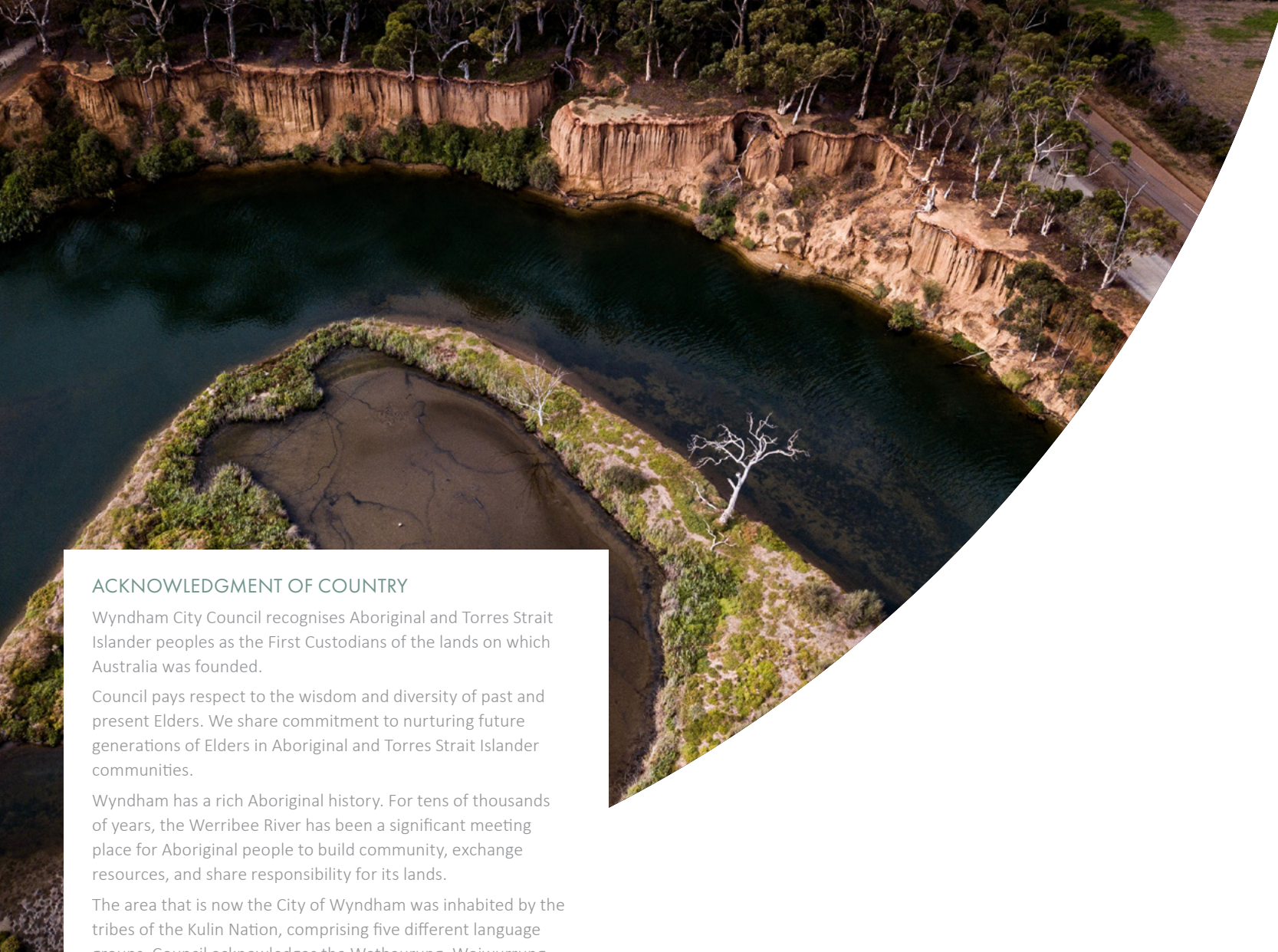


ADVOCACY REPORT 2020-21





ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

Wyndham City Council recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Custodians of the lands on which Australia was founded.

Council pays respect to the wisdom and diversity of past and present Elders. We share commitment to nurturing future generations of Elders in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Wyndham has a rich Aboriginal history. For tens of thousands of years, the Werribee River has been a significant meeting place for Aboriginal people to build community, exchange resources, and share responsibility for its lands.

The area that is now the City of Wyndham was inhabited by the tribes of the Kulin Nation, comprising five different language groups. Council acknowledges the Wathaurung, Woiwurrung and Boonwurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of the lands on which Wyndham is being built.



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ADVOCACY AT WYNDHAM CITY

WYNDHAM CITY HAS HAD A STRONG ADVOCACY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS AGENDA FOR MANY YEARS AND HAS CONTINUALLY REFINED AND REVIEWED ITS APPROACH TO REFLECT THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE DAY AND THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY.

This work has occurred in a variety of ways including but not limited to public campaigns, formal submissions, meetings with Ministers and their advisors and maintaining ongoing relationships with key government departments.

