths and public spaces, safe crossings, places to sit and greenery which shades the street, as well as optimising the precinct's accessibility to visitors of all ages and modes of travel including walking, cycling, car and public transport.

The Boroondara Bicycle Strategy sets out the framework to improve bicycle infrastructure and increase mode share in the City of Boroondara and includes a series of initiatives and actions to provide better active transport links to shopping precincts, including provision of new and upgraded off-road paths, on-road cycling infrastructure and improved wayfinding.

Strategic objectives, focus areas and actions

The following strategic objectives and focus areas, as well as actions within the draft Strategy indicate the importance Council places on this topic:

Priority 1: Thriving shopping precincts

Strategic objective 1:

Activate and enhance activity centres and shopping precincts across Boroondara to support diversity of uses and meet the needs of residents, businesses, workers and visitors.

Focus area:

- Facilitate investment in the maintenance, renewal and further development of shopping precincts to support resident liveability.

Relevant actions within:

- BCP Theme 5: Moving Around
 - BCP Theme 6: Local Economy.
- The perceived lack of car parking, including restrictions as well as the 40km/h speed limits zones were raised as impediments to a thriving local economy with a strong visitor base (4 respondents)

Council's response

The Camberwell Junction Shopping Precinct, one of many shopping centres in Boroondara, is currently served by a significant parking supply with a mix of short-term (1 hour) and medium to long-term parking spaces (predominantly 2 hours). One hour parking spaces are generally located along arterial roads with two hour or longer-term parking available in side streets and off-street car parks.

The one hour parking restrictions, typically on Burke Road, Riversdale Road, Camberwell Road and in a section of Prospect Hill Road and Railway Parade are subject to a fee.

The fee with the one hour time restriction aims to ensure that these prime, convenient spaces would be available for the benefit of as many visitors/shoppers as possible throughout the day.

These spaces are highly utilised with a good level of turnover providing opportunities for shoppers/visitors to access these prime spaces.

Compliance with the one hour restrictions is also good with past studies showing that 80% of all shoppers/visitors stayed for 45 minutes or less.

Shoppers and visitors parking for longer durations are typically utilising the two hour off-street parking areas on either side of Burke Road.

In summary, the paid parking in any of the shopping precincts aims to encourage turnover of prime spaces to improve parking availability for the benefit of shoppers/visitors. The spaces are well used and the ticket machines offer a range of payment options. There are no intentions to remove the paid parking at this stage in time.

Consistent with its Road Safety Strategy, Council supports lower speed limits in high pedestrian activity areas such as shopping strips on main roads and at schools and has several applications with the Department of Transport & Planning (DTP) seeking approval for lower speed limits in several shopping precincts, including Whitehorse Road at the Deepdene Shopping Centre. Through Council advocacy, a number of strip shopping centres in Boroondara have been reduced to time based or permanent 40km/h speed limits. This includes Whitehorse Road in Balwyn, all three legs of Camberwell Junction (Burke Road, Camberwell Road, Riversdale Road), Auburn Road in Auburn Village, Glenferrie Road in Hawthorn, High Street in Kew, Toorak Road in Burwood Village and High Street in Ashburton. Lower speed limits at 40km/h are also in the final stages of being installed in Doncaster Road at Greythorn Shopping Centre and Toorak Road in Hartwell.

Reduced speed limits along high pedestrian activity areas such as strip shopping centres are aimed to improve the level of safety for all road users, especially vulnerable users including pedestrians and cyclists. This is also welcomed by local businesses and traders where they continue to provide support and advocate Council and the State Government for reduced speed limits along strip shopping centres.

The last round of community engagement in relation to the draft Glenferrie Place Plan took place in March/April 2023 for the purposes of Council gaining: (a) feedback on the need to relocate carparking from the street to a nearby location and (b) an understanding on community preferences for how this relocation should be undertaken. This draft Plan will undergo a final round of updates to reflect community feedback and Council adoption prior to its adoption in the second half of 2023.

Strategic objectives, focus areas and actions

The following strategic objectives and focus areas, as well as actions within the draft Strategy indicate the importance Council places on this topic:

Priority 1: Thriving shopping precincts

Strategic objective 1:

Activate and enhance activity centres and shopping precincts across Boroondara to support diversity of uses and meet the needs of residents, businesses, workers and visitors.

Focus area:

- Facilitate investment in the maintenance, renewal, and further development of shopping precincts to support resident liveability.

Relevant actions within BCP Theme 5: Moving Around.

A Supported Business Community

'A Supported Business Community' was another key topic (7 respondents). Respondents made one or several suggestions, as outlined below.

- Council's role in attracting and supporting local businesses (4 respondents)
- Assistance to the growing number of employees working from home (3 respondents)

Council's response

Council provides a range of programs and services to attract and support local businesses, including:

- Advice and support to businesses through the Boroondara Business Network, including training workshops and events, networking opportunities and mentoring services,
- Programs to support the transition to a circular economy and become more environmental, sustainable such as the Go Full Circle and Plastic Free programs,
- Oversight and administration of eight special rate and charge schemes in eight key shopping centres which facilitate marketing and business development,
- Resources and information, including a regular business e-newsletter and a dedicated Business Hub on Council's website with information on a range of supports and resources,
- Love Local Life website and directory (consumer and business subscriber base)
- Boroondara Life Facebook and Instagram channels to showcase and promote local businesses and visitor attractions,
- Advocacy to local, regional and state bodies, including government,
- Provision of economic data and analysis on Council's website about Boroondara's local economy, including labour force trends and key business industries
- Initiatives to encourage local residents and businesses to support and buy local, including buy local campaigns,
- Business Support Service to provide advice and guidance on setting up a business, including information on Council permits,
- Initiatives to activate vacant shopfronts such as the Bare to Beautiful program.

Throughout September - October 2022, Council undertook a consultation on a dedicated coworking space / shared office space to understand the community's interest in and support for the concept, and to help us investigate the viability of providing a dedicated community coworking space in the future.

Following a recent review of Council's role in facilitating training and job outcomes, including for those facing barriers, Council is currently investigating opportunities to:

- Improve the capability and motivation of local employers to provide employment opportunities for people with a disability,
- Support the local social enterprise sector,
- Increase Council spend with local businesses and social enterprises.

In the second half of 2023, Council will undertake a public consultation on its new Disability and Access Inclusion Plan which will include actions related to improving employment opportunities for people with a disability and promoting the benefits of doing so.

Strategic objectives, focus areas and actions

The following strategic objectives and focus areas, as well as actions within the draft Strategy indicate the importance Council places on this topic:

Priority 2: A supportive business community

Strategic objective 2:

Promote business growth and investment in Boroondara that capitalises on existing industry specialisations and achieves successful economic and employment outcomes.

Focus areas for action:

- Create a conducive environment for 'Small' and 'Home-Based' businesses
- Encourage business investment and attraction
- Promote business recovery and resilience
- Assist to facilitate employment and training outcomes.

Relevant actions within:

- BCP Theme 1: Community, Services and Facilities
- BCP Theme 6: Local Economy.

Feedback on this topic will also inform the development of future Council departments' business plan actions beyond FY 2023/24 and will be subject to Council's annual budget processes.

Sustainability and Circular Economy

The importance of promoting environmental sustainability and the circular economy was another key topic (6 respondents).

Council's response

Council's commitment to environmental sustainability is outlined in the Climate Action Plan, which aims for Council to be net carbon neutral by 2022 and for Boroondara to be net carbon neutral by 2035. The Climate Action Plan which has five key themes (energy efficiency and renewable energy, biodiversity and trees, water and waterways, transport and circular economy) aims to achieve sustainable economic growth in Boroondara, in line with federal and state objectives, which will have implications for local economic development practices and future investments.

Council delivers a range of initiatives to support local businesses to become more sustainable and transition to a circular economy. This includes the Go Full Circle training program to support local businesses to leverage the circular economy to drive stronger financial, environmental and social outcomes for their business and the Plastic Free program to support businesses to reduce and eliminate single use plastics in their operations.

Council also provides sustainability information and resources through its website and via workshops and webinars.

Priority 3: A sustainable, circular and 'smart' local economy

Strategic objective 3:

Encourage a flourishing local economy that embraces innovative models of business and supplies sustainable goods and services to our community.

Focus area for action:

- Support the development of a sustainable and circular 'green economy'

Relevant actions within BCP Theme 3: The Environment.

Boroondara Economic Development Strategy Context Report

This document contains:

- A list of relevant local, state, federal and international policies, strategies and frameworks which guide and inform the Boroondara Economic Development Strategy
- Background information on Boroondara's:
 - Economy, including economic profile, and economic specialisations, as well as profiles on business and industry, visitor economy and employment
 - Demographic profile, including key population, housing and dwelling, age and socio-economic indicators.