Councillors and senior officers are also representatives on a range of alliances, associations, committees and working groups and hold many important stakeholder relationships.

Over the past decade Wyndham has consistently ranked among the top growing municipalities in Australia. This rapid growth has put pressure on existing services and infrastructure and there are many gaps affecting our community that we cannot solve alone. We are largely reliant on other levels of government to fund and provide the services and infrastructure our community needs.

Our growing population, the complex political landscape, and existing shortfall in infrastructure and services reinforces the need for a continued strategic approach that is agile, streamlined and embedded in best practice principles. These include:

- **Transparency:** We are open and transparent about our strategic priorities and how we pursue them.
- **Evidence-based:** We conduct and source comprehensive research to inform our understanding of issues affecting our community.
- **Solutions-focused:** Effective advocacy is not simply about community problems. We focus on bringing solutions to politicians and other key decision-makers.
- **Equity of access:** We believe all citizens should have equal access to high-quality community services and infrastructure.
- **Partnerships and collaboration:** We seek common ground and foster relationships that will deliver positive change. Messaging should centre on opportunities for further collaboration and future improvements.



- **Government alignment:** We will attract funding by positioning Wyndham as a delivery partner of projects that are aligned to the stated priorities of the Federal and State Governments.
- **Government reward/recognition:** We will recognise State and Federal government investment in Wyndham by welcoming announcements of decisions that benefit residents.

Our advocacy is also underpinned by our **Advocacy Strategy, [Securing Wyndham’s Future](#)**, an online strategy that is progressively updated. It is a comprehensive list of over 70 items that relate to the services and infrastructure Wyndham needs to support its population growth, economic prosperity and livability. There are eight categories in [Securing Wyndham’s Future](#), which include:

- public transport and roads;
- early childhood and family services; primary and secondary education;
- health, support and inclusion; environment and sustainability;
- arts, culture, sport and recreation; economic development and industry;
- and urban development and financial sustainability.

The Council’s strategic approach to advocacy has resulted in good outcomes for the community and increased satisfaction in Council’s representation, lobbying and advocacy performance. Council will continue to advocate strongly on behalf of the community, ensuring all levels of government continue to provide support and funding aimed at improving our community’s services, programs and infrastructure.



Above: Mayor Cr Adele Hegedich talking to the media at the new vaccine hub in Wyndham.

INTRODUCTION

WYNDHAM HAS A HIGHLY DIVERSE POPULATION, WITH AROUND HALF OF OUR POPULATION BORN OVERSEAS. WE VALUE OUR IDENTITY AS A MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITY AND THE RICH CULTURAL, LINGUISTIC AND FAITH DIVERSITY THAT OUR COMMUNITY BRINGS. OUR MULTICULTURALISM IS ONE OF THE REASONS WHY WE HAVE SUCH A DYNAMIC AND ENERGETIC COMMUNITY.

Wyndham also has endless economic opportunities. As the link between Melbourne and Geelong, the two largest cities in Victoria, it makes Wyndham an area of great economic significance that extends beyond its own region, impacting the rest of the state. The diverse economic and social opportunities in our region are some of the many reasons people are relocating to Wyndham.

Not only is Wyndham one of the largest local government areas by population but also one of Australia's fastest growing municipalities, with our population expected to surpass 500,000 by 2040 – a significant increase from our current population of 280,000.

Our community needs a range of services and infrastructure and there are many gaps that Council cannot solve alone. Council is mostly reliant on the State and Federal Government to fund and provide the infrastructure and services our community needs.

In addition to the already existing service and infrastructure gaps, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to

have a significant impact on Wyndham – on our families, schools, sporting clubs, arts and culture community and businesses.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, over 2,200 Wyndham residents have tested positive to COVID-19 – one of the highest numbers of COVID-19 cases of any Local Government Area in the nation. Despite this, we continue to be a resilient and socially connected community.

The need to engage and partner with all levels of government was even stronger during 2020-21.

The types of engagement undertaken included meetings with community members, meetings with political stakeholders including Members of Parliament, correspondence with State and Federal Ministers, discussions with senior level department officers, advocacy campaigns, and State and Federal pre-budget submissions.

This Advocacy Report outlines Council's advocacy approach and outcomes for 2020-21.

In 2020-21, Council continued to implement initiatives aimed at supporting the community's COVID-19 recovery efforts and assist vulnerable members in our community. This includes:

- working with Western Health in the establishment of a COVID-19 vaccination hub in Wyndham,
- improving access to community services including food relief, mental health services, housing and family violence support,
- supporting local businesses through the roll out of more outdoor dining and public spaces, and
- making it easier for locals to support local businesses through the new Wyndham Open Business Directory.

In 2020-21, through our engagements with internal and external networks, Council has been advocating on a range of issues including improvements to our infrastructure and services and funding towards social and economic initiatives.

Council continues to lead advocacy campaigns including the schools4wyndham and I Love Kinder campaigns, which have been calling for Wyndham's fair share of school funding and long-term kindergarten funding security.

Through our strategic approaches to advocacy, Council has yielded significant positive outcomes. Some of the key achievements include:

- State funding towards the construction of five new schools to open by 2024 and the purchase of land for another five future schools.
- Funding to improve our roads and public transport system, including upgrades to the Point Cook/Sneydes Road intersection, improvements to commuter carparks, and new bus routes.
- Initiatives to support Council's efforts to improve employment pathways for local residents with funding provided by the Federal Government's Regional Employment Trial and State Government's Community Revitalisation Program.
- Improved sports and recreational facilities, including funding towards the Truganina South East Master Plan Implementation project.
- Improving access to health and social services including participating in the planning of the Point Cook Community Hospital, service and capital planning for Werribee Mercy, and successfully advocating for a new Wyndham Law Court.

Guided by the *Securing Wyndham's Future* advocacy strategy, Council will continue to advocate strongly for our community to ensure Wyndham thrives as we transition into the recovery phase of the pandemic.

We thank the community, the Federal and State Government, our local Members of Parliament and local organisations for their contribution and for advocating for better outcomes in Melbourne's west.



WYNDHAM CITY LED ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS

SCHOOLS4WYNDHAM CAMPAIGN

WYNDHAM'S SCHOOLS ARE UNDER INCREASING PRESSURE TO ACCOMMODATE A GROWING NUMBER OF STUDENTS. WYNDHAM CITY'S [SCHOOLS4WYNDHAM](#) CAMPAIGN HAS BEEN ADVOCATING FOR SCHOOLS TO BE BUILT IN THE AREAS THEY ARE NEEDED MOST SINCE 2017.

The campaign has called on the State Government to provide Wyndham's growth areas with a fair share of the 100 new schools the state government committed to build by 2026.

Campaign activities for the schools4wyndham campaign during the 2020-2021 year included:

- Continuing to grow community support for the campaign online by maintaining a regular presence on Facebook, with campaign videos highlighting the needs of Wyndham's growing suburbs and campaign updates from the Mayor.
- Advocating to local MPs for the construction of schools and school upgrades as part of the State Government's COVID-19 economic stimulus package.
- Ongoing discussions with the Victorian School Building Authority on the State Government's plans and presentations of Wyndham's analysis of the school needs of our community, including plans for specialist schools and mainstream schools.
- Pre-budget briefings to local MPs on Wyndham's most urgently needed schools in their electorates.
- Advocacy to ensure that planned non-government school sites are used for schools and not other purposes, to the Victorian Education Minister, James Merlino, the Planning Minister, Richard Wynne, and local MPs.
- Updates on the campaign website on what schools Wyndham needs and when, promoted to local online audiences.
- Email updates to campaign subscribers recruited from the campaign website.
- An online survey of residents' concerns regarding school availability.
- Bus advertisements providing campaign exposure around Wyndham.

Right: Mayor Cr Adele Hegedich (top) and Cr Jasmine Hill (bottom) visiting kindergartens in Werribee and Point Cook to promote the I Love Kinder campaign.



The campaign successfully brought wider attention to the issue of a shortage of schools in Wyndham. Community promotions were reduced from previous years due to COVID-19 restrictions on face to face activities, however the online audience grew by 20 per cent compared to the previous year and social media campaigns reached 35 per cent of Wyndham's population.

The Victorian 2021-22 budget included 10 school commitments for Wyndham out of the 27 across Victoria. There was funding for construction of five new schools, four to open by 2023 and one to open by 2024, and funding to purchase land for another five future schools.

Three of Wyndham's existing schools will also be upgraded or expanded, with Alamanda College, Tarneit Senior College, and Manor Lakes P-12 all having new works funded.

While these developments are very welcome, Wyndham will be growing for years to come and many more schools will be needed to meet demand and take the pressure of the schools that we currently have. Wyndham City will continue to advocate for an ongoing program of building new schools that can meet the needs of Wyndham families into the future.

Right: Cr Josh Gilligan at the future site of East Riverdale Primary School.



I LOVE KINDER CAMPAIGN

SINCE LAUNCHING THE NATIONAL [I LOVE KINDER](#) CAMPAIGN IN LATE 2017, WYNDHAM CITY HAS PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN NATIONAL CALLS FOR SECURE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR KINDERGARTEN, RATHER THAN AD HOC ANNUAL RENEWALS.

The campaign continued to grow community support and engagement by maintaining a regular social media presence. During COVID-19 lockdowns the campaign retained a connection with families of kindergarten aged children by supporting activities such as bear and rainbow hunts, and other messages of support and solidarity.

Heart parties (where children make hearts, the I Love Kinder campaign logo) were again held at five Wyndham kindergartens. Children shared why they love kinder and also participated in the community engagement project to inform the Council Plan 2021-25.

Across all kindergartens, children identified playing with their friends as the most important thing that they love about kinder. Being creative and doing art and craft activities like painting and drawing emerged at each kinder as well as being active and running around outside, riding bikes and playing on the playground – highlighting the importance of kindergarten.