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Relevant Policy Documents

Local context

Document	Summary
Arts Plan (2015-2018)	<p>The Boroondara Arts Plan was developed with the vision “<i>Boroondara is the home for vibrant and engaging arts experiences for all residents in order to enrich the lives of the Boroondara community.</i>”</p> <p>This is supported through the following themes, which will be considered to support future economic development objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation: the development and presentation of Council’s curated arts programs in its cultural venues, outdoor spaces and non-traditional venues • Participation and accessibility: support for the community to achieve its arts participation goals, whether through Council-run activities or self-organisation • Venue management: the effective management of Council’s cultural facilities • Support and development: community cultural development and education programs, as well as support for artists in the Boroondara community • Communication: promoting Council’s venues and programs and driving the marketing and promotions planning and delivery to the Boroondara community • Advocacy: effective and relevant support for local creative industries.
Climate Action Plan (2021)	<p>This enables Council to respond to the threat climate change poses to the environment, the health and wellbeing of the community and to the quality of life of current and future generations. The aims of the Plan are for Council to be net carbon neutral by 2022 and for Boroondara to be net carbon neutral by 2035. The actions to achieve these targets – which will be supported by the recommendations of this report – are summarised in the Plan under the following five key themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy efficiency and renewable energy • Biodiversity and trees • Water and waterways • Transport • Circular economy (waste).

Document	Summary
Placemaking Framework (2019)	<p>This document outlines the approach to improving public spaces. This will influence the future utilisation of Boroondara's key activity centres and shopping precincts, which are critical to economic activity and job creation. The Framework defines placemaking as <i>"the re-imagining and activation of spaces to create vibrant, memorable and social places and precincts where people feel a sense of belonging"</i>. The principles to guide placemaking, listed below, will guide future investment in key precincts and economic development recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to the community • Collaborate with the community and key stakeholders • Create a culture of possibilities • Celebrate what makes a place unique • Be future focussed • Start by doing.
Revitalising Glenferrie: Glenferrie Road Place Plan (2021) (draft)	<p>The draft Glenferrie Road Place Plan (another key project borne out of the placemaking framework), sets out the vision for the future of the Glenferrie precinct, including cultural, economic and public realm initiatives, to ensure it continues to thrive in the future and delivered positive economic outcomes.</p> <p>The guiding principles underlying the future of this precinct are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People-focussed streets • Lively local economy • Green at heart • Vibrant public spaces • Sustainable access • Distinctive Glenferrie.

Document	Summary
Revitalising Maling Road: Maling Road Place Plan (2020)	<p>The Maling Road Place Plan (another key project resulting out of the placemaking framework) will provide a range of public realm, economic, cultural and transport initiatives to revitalise the precinct's economy and community. The following principles support the key projects to activate this precinct, which will inform future economic development recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance and maintain the heritage character to reinforce the existing sense of place, history and community • Foster business diversity and extended trading hours catering to a wider range of visitors at different times • Revitalise theatre place and underutilised laneways as playful and vibrant public spaces that will attract visitors and host community events • Improve the walkability and amenity of the street with generous footpaths and public spaces, safe crossings, places to sit and greenery which shades the street • Optimise the precinct's accessibility to visitors of all ages and modes of travel including walking, cycling, car and public transport.
Camberwell Junction Structure and Place Plan	<p>The draft Camberwell Junction Structure and Place Plan (another key project resulting out of the placemaking framework) will guide key projects to revitalise the precinct, which will inform future economic development recommendations. The following key principles support key projects to activate the precinct:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting a robust and diverse economy • Expanding living opportunities • Designing a high-quality precinct • Creating spaces for people • Connecting Camberwell • Sustainability.
Shopping Centre Improvement Plan (2011)	<p>The Shopping Centre Improvement Plan was developed to provide a strategic approach to the improvements to shopping centres in Boroondara (a key social and economic asset), which will influence local consumption and economic activity in Boroondara. A plan for each shopping centre was prepared to outline any issues and opportunities for improvement, which were prioritised based on both the existing condition of the shopping centre (i.e., the existence or lack of basic elements), as well as the size of the shopping centre.</p>

Document	Summary
Add life to your years – Healthy Ageing in Boroondara (2019)	This is Council's plan for ensuring Boroondara is an age-friendly city which recognises and celebrates the integral role of older adults in the community, which includes a set of actions designed to improve age-friendliness in the City and will influence future infrastructure investment and service delivery (to be considered as part of the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy).
Children and Young People Action Plan (2021)	<p>This document provides strategic direction for Council to support the needs and aspirations of children, young people and their families who live, work and study in Boroondara.</p> <p>The vision of the Plan is to create <i>"a city where children and young people are valued, happy, healthy, safe and empowered to actively participate in our community"</i>. This will also influence future service provision and infrastructure funding, which is a key aspect of economic development.</p>
Disability Action Plan (2018-2022)	This plan aims to guide Council's actions to ensure people with a disability are able to participate in all aspects of community life. The goal is to <i>"enable people with a disability to fulfil their potential as equal citizens by improving access and reducing barriers to participation in social, built, economic and natural places, services and activities"</i> .
Multicultural Action Plan (2019-2023)	This outlines Council's commitment to supporting, promoting and celebrating the increasingly culturally diverse population in Boroondara. This will help inform economic development as eradicating barriers will increase social inclusion, improve employment access and enable business growth and development for all residents.
Boroondara Planning Scheme - Local policies	<p>Clauses 11 and 17 contain the most relevant local planning policies, including on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camberwell Junction Major Activity Centre • Hawthorn–Glenferrie Road Major Activity Centre • Kew Junction Major Activity Centre • Neighbourhood centres, local centres, commercial corridors • Out-of-centre use and development.
Boroondara Housing Strategy 2015	<p>The Boroondara Housing Strategy outlines current and future housing needs to the year 2031, based on demographic trends and existing capacity.</p> <p>The strategy addresses neighbourhood character and heritage protection, while enabling appropriate housing development within firm design guidelines.</p>

Document	Summary
Boroondara Neighbourhood Centres and Commercial Corridor Guidelines 2014	<p>The Neighbourhood Centres and Commercial Corridor Guidelines (2014) detail mandatory maximum building heights, mandatory street wall heights, and preferred minimum upper-storey building setbacks to protect character and guide appropriate development in our retail and commercial precincts.</p> <p>These guidelines have been translated into the Boroondara Planning Scheme through Design and Development Overlay 16, Design and Development Overlay 17 and Neighbourhood Centres and Commercial Corridors Urban Design Policy (Clause 22.06)-external site.</p>
Boroondara Open Space Strategy 2013	<p>The Boroondara Open Space Strategy describes the ways we manage our network of public open spaces. The strategy extends from 2013 to 2026 and contains suburb-by-suburb open space programs.</p> <p>It responds to the community's priorities, including biodiversity maintenance, protecting cultural heritage, and promoting health and wellbeing, while protecting open space for the future.</p>
Boroondara Planning Scheme - Regional policies	<p>Clauses 11 and 17 contain the relevant regional planning policies, which for Boroondara relate to Metropolitan Melbourne, and also the Inner South East Metro region.</p>
Boroondara Planning Scheme - State policies	<p>Clauses 11 and 17 contain the most relevant state planning policies, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clause 11.03 - Planning for Places • Clause 17.01 - Employment • Clause 17.02 - Commercial • Clause 17.03 - Industry • Clause 17.04 - Tourism. <p>The State government also sets the head clauses for the zone and overlay controls available to use in the Boroondara Planning Scheme, shaping the tools that Council can use to guide land use and development.</p>

Regional context

Document	Summary
Inner Metropolitan Melbourne Local Jobs Plan (2020)	<p>The Inner Metropolitan Melbourne Local Jobs Plan identifies the key priorities for the Inner Metropolitan Region of Melbourne, with a focus on creating employment opportunities, meeting local employer demand and better skilling local job seekers. The following local priorities for the partnership region were identified in the document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maximising the benefits of existing Australian and Victorian government programs to create pathways into growth industries • brokering opportunities for skill development and employment, across all sectors, particularly skills in demand and ensuring apprenticeship and traineeship positions are filled • maximising the extent to which local positions are filled by local job seekers, including through ensuring local jobseekers are skilled to meet the needs of employers • reducing the labour market disadvantage of Youth, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD), Mature Aged and Indigenous Australians in the region • strengthening existing micro businesses and supporting pathways to self-employment through the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS).
Metropolitan Partnerships – COVID-19 Recovery (2021)	<p>The 2020-21 Metropolitan Partnership Development Fund projects will assist Melbourne's suburbs to recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Funding of \$250,000 will be allocated to each of the six Metropolitan Partnerships for nominated projects.</p>
Inner Metropolitan Partnership Priorities (2017)	<p>The Inner Metropolitan Partnership is an advisory group to the Victorian Government, established with the aim of encouraging local communities to engage directly with government and advise on the region's priorities. The Partnership's vision for the region is to harness the opportunities growth provides in a way that supports a strong economy, a sustainable future and greater social inclusion. The following priority outcomes were provided to the Victorian Government in 2017:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rough sleeping and affordable housing: More support for those rough sleeping and increasing supply of affordable housing • Aboriginal children: Improve health and well-being, safety and educational outcomes for Aboriginal children • Innovation and creative economies: Retain and enhance places for local innovative and creative economies • Environment: Ensure environmental benefits and mitigating environmental impacts.