Significant progress was made in 2020-21 towards improved national funding arrangements for kindergarten. Following a national review into early childhood education funding the Federal Government offered in the 2020-21 Budget to negotiate a new four-year national partnership agreement with the states and territories for universal access to early learning for four-year olds, rather than funding a single year only as had happened previously.

However, the details of the new national agreement for kindergarten funding are yet to be finalised. Wyndham City will continue to monitor the issue ahead of the upcoming federal election.



WYNDHAM CITY LED ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS

LIBRARIES CHANGE LIVES

LIBRARIES CHANGE LIVES IS A SECTOR-WIDE, STATE ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN LED BY THE STATE LIBRARY OF VICTORIA AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES VICTORIA (PLV). IT AIMS TO START A CONVERSATION ABOUT THE VALUE AND IMPACT OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND THE ROLE THEY PLAY IN SUPPORTING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES.

This three-year campaign was launched in September 2018, with the key goals being:

- To attain stronger support from State Government stakeholders, particularly to meet rising community demand for library spaces and services.
- To demonstrate the key contribution libraries make to Victoria, to ensure decision makers consider libraries as a key contender in planning.
- To deliver State Government commitment to fund initiatives that focus on early years literacy; Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM); and building infrastructure.
- Program statistics shared with the State Library of Victoria and the campaign staff for use in various submissions to the State Government.
- Staff participating in advocacy planning courses.
- Using State Library of Victoria and PLV supplied campaign materials in library branches and online. This included banners, digital images and posters.
- Collecting feedback from community members about how libraries have impacted their lives, particularly during COVID-19 lockdowns, for future advocacy use.

Despite the pandemic, in 2020-21, Wyndham libraries continued with *Libraries Change Lives* campaign activities.

Wyndham City's advocacy efforts for this campaign in 2020-21 included:

- Using our social media platforms to share the latest *Libraries Change Lives* campaign, *Be Surprised By Libraries*, which featured five community stories.

ADDRESSING GAMBLING HARM

WYNDHAM CITY HAS BECOME A LEADER IN MELBOURNE'S WEST IN ADVOCATING FOR STRONGER RESTRICTIONS AND REGULATIONS ON THE GAMBLING INDUSTRY. WYNDHAM CITY IS COMMITTED TO CONTINUED ENGAGEMENTS WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY IN TAKING POSITIVE OWNERSHIP OF THIS ISSUE, DECREASE STIGMA, ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION IN GAMBLING FREE COMMUNITY SPACES AND ACTIVITIES, AND ENSURE THE RIGHT SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE WHEN REQUIRED.

In 2020-21, Wyndham City undertook a range of campaign activities and workshops that focused on gambling harm prevention:

Alliance for Gambling Reform

Wyndham City is a member of the Alliance for Gambling Reform, a national advocacy organisation that works to prevent and minimise the harm from gambling. The Alliance's aim is to remove the shame that surrounds gambling addiction, have the problem treated as a public health issue, and achieve the legislative changes needed to protect our communities.

In 2020-21, the Alliance undertook an array of advocacy campaigns and activities including:

- calling for a Royal Commission into gambling,
- calling for reduced venue opening hours to prevent gambling harm,
- raising awareness about the risks of gambling,
- providing a response to the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System, and
- highlighting the harm caused by gambling and concerning gambling figures.

In 2020-21, Wyndham City partook in the Alliance for Gambling Reform's advocacy efforts by writing to the State Government, recommending that the Government consider reducing opening hours for gaming venues and implement economic policies that reduce electronic gambling machine numbers and support clubs to become gambling-free.

Libraries After Dark - Anti Gambling Campaign

Wyndham City Libraries received Libraries After Dark (LAD) project funding in December 2020. The program, which is funded by the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation, aims to provide a welcoming space for at risk gamblers.

The project involved extended opening hours until 10pm on Thursdays at the Hoppers Crossing Library. Since its commencement in January 2021, there has been a steady increase in attendance with families, students, tutors, seniors and adults coming into the library during the LAD hours to attend our programs and events, study, borrow, pick up their holds, use the computers and to access the free Wi-Fi. There were 2,500 visits during these hours to 30 June 2021, with the highest attendance recorded in one night being 195 visitors.





Above: Wyndham Councillors at the launch of the Street Surfer Bus.



Left: Cr Josh Gilligan, Mayor Cr Adele Hegedich and Deputy Mayor Cr Peter at a Committee for Economic Development of Australia event.



Above: Mayor Cr Adele Hegedich, Cr Susan McIntyre and Cr Jennie Barrera at the launch of the Wyndham Anti-Racism Network.



ENGAGEMENT

WYNDHAM CITY'S ADVOCACY WORK INVOLVES EXTENSIVE COMMUNITY, POLITICAL AND SENIOR OFFICER LEVEL ENGAGEMENTS.

The types of engagement undertaken included discussions with community members, Members of Parliament, State and Federal Ministers, senior level department officers, advocacy campaigns, and State and Federal pre-budget submissions.

In 2020-21, Wyndham City's councillors represented the community by meeting with political stakeholders from all sides of the political aisle and held positions in over 20 different external committees, briefing them on local issues and discussing options on how to create better outcomes for the Wyndham community.

The issues addressed during these discussions include:

- Investing in our roads and public transport system to support our growing population.
- Addressing the shortage of schools in our community.
- Supporting the arts, culture and creative industries.
- Funding towards early childhood education services and infrastructure.

- Increased protection of our natural environmental assets.
- Initiatives and partnerships that will create local employment opportunities.
- Implementing social support programs and initiatives.

The work undertaken by the Mayor, Councillors, Chief Executive and the Executive Leadership Team at these meetings has been instrumental in furthering Wyndham City's advocacy objectives. It has enabled Council to gather detailed information on a range of issues that affect the future of our community, while also seeking cross-organisational support for mutually beneficial projects.

The following tables outlines some of the external committees, forums and meetings attended by Wyndham City in 2020 21.



Above: Wyndham Councillors and the Member for Tarneit Sarah Connolly MP at the opening of the Grange Reserve Pitch 1 Lighting Project.



Above: Deputy Mayor Cr Peter Maynard and Member for Tarneit Sarah Connolly MP at the State Government's announcement of funding towards 500,000 new trees in Melbourne's west.



Wyndham City thanks Sarah Connolly MP for advocating for more green spaces and shade in our community.

Left: Wyndham Councillors and Member for Tarneit Sarah Connolly MP at the Truganina South East Integrated Family Centre sod turn.

EXTERNAL COMMITTEES AND FORUMS IN 2020-21		
COMMITTEE/FORUM	COUNCILLOR DECEMBER 2020 TO JUNE 2021	COUNCILLOR JULY 2020 TO OCTOBER 2020 (DURING PREVIOUS COUNCIL TERM)
Alliance for Gambling Reform	Cr Jennie Barrera	Cr Josh Gilligan
Association of Bayside Municipalities	Cr Robert Szatkowski	Cr Heather Marcus
Cherry Creek Youth Justice Centre - Community Advisory Group	Cr Peter Maynard Cr Mia Shaw Cr Susan McIntyre	Cr Peter Maynard Former Cr Walter Villagonzalo
Interface Councils Group Forum	Cr Adele Hegedich	Cr Josh Gilligan
LeadWest Advisory Committee	Cr Peter Maynard	Cr Peter Maynard Former Cr John Gibbons
Local Government Mayoral Advisory Panel	Cr Adele Hegedich	
MAV Delegate	Cr Sahana Ramesh	Cr Josh Gilligan
MAV Substitute (Deputy) Delegate	Cr Heather Marcus	
MAV Emergency Management	Cr Susan McIntyre	
MAV Environment Committee	Cr Robert Szatkowski	Cr Heather Marcus
MAV Human Services Committee	Cr Adele Hegedich	
MAV Planning Committee	Cr Josh Gilligan	
MAV Professional Development Reference Group	Cr Sahana Ramesh	Former Cr Henry Barlow



Left to right:
L: Cr Robert Szatkowski, Member for Tarneit Sarah Connolly MP, Acting Wyndham City CEO Natalie Walker, Acting Premier James Merlino MP, Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio MP, and Deputy Mayor Cr Peter Maynard at the State Government's announcement of a new tree planting initiative.

These trees will create cooler spaces and bolster the State Government's efforts to tackle climate change.

M: Acting Premier James Merlino MP planting a tree as part of the tree planting initiative.

R: Wyndham City Councillors, Member for Tarneit Sarah Connolly MP and Member for the Western Metropolitan Region Kaushaliya Vaghela MP at the opening of park upgrades to the Golden Square Reserve in Hoppers Crossing.

EXTERNAL COMMITTEES AND FORUMS IN 2020-21		
COMMITTEE/FORUM	COUNCILLOR DECEMBER 2020 TO JUNE 2021	COUNCILLOR JULY 2020 TO OCTOBER 2020 (DURING PREVIOUS COUNCIL TERM)
MAV Technology		Former Cr Aaron An
MAV Transport and Infrastructure Committee	Cr Robert Szatkowski	Former Cr Henry Barlow
Metropolitan Transport Forum	Cr Adele Hegedich	Former Cr Intaj Khan
Metropolitan Waste Resource & Recovery Group	Cr Robert Szatkowski	Cr Peter Maynard
National Growth Areas Alliance – Strategic Committee	Cr Peter Maynard	Cr Peter Maynard
Roadsafe Westgate Community Road Safety Council	Cr Susan McIntyre	Cr Peter Maynard
Tarneit Suburban Revitalisation Board	Cr Adele Hegedich	
Victorian Government Gender Equality Advisory Committee	Cr Jennie Barrera	
Werribee City Centre Safety Committee	Cr Susan McIntyre	Cr Mia Shaw
Werribee River Association Inc	Cr Robert Szatkowski	
Western Melbourne Tourism Committee	Cr Heather Marcus	
Western Transport Alliance	Cr Adele Hegedich	Cr Peter Maynard
Western Treatment Plant Biodiversity Conservation Advisory Committee	Cr Robert Szatkowski	Cr Heather Marcus