Document	Summary
Inner South East Metropolitan Land Use Framework Plan (2017-2050)	<p>The Inner South East Metropolitan Land Use Framework Plan is an extension of Plan Melbourne 2017-2050, specific to the Inner South East Region. The plan outlines strategic directions for six themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Productivity • Housing • Integrated transport • Liveability • Strong communities • Sustainability and resilience.
Inner South East Metropolitan Partnership Regional Framework (2020)	<p>The purpose of the Inner South East Partnership is to identify and align regional priorities in order to secure funding and drive collaborative action in the Inner South-East Metropolitan region. The four main objectives of the partnership, outlined in the framework are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable housing • Safe and reliable transport • Hubs attracting business and opportunities • A healthy environment with open spaces.
Inner South East Metropolitan Region: Five-year Plan for Jobs, Services and Infrastructure (2018-2023)	<p>The Inner South East Metropolitan Region Five-year Plan will assist all levels of government and the region's communities to work together to identify local challenges and opportunities and develop new approaches to enhance liveability and prosperity. The following priority outcomes were provided by the Partnership to the Victorian Government in 2017:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment and open space: Increase the network of accessible public open space, supporting inclusive, vibrant and healthy neighbourhoods • Economy, industry and jobs: Encourage local employment hubs that support strong, local economies, fostering collaboration, innovation and education for small businesses to enable people and businesses to work flexibly, close to home • Affordable and social housing: Deliver the right mix of social and affordable housing through mandatory inclusionary zoning in new developments, and explore options for community housing developments • Transport connectivity: Improve the connectivity of all transport modes to cover sustainable, low-cost travel across the region, including north-south coverage, reducing the car dependency leading to associated health, environmental and economic problems.

Document	Summary
Melbourne East Regional Plan (2020)	<p>The Melbourne East 2020 Regional Plan was developed for the purpose of managing economic development and population growth in Melbourne's Eastern Metropolitan Council areas. The six regional priorities to drive long term economic growth, as outlined in the plan, are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment attraction: communicate the Melbourne East value proposition as Australia's premier lifestyle and business destination • Accommodation: extend the availability of suitable and affordable accommodation to meeting growing demand • Precinct activation: promote targeted place-based investment attraction which leverages existing strengths of activity centres, knowledge, health, research and development precinct • Connectivity: promote soft and hard infrastructure that supports and sustains jobs of the future, along with the liveability and amenity of the region • Employability: encourage work placements, internships, graduate placement and an employer culture which supports employee wellbeing • Import replacement: enable targeted high value import replacement (e.g., professional services currently imported into significant business precincts).

State Government context

Document	Summary
Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) Strategic Plan (2019-2023)	<p>The DJSIR Strategic Plan is focused on growing Victoria's economy and ensuring it benefits all Victorians, with the aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create and maintain jobs • foster a competitive business environment • be a globally connected economy • build prosperous and liveable regions and precincts • grow vibrant, active and creative communities • support the transition to a sustainable economy • facilitate shared economic prosperity • foster a fair and inclusive society.
DJSIR Visitor Economy Recovery and Reform Plan (2021)	<p>This report was developed in response to COVID-19's significant negative economic impact on the Victorian visitor economy. The goal of the plan is for the industry to reach \$35 billion in annual visitor spend and generate 300,000 additional jobs by June 2024. The key themes identified in the plan as enablers of the visitor economy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Products and infrastructure • Industry strengthening • Destination marketing • Events • Strategic collaboration and planning • Data and insights.
Invest Victoria International Investment Strategy (2020)	<p>Invest Victoria is the Victorian Government investment attraction agency, aiming to foster long term economic prosperity by enabling business opportunities and job creation for Victoria. The International Investment Strategy aims to attract global companies from emerging and growth industries that are crucial to the state's economy, with a particular focus on investments delivering the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • facilitate energy transition to enable emissions reduction • enhance capability and capacity to deliver the major transport infrastructure agenda • introduce new waste management solutions • activate priority precincts and regions.

Document	Summary
Plan Melbourne (2017-2050)	<p>Plan Melbourne is a long-term plan to accommodate Melbourne's future growth in population and employment. The following outcomes to drive Melbourne as a competitive, liveable and sustainable city are relevant to the City of Boroondara:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Melbourne is a productive city that attracts investment, supports innovation and creates jobs • Melbourne provides housing choice close to jobs and services • Melbourne has an integrated transport system that connects people to jobs and services and goods to market • Melbourne is a distinctive and liveable city with quality design and amenity • Melbourne is a city of inclusive, vibrant and healthy neighbourhoods • Melbourne is a sustainable and resilient city. <p>Plan Melbourne nominates Camberwell Junction, Glenferrie-Hawthorn and Kew Junction as the City's Major Activity Centres.</p> <p>Plan Melbourne sets out to create a city of 20-minute neighbourhoods. The 20-minute neighbourhood concept is all about 'living locally' - giving people the ability to meet most of their everyday needs within a 20-minute walk, cycle or local public transport trip of their home.</p>
Recycling Victoria: A New Economy (2020)	<p>This is the Victorian Government's circular economy policy and 10-year action plan to deliver a cleaner, greener Victoria with less waste and pollution, better recycling, more jobs and a stronger economy. The following changes, which will influence future economic growth, are set to be implemented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • by 2030, a new recycling system will be standard for households across the state • by 2022–23, a container deposit scheme will be implemented so empty cans and bottles can be swapped for cash • \$100 million will be invested to strengthen Victoria's waste and recycling industry, aiming to grow the local industry, create local jobs and drive innovation and new technologies • the waste and recycling sector will be regulated as an essential service with a new waste and recycling Act and a waste authority, to put an end to illegal and unsafe storage and stockpiling of waste • single use plastics will be banned across Victoria by February 2023 • the landfill levy will double.

Document	Summary
Victorian Budget 2022/23 Budget Paper 2: Strategy and Outlook	<p>The Victorian Government's Strategy and Outlook paper for the 2022/23 budget outlines the economic and conditions and outlook for Victoria, nationally and globally and summarises The Victorian Government's budget position and outlook. The plan outlines state government initiatives for the 2022/23 financial year, relating to the following themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pandemic Repair Plan • Education • Jobs • Supporting stronger communities, and • Better connected communities.
Victorian Visitor Economy Masterplan Directions Paper (2022)	<p>The Victorian Government released a directions paper in 2022, providing a high-level summary of the vision, mission, and the strategic directions for Victoria's visitor economy to test with stakeholders and seek public feedback, prior to developing the final Visitor Economy Masterplan. The seven strategic directions for Victoria's visitor economy are listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw people to Melbourne by building on its unique experiences and liveability, supporting its role as a gateway • Position Victoria as Australia's premier destination of choice for wellness travel • Curate a diverse range of arts and culture experiences across Victoria to create an all-encompassing 'living gallery' • Be led by Victoria's first peoples' communities to support distinctive and authentic first people's experiences • Deliver unique food and drink experiences to showcase Victoria's quality produce and provenance, and • Build on Victoria's one-of-a-kind expertise in delivering events.
Victoria's Mental Health and Wellbeing Workforce Strategy (2021-2024)	<p>Victoria's Mental Health and Wellbeing Workforce Strategy was delivered in response to the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System. The strategy sets out a coordinated and strategic approach to deliver the diverse, skilled and multidisciplinary workforce require for Victoria's reformed mental health and wellbeing system and outlines four priority areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building workforce supply • Building workforce skills, knowledge and capabilities • Supporting the safety, wellbeing and retention of the mental health and wellbeing workforce, and • Building system enablers for excellence in workforce.

Document	Summary
Victorian Department of Education and Training Strategic Plan (2021-2025)	The Department of Education and Training's Strategic Plan outlines priorities and programs to support Victoria's economic and social recovery, and continue the progress of ambitious Education State reforms. A number of initiatives are underway or planned for the development of the education workforce and the improvement of early childhood, school and higher education delivery.
Victoria's Infrastructure Strategy (2021-2051)	<p>Infrastructure Victoria's 30 year Strategy aims to help Victoria address existing infrastructure pressures, emerge stronger from the COVID-19 pandemic and be prepared for the future, with goals to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for population change • Foster healthy, safe and inclusive communities • Reduce disadvantage • Enable workforce participation • Lift productivity • Drive Victoria's changing, globally integrated economy • Promote sustainable production and consumption • Protect and enhance natural environments • Advance climate change mitigation and adaptation, and • Build resilience to shocks.
Creative State Strategy (2025)	<p>Creative Victoria's, Creative State Strategy 2025 was developed with the vision of fostering <i>"a state where creative people ideas and enterprises thrive, and where everyone has equitable access to and benefits from a rich creative culture."</i> The following objectives are outlined to achieve this vision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More and better job opportunities and pathways • Innovative creative products and experiences • Innovative creative products and experiences • Industry stability and growth • Equitable access to the creative industries, and • New audiences and markets.

Document	Summary
Victorian Skills Authority Victorian Skills Plan for 2022 into 2023	<p>Victorian Skills Authority's Victorian Skills Plan for 2022 into 2023 provides a roadmap to ensure Victoria has a skilled workforce to perform the jobs of the future. The Plan provides an overview of the labour market to date, estimating Victoria will need an additional 373,000 workers across 13 key industries by 2025. The following State Government actions to address workforce shortages are outlined in the plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start the VET journey at school • Enable learners and workers to make informed skilling and career choices • Expand opportunities and approaches for students to put theory into practice during their course • Build foundation skills to enhance workforce participation • Bridge the gender gap • Build skills to support Victoria's clean economy intentions • Create innovative solutions to support future skills development • Align qualifications to new needs • Build the VET Workforce • Expand reskilling and upskilling opportunities through skill sets, and • Drive for higher skills and progression through education and training.

Federal Government context

Document	Summary
Australia 2030: Prosperity Through Innovation Strategy (2017)	<p>This document plans for the sort of society and economy all Australians can aspire to by 2030. The Plan is underpinned by the following five strategic policy imperatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education: respond to the changing nature of work by equipping all Australians with skills relevant to 2030 • Industry: ensure Australia's ongoing prosperity by stimulating high-growth firms and raising productivity • Government: become a catalyst for innovation and be recognised as a global leader in innovative service delivery • Research and development: improve research and development effectiveness by increasing translation and commercialisation of research • Culture and ambition: enhance the national culture of innovation by launching ambitious National Missions.
Australia's Long Term Emissions Reduction Strategy (2021)	<p>This outlines the Australian Government's plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 26%-28% below 2005 levels by 2030. The plan involves four key strategic directions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving down technology costs: accelerate the development of emerging technologies through The Technology Investment Roadmap • Enabling deployment at scale: building infrastructure, growing voluntary markets and providing finance and incentives • Seizing opportunities in new and traditional markets: Capitalise on the global shift to low emissions, while continuing to serve traditional markets • Fostering global collaboration: partnering and co-investing with other nations to accelerate innovation in low emissions technology and build resilience to climate impacts.
Australia's Tech Future (2018)	<p>This document aims for all Australians to experience an enhanced quality of life and share in the opportunities of a growing, globally competitive modern economy, enabled by technology. The four key areas outlined are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People: developing Australia's digital skills and leaving no one behind • Services: how government can better deliver digital services • Digital assets: building infrastructure and providing secure access to high-quality data • The enabling environment: maintaining our cyber security and reviewing our regulatory systems.

Document	Summary
Digital Transformation Strategy (2019)	The digital transformation strategy aims to deliver world leading digital services for the benefit for all Australians. The three strategic priorities to achieve this vision outlined in the document are a 'government that's easy to deal with', 'a government that's informed by you' and 'a government that's fit for the digital age'
Global Innovation Strategy (2016)	<p>This strategy presents an integrated and coordinated approach to advance Australia's international industry, science and research collaboration. The strategy will support economic and science diplomacy efforts to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • foster, improve and promote international industry-research collaboration and whole of government global engagement, entrepreneurship, innovation, science and research • build strong research and business connections within the Asia-Pacific region • leverage Australian Government investment in international programmes to help foster and support a dynamic Australian innovation system.
National Waste Policy and Action Plan (2019)	<p>This plan sets out targets and actions to guide investment and national efforts regarding waste management, recycling and resource recovery to 2030. This plan is underpinned by circular economy principles for waste and supports the implementation of better waste management plans by state and territory governments, local government, business and industry. National targets are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ban the export of waste plastic, paper, glass and tyres, commencing in the second half of 2020 • reduce total waste generated in Australia by 10% per person by 2030 • 80% average recovery rate from all waste streams by 2030 • significantly increase the use of recycled content by governments and industry • phase out problematic and unnecessary plastics by 2025 • halve the amount of organic waste sent to landfill by 2030 • make comprehensive, economy-wide and timely data publicly available to support better consumer, investment and policy decisions.

Document	Summary
Smart Cities Plan (2016)	<p>This sets out the Australian Government's vision for our cities, and our plan for maximising their potential. It includes three innovative pillars that will help provide the relevant data to assist in strategic planning and investments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart Investment • Smart Policy • Smart Technology.
Federal Government Budget 2022-23 Budget Paper 1: Strategy and Outlook	<p>The Federal Budget Strategy and Outlook 2022/23 outlines the national and global economic and fiscal outlook, as well as the following budget priorities for the 2022/23 period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building a stronger and more productive economy • Helping Australians with cost of living pressures • Responding the floods in Queensland and New South Wales • Strengthening our regions and critical infrastructure • Guaranteeing essential services, and • Protecting our interests in an uncertain world.
Australian Jobs and Skills Summit Issue Paper (2022)	<p>The Jobs and Skills Summit (the Summit) will bring together Australians, including unions, employers, civil society, and government, to discuss our shared economic challenges and propose both immediate and long-term solutions. The summit will cover five broad themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining full employment and growing productivity • Boosting job security and wages • Lifting participation and reducing barriers to employment • Delivering a high quality labour force through skills, training and migration, and • Maximising opportunities in the industries of the future. <p>This Issues Paper outlines the labour market challenges associated with these five themes.</p>

Document	Summary
National Reconstruction /Fund (2022)	<p>The National Reconstruction Fund 2022 will provide \$15 billion in finance for projects that diversify and transform Australia's industry and economy. The NRF aims to create more sustainable and high-value jobs for all Australians through targeted investments in the following priority areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • renewables and low emissions technologies • medical science • transport • value-add in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors • value-add in resources • defence capability • enabling capabilities. <p>Expected outcomes of the NRF include assisting Australian industry move up the value chain to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • become more productive • take advantage of opportunities in a net zero economy • address supply chain vulnerabilities.
Thrive 2030: The Re-imagined Visitor Economy Strategy (2022-2030)	<p>Thrive 2030 is a national strategy for Australia's visitor economy recovery and return to sustainable growth. The plan aims to boost the size of Australia's visitor economy to \$230 billion om 2030. The following policy priorities are outlined in the plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver success through comprehensive collaboration • Improve data and insights; • Grow a secure and resilient workforce • Embrace leading edge business strategies • Enhance visitor infrastructure • Build markets and attract visitors, and • Grow unique and high quality products.

International context

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were developed in 2015, forming a part of the UN's global development framework (which informs economic development). There are 17 SDGs intended to be achieved by 2030 and are each comprised of specific targets and indicators. These are listed below and have been considered in the development of the Boroondara Economic Development and Tourism Strategy.

1. **End poverty** in all its forms everywhere
2. **End hunger**, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
3. Promote **healthy lives** and promote well-being for all at all ages
4. Ensure inclusive and equitable **quality education** and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
5. Achieve **gender equality** and empower all women and girls
6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of **water and sanitation** for all
7. Ensure access to **affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy** for all
8. Promoted sustained, inclusive and **sustainable economic growth**, full and productive employment and decent work for all
9. Build resilient **infrastructure**, promote inclusive and sustainable **industrialisation**, and foster **innovation**
10. **Reduce income inequality** within and among countries
11. **Sustainable cities**: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
12. Ensure **sustainable consumption and production** patterns
13. Take urgent action to **combat climate change** and its impacts by regulating emissions and promoting developments in renewable energy
14. **Life below water**: Conserve and sustainably use oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
15. **Life on land**: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably managed forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

16. Promote **peaceful and inclusive societies** for sustainable development, provide access to **justice** for all and build effective, accountable and **inclusive institutions** at all levels
17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the **global partnership** for sustainable development.