DISCUSSIONS WITH MINISTERS AND MEMBERS OF THE PARLIAMENT	
MINISTERS AND MPS	MINISTRY, POSITIONS AND COMMITTEES
Ms Joanne Ryan MP	Member for Lalor Federal Opposition Whip
Mr Tim Watts MP	Member for Gellibrand Federal Shadow Assistant Minister for Communications Federal Shadow Assistant Minister for Cyber Security
Senator David Van	Senator for Victoria Senate Standing: Senators' Interests <i>Committees:</i> Senate Select: Foreign Interference through Social Media Senate Legislative and General Purpose Standing: Environment and Communications: Legislation Legal and Constitutional Affairs: Legislation Joint Standing: Trade and Investment Growth
Mr Tim Pallas MP	Member for Werribee Treasurer Minister for Economic Development Minister for Industrial Relations
Ms Sarah Connolly MP	Member for Tarneit Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee Environment and Planning Committee
The Hon Jill Hennessy MP	Member for Altona Dispute Resolution Committee Privileges Committee Integrity and Oversight Committee
Mr Cesar Melhem MP	Member for Western Metropolitan Region Parliamentary Secretary for Training and Skills Environment and Planning Committee Electoral Matters Committee
Dr Catherine Cumming MP	Member of Western Metropolitan Region Environment and Planning Committee
Ms Kaushaliya Vaghela MP	Member of Western Metropolitan Region Legal and Social Issues Committee
Ms Ingrid Stitt MP	Member of Western Metropolitan Region Minister for Workplace Safety Minister for Early Childhood
The Hon James Merlino	Deputy Premier Minister for Education Minister for Mental Health Dispute Resolution Committee

MEETINGS WITH MINISTERS AND MEMBERS OF THE PARLIAMENT	
MINISTERS AND MPS	MINISTRY, POSITIONS AND COMMITTEES
The Hon Shaun Leane	Minister for Local Government Minister for Suburban Development Minister for Veterans
The Hon Ben Carroll MP	Minister for Public Transport Minister for Roads and Road Safety Privileges Committee
The Hon Gabrielle Williams MP	Minister for Prevention of Family Violence Minister for Women Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio	Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Minister for Solar Homes
The Hon Martin Pakula MP	Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Minister for Racing Minister for Industry Support and Recovery Minister for Trade Minister for Business Precincts Dispute Resolution Committee Privileges Committee
The Hon Richard Wynne MP	Minister for Planning Minister for Housing
The Hon Ros Spence	Minister for Multicultural Affairs Minister for Community Sport Minister for Youth

MEETINGS AND ENGAGEMENT WITH COUNCILS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATIONS
Association of Bayside Municipalities
Australian Local Government Association
Interface Councils
LeadWest
Local Government Mayoral Advisory Panel
Meetings with Western Councils
Metropolitan Transport Forum
Municipal Association of Victoria
National Growth Areas Alliance
Victorian Local Government Association



Above: Victorian Treasurer, Member for Werribee Tim Pallas MP and Mayor Cr Adele Hegedich at the launch of the Wyndham Street Surfer Bus.

COLLABORATION

WYNDHAM CITY CONTINUES TO WORK WITH THE COMMUNITY AS AN ACTIVE PARTNER TO INFORM OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND TO HELP US UNDERSTAND WHAT WYNDHAM NEEDS. COUNCIL HAS ALSO BEEN FORMING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS WITH ORGANISATIONS WHOSE INTERESTS ALIGN WITH THOSE OF OUR COMMUNITY. BY COLLABORATING WITH OUR PARTNERS, WE PROMOTE POLICIES AND SOLUTIONS THAT STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CAN ADOPT TO IMPROVE LIFE IN WYNDHAM.

BELOW ARE EXAMPLES OF SOME OF THE FORMAL WAYS COUNCIL COLLABORATES WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS TO ADVOCATE FOR OUR COMMUNITY.

Working with the State and Federal Governments in the Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

WYNDHAM CITY, THE STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS HAVE BEEN WORKING TOGETHER, RESPONDING RAPIDLY TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SHOCK BEING CAUSED BY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

In 2020-21, a number of Government initiatives were rolled out to Wyndham to support our community during this pandemic and beyond. These included:

- Joint projects between Wyndham City and the State Government to deliver projects that will improve public space and amenity and support local jobs and businesses.
- With support from the State Government, the establishment of the *Opportunity Wyndham* initiative which brings together Wyndham City, local employment partners and businesses to support employment pathways for local residents.
- Funding to continue funding the H3 Alliance to prevent and resolve homelessness in the rapidly expanding Wyndham growth corridor.
- Federal funding towards the establishment of a *HeadtoHelp* Hub in Wyndham where people can access counselling and support services with mental health professionals.
- Government funding towards shovel ready transport projects that will create local jobs and improve road safety.



Above: Council employee, Mayor Cr Adele Hegedich and Cr Heather Marcus at the new Wyndham City pound.



Above: Wyndham's Councillors pictured at the Declaration of Polls by the Victorian Electoral Commission.



Above: Cr Mia Shaw at the Werribee Racecourse with representatives from Western United Football Club.

Partnering with Organisations to Support our CALD Communities

IN LATE 2020, THE DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY, FAIRNESS AND HOUSING (DFFH) PROVIDED FUNDING TO SUPPORT EFFORTS TO RESPOND TO THE GLOBAL PANDEMIC AND FIND LOCAL SOLUTIONS TO SUPPORT THE WYNDHAM COMMUNITY.

With this funding, in partnership with Wyndham Community Education Centre, The Huddle, MiCare, CMY, AMES and IPC Health, Wyndham City commenced a 13-week project in November 2020 to:

- Expand the bicultural capacity in local community organisations to support COVID-19 testing, contract tracing and support coordination, outbreak management, in- language communication and vaccination information and support.
- Increase access to culturally appropriate food, emergency relief and PPE.
- Support capacity building of local multicultural organisations and groups.
- Support for high impacted areas and cohorts including culturally appropriate testing, targeted health messaging and communication campaigns, a community health champions program, and engagement with community leaders and connectors.
- Share data and intelligence to enable a more effective and targeted local response across organisations and government agencies.
- Advocate for the needs of the diverse community when engaging with government.

- Support community members to reengage with health services and specialists after the Stage 4 lock down in 2020.
- Develop podcasts, provide weekly webinars and information sessions and translate COVID information into different language.
- Promote positive health messaging, testing and accurate information and provide updates on COVID vaccination.

The success of this project led to the Minister for Multicultural Affairs extending the funding for a further six months until the end of October 2021. In total, for both phases, a total of \$750,000 has been directed towards this project.

Between November 2020 and May 2021, almost 5000 individuals, 770 families, 435 community groups have received support through these services. Moreover, there have been over 800 online community engagement services and, since February 2021, over 600 vaccination information sessions.

The funding also supported the community kitchen and emergency food relief services, resulting in almost 16,000 ready-made meals and over 6,900 hampers.

Engagement through Local Government Associations

THROUGH OUR ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION WITH OTHER LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT PEAK BODIES AND ASSOCIATIONS, WYNDHAM HAS BEEN ADVOCATING FOR MORE SUPPORT AND INVESTMENT IN OUR GROWING COMMUNITIES.

National Growth Areas Alliance

The National Growth Areas Alliance (NGAA) – which Wyndham City is an active member of – is the peak body for local governments in Australia’s outer urban growth areas and advocates to State and Federal Government on growth area challenges and opportunities.

In 2020-21, the NGAA advocated on issues including:

- **Growth areas experience of working from home.** NGAA’s new research on the lived experience of working from home (WFH) in Australia’s outer suburbs during the COVID-19 lockdowns has shown some unexpected and very positive findings. This includes: the boost to local economies from people working locally, and WFH is creating more businesses and employment opportunities for people living in outer suburbs as they are no longer limited by distance. NGAA has been advocating for further government infrastructure investment to support the greater number of people working from home instead of commuting.
- **Job creation and economic investment.** Australia’s outer urban growth areas has been facing a significant increase in the number of mortgage defaults and financial stress amidst a recession, shrinking levels of income support and the end of mortgage repayment moratoriums. The NGAA has been calling on the Federal Government and National Cabinet to focus on the great need in growth areas for job creation and other economic investment, along with long term shifts in cities policy.
- **Infrastructure investment,** including urgent action on outer suburbs traffic congestion. This includes fixing major transport and freight routes that cannot cope with today’s traffic, as well as local congestion hotspots. Growth areas also lag behind in social and community infrastructure like recreation facilities and early childhood services.
- **Jobs and strong local economies** – investing in local employment services, local community and employment hubs in growth areas and small business support through local government.
- **Health and allied services** including hospitals, youth mental health and family violence prevention services. Many of the existing services in growth areas cannot meet demand.

- **Equitable allocation of emergency alleviation and response funding** to support residents after recent bushfires and floods in growth areas and so high-risk areas are prepared for future emergencies.
- **Better planning policies and decisions for our cities,** including reviewing the emergency planning measures that were brought in during the COVID-19 crisis and researching the circumstances that led to so many growth areas becoming pandemic hotspots.

In the NGAA’s 2021-22 Federal pre-budget submission, it listed a range of recommendations including:

- Support vulnerable growth area communities by increasing income support (JobSeeker and JobKeeper) and directing health, mental health and family violence prevention funding to those communities.
- Address the COVID-19 induced record high unemployment rates in LGAs such as Wyndham City with enhanced employment services.
- Urgently commit resources to progress the stalled City Deal negotiations in North and West Melbourne and Greater South East Melbourne.
- Equip local government with the resources to unlock employment opportunities for residents who are not currently in the workforce, through creating and promoting local/home-based employment strategies and small business support.
- Urgently address the numerous congestion hotspots caused by rapid population growth and inadequate infrastructure investment in all states.
- Fund major transport and freight projects that currently hamper commuter and logistics movements and which are not designed to cope with increased demand.