City of Boroondara Profile (2021)

Note

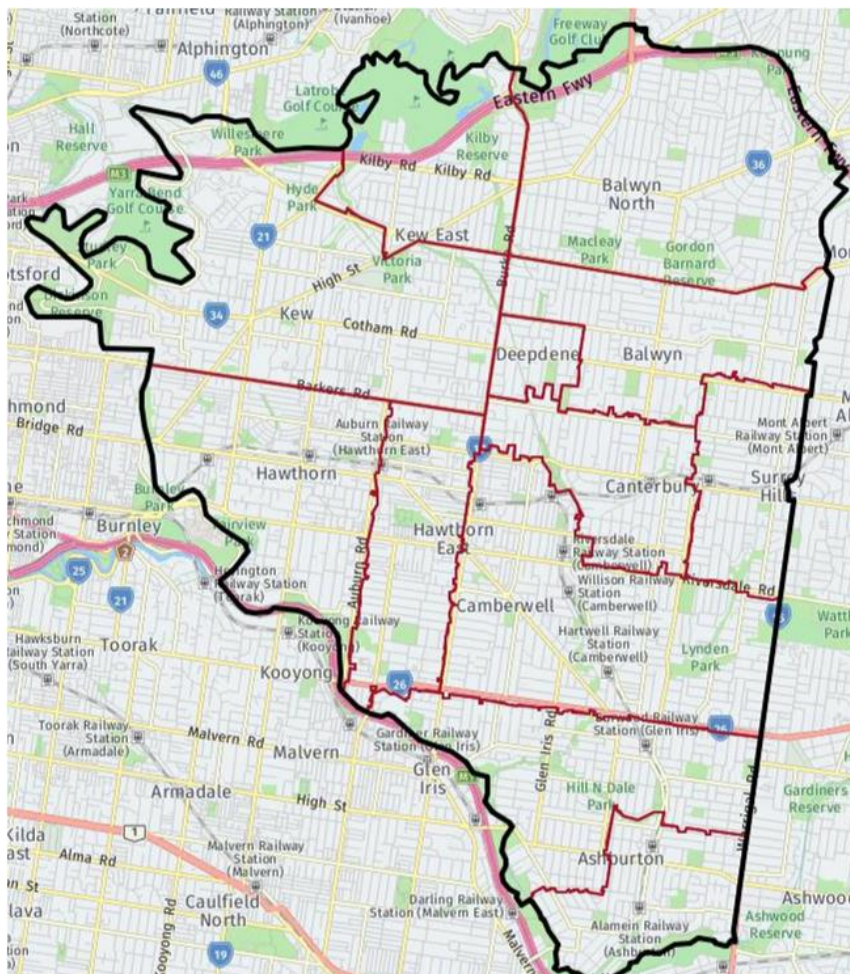
Some data included in this section has been compiled by Urban Enterprise from a combination of official sources of information including: REMPLAN, Economy ID, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Business Register and Tourism Research Australia as well as Australia's leading economic modellers National Economics (NIEIR). The data presented reflects the most up-to-date information at the time of publication, which may vary by release date depending on the source.

Our City

The City of Boroondara covers 60 square kilometres in Melbourne's inner east, close to the eastern edge of the CBD, across its 13 suburbs.

The City of Boroondara includes the suburbs of Ashburton, Balwyn, Balwyn North (part), Camberwell, Canterbury, Deepdene, Glen Iris (part), Hawthorn, Hawthorn East, Kew, Kew East, Mont Albert (part) and Surrey Hills (part).

Figure 2: Boroondara's suburbs



Source: Id Consulting, City of Boroondara Economy ID, 2022, accessed 20 March 2023

Balwyn North, Mont Albert and Surrey Hills are shared with the City of Whitehorse, Glen Iris is shared with the City of Stonnington.

It is a highly developed and affluent municipality, consisting of key infrastructure and services to support residents, as well as a rich history and heritage represented by historic landmarks, homes and parks. Boroondara's assets include green open spaces, shopping precincts, local markets and a well-served public transport

network (trains, buses and trams) that supports movements to and from the CBD, as well as nearby inner metropolitan suburbs.

The municipality is well-known for its educational services, particularly its large proportion of reputable private and public schools, making it one of the highest concentrated student areas in Victoria. This includes the main Swinburne University campus in Hawthorn, which is a key economic driver and community asset for Boroondara and promotes education, training and innovation outcomes.

Boroondara is, therefore, a highly desirable place to live, providing ample employment opportunities and lifestyle benefits including a diverse retail mix, a high-quality hospitality and entertainment offering, public open spaces, access to public transport and close proximity and connectivity to the CBD.

Our Precincts

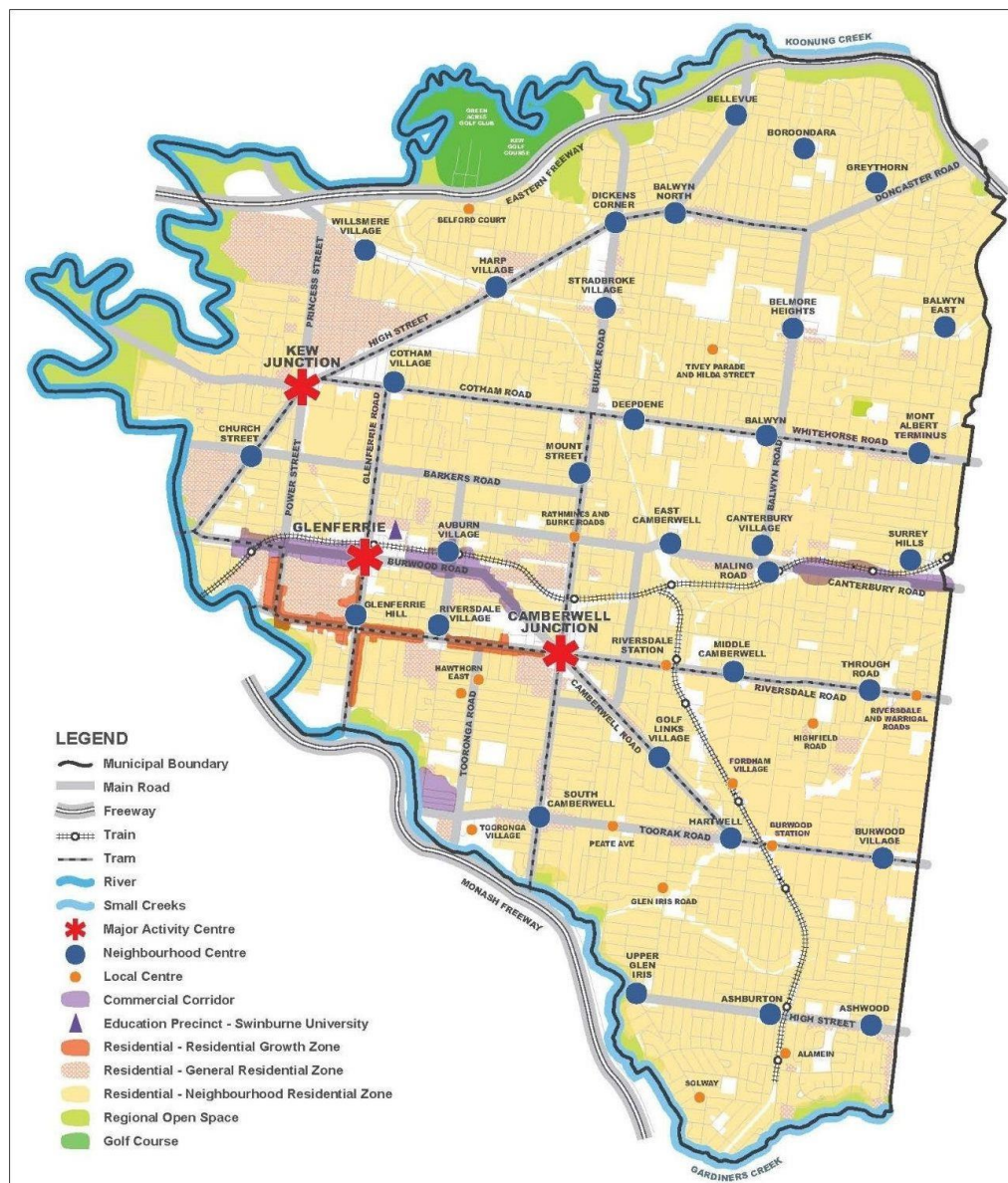
Economic and Employment Precincts

Boroondara is renowned for its established activity centres and shopping precincts. With 53 shopping centres in total, they service both residents and visitors, supporting local consumer spend and providing local employment opportunities, primarily through retail, hospitality, professional services businesses and commercial office spaces. As such, they provide an important social, economic, environmental and infrastructure role for the municipality.

The municipality also includes key commercial corridors, health and education precincts that deliver needed services to residents and support economic activity and local employment. A visual representation of the major activity and neighbourhood centres, employment precincts and other key assets for Boroondara are illustrated in the Figure 3, below which includes:

- major activity and neighbourhood centres at Camberwell Junction, Glenferrie Road Hawthorn and Kew Junction, which largely supports retail and hospitality businesses;
- the Swinburne University education precinct;
- significant commercial corridors – which provide an important social and economic role – in West Hawthorn, Burwood Road, Canterbury Road and Tooronga; and
- key public transport nodes and road transport infrastructure.

Figure 3 Boroondara's key precincts and assets



Source: Department of Transport and Planning - Boroondara Planning Scheme, 2023, accessed 22 March 2023

Activity Centre Traders' Associations

Eleven of Boroondara's activity centres and shopping precincts are represented and supported by the following traders' associations:

- Ashburton Traders' Association
- Auburn Village Traders' Association
- Burwood Village Traders' Association
- Camberwell Centre Association
- Glenferrie Road Shopping Centre Association
- Greythorn Traders' Association
- Hartwell Association of Residents and Traders
- Kew Junction Business Association
- Maling Road Business Association
- North Balwyn Village Traders' Association
- Union Road Surrey Hills Traders' Association.

The traders' associations provide key services on behalf of the shopping precincts to encourage local shopping. This includes business support, promotion/marketing activities, beautification/enhancements and event delivery.

These traders' associations (excluding Auburn Village, Hartwell and Union Road Surrey Hills) have requested Council support them to facilitate a *special rate and charge scheme*. This involves Council collecting on their behalf a special rate and charge from owners/occupiers, subject to the Scheme, which establishes a pool of funds which are allocated each year to support marketing and business development activities and events.

The Scheme benefits the local shopping precincts, as it provides resources for activation and business development activities. This also provides Council with a local and 'on the ground' partner to develop and deliver a range of initiatives in local shopping precincts aligned to the needs of traders and the community.

Economic Profile

The economic characteristics of Boroondara and implications for future growth, including key economic, employment and industry drivers are summarised below. This also includes an overview of the ongoing economic impacts of COVID-19 and potential areas of focus for future recovery efforts.

Boroondara economic snapshot

- \$12.4 billion Gross Regional Product 2021 ¹
- \$21.3 billion Economic Output 2021 ²¹
- \$4.8 billion Regional Export Value 2021 ²¹
- 81,609 Local jobs (2021) ²¹
- 26,160 Registered Businesses (June 2022) ²
- 27% Job Containment Rate (2021) ²¹

Top industries 2021 by output ²¹

1. Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services – \$3.249 billion (15%)
2. Professional, Scientific and Technical Services – \$2.905 billion (14%)
3. Construction – \$2.877 billion (14%)

Top industries 2021 by employment ²¹

1. Health Care and Social Assistance – 14,584 (18%)
2. Professional, Scientific and Technical Services – 12,065 (15%)
3. Education and Training – 11,852 (15%)

Business counts by industry (2022) ²²

1. Professional, Scientific and Technical Services – 5,163 (20%)
2. Health Care and Social Assistance – 4,577 (17%)
3. Construction – 3,328 (13%)

Business counts by employment (2022) ²²

- 64% non-employing businesses
- 34% small to medium businesses (1 to 19 employees)

¹ Source: Id Consulting, City of Boroondara Economy ID, 2022, derived by Urban Enterprise, accessed 16th December 2022

² Source: Counts of Australian Businesses, Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), June 2022, accessed 16th December 2022

Total visitor economy (2015–19 average)

- 696,000 total visitation ³
- \$396 million total visitor spend ⁴

	Domestic daytrip	Domestic overnight	International
Proportion of visitors ²³	59%	34%	7%
Average spend per visitor ²⁴	\$102	\$859	\$3,025

Economic Specialisations

Boroondara's industry specialisations in terms of contribution to jobs, output and exports is summarised in Table 3 below.

Table 1: Industry Specialisations

Specialisation	Key Sectors	Local Jobs	Output (\$m)	Regional Exports (\$m)
Public sector and knowledge-based industries	Health Care & Social Assistance, Education & Training	26,436 (32%)	\$3,497 (16%)	\$1,052 (22%)
Professional service industries	Professional, Scientific and Technical Services, Financial and Insurance Services	21,005 (25%)	\$4,790 (23%)	\$1,791 (38%)
Population-driven industries	Retail Trade, Construction, Property	30,245 (36%)	\$21,265 (35%)	\$266 (6%)

Source: Id Consulting, City of Boroondara Economy ID, 2021, derived by Urban Enterprise.

Given these industries make up almost three-quarters of total jobs and output, they are fundamental to the function and productivity of the local economy. The performance of these specialisations and key industry sectors are explored throughout this section.

³ Source: National Visitor Survey (NVS), Tourism Research Australia (TRA), 2015-2019 5-year average, accessed 25th November 2021

⁴ Source: REMPLAN, 2021, accessed 25th November 2021

Public sector and knowledge-based industries



This includes key public services, such as health care, aged care and education, that promotes community wellbeing and engagement.

Boroondara has a high proportion of public and private schools, as well as the main Swinburne University campus. These are key community assets supporting jobs in the region, as well as providing training opportunities and promoting employment pathways for younger aged cohorts.

In addition, the ageing population is expected to generate increased demand for health and aged care services. These sectors will require additional staff and increased capacity (through infrastructure investment) to adequately service the population.

Professional service industries



This comprises 'white-collar' professions, within professional and financial service sectors, typically requiring highly skilled and qualified employees.

This is a particular area of strength for Boroondara, given the socio-economic make-up of its population and proximity to the CBD, which attracts these business types.

The number of businesses and jobs in these industries is high considering the limited employment land in Boroondara. It is likely; therefore, this industry is supported by a large proportion of home-based businesses. As such, these sectors are likely to be strengthened in the area given the growth in home-based businesses and remote working, which supports the re-location of many professional businesses away from the Melbourne CBD.

Therefore, providing targeted business support and infrastructure to nurture these industries will facilitate business growth and development and support positive economic outcomes.

Population-driven industries



This includes businesses that are directly impacted by the level of resident (and visitor) demand and relies on local consumption.

Retail Trade as well as Personal Services and Hospitality, provide significant value to Boroondara's economy, particularly through its well-renowned (and numerous) activity centres and shopping precincts. Therefore, it will be important to sustain and support this sector to stimulate business activity, create local jobs and promote local consumption (including resident and visitor spend). A thriving retail sector which meets the needs of the community will also minimise

expenditure leakages to other municipalities as residents will be more encouraged to 'spend local'.

In addition, the Construction and Property (i.e., Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services) sectors also provide a significant economic contribution via residential construction. This is important for economic development as it supports population growth and provides local job opportunities, particularly flow-on benefits to local tradespeople and businesses within the supply chain.

Output Profile



Output in Boroondara is driven by the population-driven sectors of Property Services (\$3.2 billion or 15%) and Professional Services (\$2.9 billion or 14%), followed by Construction (\$2.9 billion or 14%). These industries also represent a competitive advantage, given they each contribute to a higher proportion of output compared to the Greater Melbourne average.

Between 2016 and 2021, total output in Boroondara decreased by \$1.3 billion (6%). From 2016 and 2019, output increased moderately (\$336 million), but experienced a sharp decline between 2019 and 2021 (-\$1.6 billion) due to the economic impacts associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the following industries experienced significant growth in output during the period:

- Health Care and Social Assistance (+\$261 million)
- Information Media and Telecommunications (+\$105 million)
- Financial and Insurance Services (+\$35 million)
- Education and Training (+\$30 million).⁵

These significant industries highlight strength and competitive advantage, that could be further leveraged to sustain economic prosperity in the region.

⁵ Id Consulting, City of Boroondara Economy ID, 2022, derived by Urban Enterprise.

Employment Profile

Employment by Industry

The top employing industries in 2021 – which indicate the areas of strength – include:

- Health Care and Social Assistance (14,584 jobs or 18%)
- Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (12,065 jobs or 15%)
- Education and Training (11,852 jobs or 15%)
- Retail Trade (9,842 jobs or 12%).⁶

These industries also represent a competitive advantage, given they each support a higher proportion of jobs compared to the Greater Melbourne average.

Between 2016-2021, Boroondara experienced a decline in local jobs, decreasing by 1,567 jobs (-2%). Between 2016 and 2019, the municipality experienced modest jobs growth (+1,445), however local jobs decreased by (-2,012 or 4%) between 2019 and 2021, which can be attributed to workforce shortages associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite this, the following sectors experienced employment growth between 2016 and 2021:

- Health Care and Social Assistance (+1,730 jobs)
- Arts and Recreation Services (+228 jobs)
- Mining (+206 jobs)
- Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (+63 jobs)

This provides an indication of where industry growth is occurring and highlights the areas of strength and resilience that could be supported and leveraged to achieve future jobs growth.

Location of Work

The location of work for both resident workers (i.e., employed residents of Boroondara) and local workers (i.e. all people employed within the municipality). The following types of workers helps demonstrate both the availability of labour for local industry, as well as the propensity for residents to work within the municipality.⁷

Resident Workers

Boroondara has a job containment rate of 27% (i.e., the proportion of residents who both live and work in the municipality). This indicates over 70% – or over 60,000 – residents commute outside the municipality for work, with 27% travelling to the Melbourne CBD.

There are many reasons for resident workers to commute outside Boroondara, including the availability of jobs, the location of relevant industries and commuting times. In this instance, the proximity of the Melbourne CBD is a key attractor for

⁶ Id Consulting, City of Boroondara Economy ID, 2022, derived by Urban Enterprise.

⁷ Note: this data is derived from the 2021 Census at the time of analysis.

resident workers. However, due to the impact of COVID-19 and the rise of remote working – particularly for professional industries – the job containment rate is likely to increase as residents have the flexibility to work from home.

Typically, a higher rate of job containment is preferred, as it can indicate there are sufficient and suitable jobs available locally to support the local labour force. This also has a positive effect on local consumption, as more workers in Boroondara will increase opportunities for local spend (i.e., food, coffee) to support the business base. Therefore, Council will continue to monitor the job containment rate over time and identify opportunities to support resident workers in Boroondara, as well as local businesses.

In addition, around 22% (36,499) of residents work from home, which represents an increase of 31,167 (+585%) since 2016. This reflects the high number of residents employed in professional services and the rise in remote and flexible working following the impacts of the pandemic.

Local Workers

Conversely, 70% (or around 50,000) of local workers commute into Boroondara from another municipality. This rate is likely to change with the prevalence of remote working, as many local workers from outside Boroondara – particularly those in non-consumer facing industries (i.e. Professional and Financial Services) – will adopt hybrid working arrangements and work outside the municipality on a more regular basis. However, many workers in essential and/or consumer-facing industries (i.e. Health, Education, Retail) will continue to commute into Boroondara for work. It will be important for businesses to continue to attract workers from other municipalities to meet employment demand, as this will help mitigate any workforce shortages and also ensure businesses can deliver services to meet the needs of the population.

Business and Industry Profile

There were 26,160 businesses registered in Boroondara in 2022, which is the largest business base in the Inner South-East Metropolitan Partnership (ISEMP)⁸ council region.

The key industry sectors that contribute to the business base, which demonstrates relative areas of strength (and gaps), include:

- Professional, Scientific & Technical Services – 5,163 businesses (20%)
- Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services – 4,577 (17%)
- Health Care & Social Assistance – 3,328 (13%)
- Construction – 2,705 (10%)
- Financial & Insurance Services – 2,177 (8%)
- Retail Trade – 1,579 (6%)⁹

⁸ Inner South-East Metropolitan Region Local Government Areas consist of Bayside City Council; Boroondara City Council; Glen Eira City Council; and Stonnington City Council.

⁹ Counts of Australian Businesses, ABS, June 2022

These industries reflect areas of strength for Boroondara in terms of total output and local employment and, therefore, should continue to be supported by Council to sustain positive economic outcomes for the municipality.

Other considerations with regard to the business profile are summarised below:

- The highest proportions of business counts by suburb aligns with the location of the major activity centres in the region, including in Kew, Camberwell and Hawthorn (approx. 14% for each) ¹⁰
- 98% of the business base are considered Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and are either sole traders or employ less than 20 people (a large proportion of which are 'home-based' businesses). Therefore, while the business base is large, the direct contribution to employment is limited (which provides opportunities to support and grow existing businesses to achieve employment outcomes)¹¹.

¹⁰ Note: this data is derived from the 2020 Australian Business Register at the time of analysis.

¹¹ Counts of Australian Businesses, ABS, June 2022

Visitor Economy Profile

Please note the following data is provided up to 2019 to demonstrate the visitor economy profile prior to the onset of COVID-19, which has severely restricted travel through most of 2020 and 2021.

Overview

The Boroondara visitor economy provides an important contribution to the local economy, in terms of total employment (5,781 jobs or 7% of total) and total output (\$983 million or 4% of total).

For Boroondara, its strengths as a destination are based on high-quality amenity and services, which is provided through its shopping precincts, entertainment/leisure experiences and food offerings, as well as its heritage assets (such as historic homes, parks and gardens and monuments).

Boroondara's value proposition also includes its diverse and quality events calendar, which includes a range of one-off events (i.e. arts and culture, traders association events and festivals, such as the Glenferrie Festival) and regular markets (i.e. Camberwell Sunday Market, Boroondara Farmer's Market, Hawthorn Maker's Market).

The municipality is in an advantageous position to leverage its location and attract visitors from the Melbourne CBD as well as surrounding inner-metropolitan suburbs, including non-local (i.e., Melbourne residents from outside Boroondara), regional and interstate visitors. This delivers important economic benefits through increases in visitor spend (i.e., local consumption) and job creation.

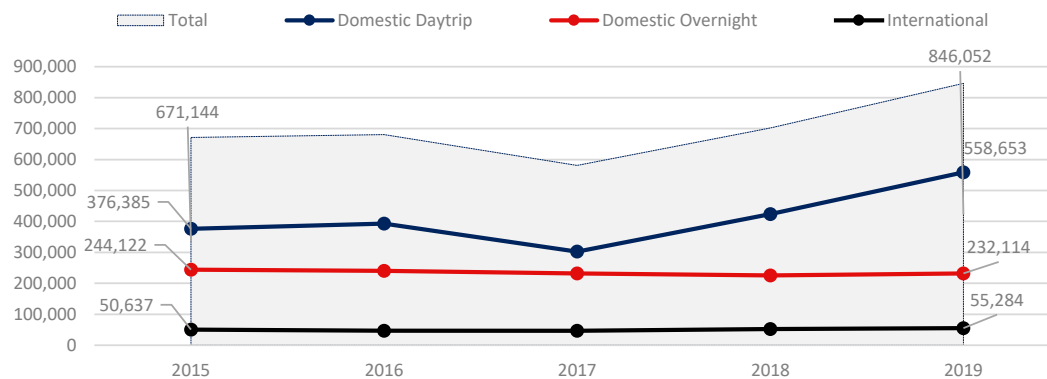
Visitation

In 2019, the municipality received almost 850,000 visitors¹², which consists of approx. 560,000 domestic daytrips (66%), 230,000 domestic overnight visitors (27%) and 50,000 international visitors (7%), as shown in Figure 4. This represents growth of around 175,000 or 6% p.a. since 2015, which is slightly more conservative than the growth experienced by the Melbourne tourism region over the same period (9% p.a.).¹³

Figure 4 Boroondara visitation 2015 - 2019

¹² This figure is relatively high when compared to other ISEMP Councils, with Boroondara receiving almost the same rates of visitation as Stonnington (860,000) and greater levels of visitation than the municipalities of Bayside (560,000) and Glen Eira (460,000).

¹³ However, given a daytrip visitor must travel at least 50km (according to official definitions), this data excludes people visiting from the surrounding Metropolitan Melbourne area – including the CBD. As such, the daytrip visitor numbers are understated, and the real figures are likely to be significantly greater.



Source: TRA, NVS and IVS, 2015-2019 year ending June 30

Visitor Expenditure

As visitor data is collected via surveys conducted by Tourism Research Australia (TRA), to account for small sample sizes and increase the reliability of results, the following presents visitor data as a 5-year average from 2015 to 2019. Boroondara's 5-year average visitation totals 696,123 visitors p.a.

As shown in Table 4, average visitor spend in Boroondara totals \$396 million p.a., driven by high-yielding domestic overnight (51%) and international (39%) visitors.

However, average spend per trip for daytrips (\$126), overnight (\$939), international (\$2,951) visitors are relatively lower than the Melbourne tourism region. This presents opportunities to capture additional yield through provision of quality products and commissionable experiences, which will increase the value of the visitor economy.

Table 2: Visitor Spend (5 year average 2016 to 2019)

Visitor Type	Visitation (2015-2019 Ave)	Ave Spend per Trip	Visitor Spend	%
Domestic Daytrip	410,888	\$102	\$41,910,544	11%
Domestic Overnight	234,716	\$859 ¹⁴	\$201,621,057	51%
International	50,519	\$3,025 ¹⁵	\$152,821,162	39%
Total	696,123		\$396,352,762	100%

Source: TRA, NVS and IVS, 2015-2019 year ending June 30; REMPLAN 2021; derived by Urban Enterprise

Visitor Trends and Preferences

Other key findings for the Boroondara visitor economy are summarised below:

- Hawthorn accounts for almost one-third of total visitation to Boroondara, which can be attributed to its well-established activity centres and proximity to Richmond. However, encouraging dispersal of visitors across Boroondara is important for the sustainable growth of the visitor economy, as it helps generate economic activity in a range of locations to support local business.
- The primary purpose of visit for all visitor types is 'visiting friends and relatives' (VFR), followed by 'holiday'. The VFR market is typically lower-yielding, while holiday visitors have a higher propensity to undertake (and spend on) a variety of activities and experiences.
- The most popular activities undertaken by visitors include VFR (52%), Eat out/dine out (46%) and shopping, the latter two attributed to the shopping precincts as a key driver of visitation. Therefore, investing in the maintenance and development of the shopping precincts will support visitation and sustain growth in the visitor economy.
- Most of the accommodation used by both domestic and international overnight visitors is a 'friends or relatives' property' (72%), which again aligns with the large VFR market. As this is non-commercial accommodation, it

¹⁴ Based on an average length of stay of 3 nights.

¹⁵ Based on an average length of stay of 24 nights.

constrains the level of visitor spend that could be generated by overnight stays. Therefore, the provision of suitable accommodation that meets gaps in the market (e.g., hotels, serviced apartments) could help grow the overnight market and increase yield.

Impact on Economic Output

Compared against monthly output generated in March 2020 (i.e., pre-COVID), the peak impact occurred in August 2020, which saw monthly output decline by \$121 million (-7%) as all sectors were adversely affected by the onset of restrictions.

In particular, the hardest hit industries were those which relied on population movements or were consumer facing, including Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services (-\$20.5 million), Education & Training (-\$14.8 million) and Health Care & Social Assistance (-\$12 million).

However, the latest data for June 2021 shows the economy returned to growth, with monthly output *increasing* by \$14.2 million (0.8%) above pre-COVID levels. While most industries had recovered and contributed to growth, some industries continue to be affected and may require ongoing support, including Administrative & Support Services (-\$3.8 million), Information Media & Telecommunications (-\$2.1 million) and Arts & Recreation Services (-\$0.8 million).

Impact on Employment

Similar to output, the peak negative impact for monthly employed also occurred in August 2020 (-2,673 local jobs or -4%).

This decrease was driven by Education & Training (-550 jobs), Retail Trade (-513) and Health Care & Social Assistance (-381), while some of the 'white-collar' office industries – such as financial and professional services, were less affected.

The most recent data for June 2021 shows a marginal growth in employment (+324 jobs or +0.4%) from pre-COVID levels. This growth was driven by employment increases for each of the three hardest hit industries – Retail, Health Care and Education. However, industries that continue to be affected with employment loss includes Administrative & Support Services (-74), Arts & Recreation Services (-22) and Information Media & Telecommunications (-16).

The ongoing COVID-19 impacts on employment will need to be monitored over time, particularly as many industries (including Retail, Hospitality, Health and Education) are facing workforce shortages due to restricted border conditions and increasing local demand for employment.

Impact on The Visitor Economy

The impact on the visitor economy is calculated by comparing the average figures from 2015-2019 (i.e., pre-COVID) against the most recent data (2020-21 financial year).¹⁶ The impacts included:

- total visitation declined by 210,000 visitors (-30%), with significant decreases in the high-yielding domestic overnight (-62%) and international (-100%) markets. International visitation has suffered heavily across the state due to the closures to international borders.
- total visitor spend declined by \$279 million (-70%), given the substantial decline in overnight visitation and subsequent decreases in spend generated by the reduction of domestic overnight (-\$125 million) and absence of international (-\$153 million) visitors.

¹⁶ The figures for 2020 (year ending 30 June) were excluded, as this was only partially impacted by COVID-19 restrictions from March 2020 onwards.

Demographic Profile

Boroondara's demographic profile, including key population, housing and dwelling, age and socio-economic indicators to ensure all needs and challenges are considered for future economic development planning.

Population Forecast

At June 2021, Boroondara had an estimated resident population of 169,901.¹⁷ Boroondara's population profile below, demonstrates predicted population growth of 13% (to 192,344) by 2031.¹⁸

The Australian Government projects that Greater Melbourne will grow by 18% over the same period.¹⁹ The low rate of growth across the Boroondara municipality could be attributed to a range of factors, including the scarcity of major redevelopment opportunities and an ageing population. However, identifying localised areas of growth (i.e. Camberwell, Hawthorn East, Kew) is important as it will have implications for the location and supply of housing, infrastructure, services and amenity. This will influence Council's future planning and development activities.

Boroondara Population Profile

- Population forecast: 169,901 in 2021, with an increase of 13% predicted by 2031, to a population of 192,344.³⁷
- 436 residents identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.²⁰
- More than 150 different countries represented, and more than 110 languages spoken.²¹
- 33% of residents were born overseas.³⁷
- 29% speak a language other than English at home.³⁷
- The top 3 languages other than English are Mandarin, Cantonese and Greek.³⁷
- 19% of residents volunteer, a drop on the pre-COVID rate.³⁷
- 7,516 residents need help in their day-to-day lives due to disability.³⁷
- 51% of residents identified as having a religion, while 45% reported no religious, or secular, beliefs.³⁷
- 52% of residents over 15 years have a Bachelor or Higher degree.³⁷
- 4.3% of the labour force are unemployed.³⁷ In June 2022 1,747 residents were receiving JobSeeker or Youth Allowance for job seekers.²²

¹⁷ .id 2022, [City of Boroondara community profile website](#), accessed 9 December 2022.

¹⁸ .id 2022, [City of Boroondara: Population, households and dwellings](#), City of Boroondara population forecast website, accessed 9 December 2022.

¹⁹ Australian Government Centre for Population 2022, [Projections of population changes in our capital cities and rest-of-state areas](#), accessed 7 December 2022.

²⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021, *Indigenous Status (INGP) by LGA (UR)*, [Census TableBuilder Pro], accessed 9 December 2022.

²¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021, *4-digit level Country of Birth of Person (BPLP) & 4-digit level Language Used at Home (LANP) by LGA (UR)* [Census TableBuilder Pro], accessed 9 December 2022.

²² Department of Social Services 2022, 'DSS demographics - June 2022' [data set] [DSS Payment Demographic Data](#), accessed 8 December 2022.

Housing Forecast

In June 2021 there were 65,953 households living in Boroondara, expected to rise to 74,991 by 2031.²³ Boroondara's household profile below, provides a snapshot of current and forecast households, household types, weekly income expenditure, housing and dwelling types and property indicators.

Boroondara Household Profile

- 65,953 households lived in Boroondara in 2021, 74,991 households are expected to live in Boroondara by 2031.⁴³
- 18% of households have an income in the bottom quartile for Victoria (less than \$882 per week).²⁴
- 42% of households have an income in the top quartile for Victoria (more than \$2,946 per week).⁴⁴
- 22,003 households are couples with children, which is the most common household type.⁴⁴
- 610 households reported living in social and public housing.⁴⁴
- 426 people identified as homeless in 2016 (2021 estimates not available until 2023).⁴⁴
- \$451 is the median weekly rent, which is higher than the median for Greater Melbourne (\$390).⁴⁴
- \$3,000 is the median monthly mortgage repayment. The median for Greater Melbourne is \$2,000.²⁵
- 53% of dwellings are separate houses.⁴⁴

Age Profile

The largest age cohorts in Boroondara are currently *Parents and homebuilders (35 to 49 years)* (32,026 residents), followed by *Older workers and pre-retirees (50 to 59 years)* (23,324 residents) both of which contribute to the local labour force.^{26,27} *Young workforce (25 to 34 years)* (21,044 residents) come in a close third but at the 2016 Census were more numerous than *Older workers and pre-retirees*. This highlights an ageing workforce. More than half of Boroondara residents are either aged 0 to 24 years or over 60 years. These cohorts will demand key services including education, health and aged care.

The age profile is not expected to substantially shift between 2021 and 2031, however each age group is expected to increase, particularly *Parents and*

²³ .id 2022, [City of Boroondara: Population, households and dwellings](#), City of Boroondara population forecast website, accessed 9 December 2022.

²⁴ .id 2022, [City of Boroondara community profile website](#), accessed 9 December 2022.

²⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021, 'Median monthly mortgage repayments', [2021 Census QuickStats: Boroondara](#), accessed 9 December 2022.

²⁶ .id 2022, [City of Boroondara: Service age groups](#), City of Boroondara community profile website, accessed 8 December 2022.

²⁷ Service age groups are used as they divide the population into age categories that reflect typical life-stages. They indicate the level of demand for services that target people at different stages in life and how that demand is changing.

Homebuilders (+4,651 residents)²⁸. Boroondara's population of *Seniors and Elderly* (+3,671 residents) will also increase substantially, as part of the population ageing which can correspond with young couples and families moving to an area. The substantial growth in the number of *Tertiary education and independence age* residents (+3,539) is partly due to the predicted return of overseas student numbers, which dropped in recent years due to COVID and the related international border closures.

The age profile of a region helps demonstrate the potential scale of demand for aged-based services (e.g. education, health, aged care), as well as the future need for increases in the local labour force.

Socio-Economic Profile

The socio-economic profile of residents is typically identified through a combination of employment, income and education indicators. This information demonstrates the relative social and economic position of residents, which has implications for service and infrastructure provision.

Key points to note include:

- According to the Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) Index of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage, Boroondara's score of 1,090 – which is above the national average score of 1,000, ranked Boroondara (along with Bayside) as the second most advantaged municipality in Victoria in 2021.²⁹
- Median weekly household income levels in Boroondara (\$2,311) are higher – by some 24% – when compared to the Greater Melbourne median (\$1,866).⁴⁹
- The unemployment rate for Boroondara (4.3%) is *lower* than the Greater Melbourne average (5.3%) in 2021 (and has been lower since at least the 2006 Census).⁴⁹
- Over half of the local workers in Boroondara are in high-income occupations, such as professionals (40%) and managers (20%), which typically require qualifications.⁴⁹

The socio-economic indicators show Boroondara has a high degree of wealth, typified by income, employment and occupation (complemented by other measures including home ownership rates). This contributes to positive economic outcomes as more affluent residents will have a higher propensity to spend, resulting in increased local consumption that supports local businesses (particularly retail and hospitality).

²⁸ .id 2020, [City of Boroondara: Forecast age structure - Service age groups](#), City of Boroondara population forecast website, accessed 8 December 2022.

²⁹ .id 2022, [City of Boroondara community profile website](#), accessed 9 May 2023.