Interface Councils

Interface Councils is a group of 10 municipalities – including Wyndham City – representing the communities in Melbourne’s urban fringe. The organisation advocates for better services and infrastructure for people living in these areas. In 2020-21, some of the issues Interface Councils advocated for included:

- More funding towards infrastructure projects and programs for the outer suburbs of Melbourne, especially areas with inadequate access to infrastructure and services.
- Increase funding for the Growing Suburbs Fund, which helps deliver community facilities including local youth centres, community hubs and playgrounds in growth areas.
- Greater funding towards social infrastructure and services. With the rapid and sustained growth of our communities, the Interface Councils has called for government funding towards emerging areas of need, particularly in social infrastructure and issues such as mental health.

In the Interface Council’s 2021-22 Victorian pre-budget submission, it called for:

- A one-off investment of \$333 million for an Interface Councils Stimulus Package to deliver economic stimulus for local communities.
- An annual and consistent funding commitment of \$75 million for the Growing Suburbs Fund that will provide certainty for a significant pipeline of priority projects.
- A long-term funding commitment of \$2 million for the Live4Life youth engagement program to improve mental health outcomes for young people and surrounding communities.
- A funding commitment of \$50 million per annum to maintain undeclared Arterial Roads.

Municipal Association of Victoria

Wyndham City is an active member of the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), with Councillors sitting on many of MAV’s Committees. The MAV represents and advocates for Victorian local government interests, provides and initiates specialist policy advice and information, and assists in building the capacity of Victorian Councils. Working with the MAV allows Wyndham to take advantage of their resources and influence to add to our own.

In 2020-21, Wyndham City attended the MAV State Council meetings, raising and voting on motions to officially call on the State and Federal Governments to improve the delivery of services, infrastructure and programs. This includes:

- improvements to roads and public transport infrastructure and programs,
- improvements to pedestrian and cycling connections and safety,
- increased tree canopy coverage across urban areas,
- the establishment of a youth employment taskforce,
- extension of JobKeeper, JobSeeker, Business Support Fund and Working for Victoria programs,
- greater access and support for aged care services, and
- delivering health, wellbeing and economic response packages for local government.

Wyndham City put motions to the MAV State Council meetings, which called on the State Government to secure land for primary and secondary schools and undertake infrastructure contribution reforms. An overwhelming majority of MAV Delegates voted in support of Wyndham City’s motions.

Left: Mayor Cr Adele Hegedich and Cr Robert Szatkowski meeting with Mayors and Councillors from growth areas around Australia.

Australian Local Government Association

The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) is the national voice of local government, representing 537 councils across the country.

In 2020-21, Wyndham City attended the ALGA 2021 National General Assembly (NGA). The NGA attracts in excess of 800 Mayors and Councillors each year and is also an opportunity to engage directly with the Federal Government.

At the NGA, we advocated for Wyndham and Melbourne’s West, ensuring our community’s voice is being heard. Wyndham City Councillors also met with Mayors and Councillors from growth areas around Australia, discussing our advocacy for a better infrastructure funding deal from the Federal Government.

Over 100 motions were debated at the NGA, including Wyndham City’s motion. Our motion sought the NGA’s support to call on our Federal, State and Territory counterparts to work with local governments in the roll out of place-based employment programs aimed at supporting disadvantaged job seekers – particularly refugees and humanitarians – under the New Employment Services Model.

This motion was unanimously supported and will be referred to the ALGA Board to inform future policy initiatives and for consideration in the development of work programs.

- Other motions that Council supported at NGA included calling on the Federal Government to undertake the following:
- ensure there is representation of Local Government on National Cabinet,
 - restore funding for Financial Assistance Grants to a level equal to at least 1 per cent of Commonwealth taxation revenue,
 - retain and expand the JobKeeper and JobSeeker Programs,
 - invest in social and affordable housing,
 - continue to invest in arts and culture stimulus programs,
 - provide funding and resources for circular economy capability building, and
 - establish a funding stream for local governments to support their efforts in climate adaptation and mitigation.

Victorian Local Governance Association

Wyndham City is a member of the Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA). The VLGA is an independent organisation that supports and strengthens partnerships and collaboration between councils, their elected representatives and local communities.

In 2020-21, the VLGA engaged in advocacy efforts that focused on supporting councils in their delivery of services and infrastructure.



ADVOCACY ACHIEVEMENTS

IN 2020-21, WYNDHAM CITY DELIVERED EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY PLANS AND WORKED CLOSELY WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN THE DELIVERY OF PROJECTS AIMED AT SUPPORTING VICTORIA IN ITS RECOVERY FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC. THIS INCLUDES:

- reducing traffic congestion
- supporting local employment
- improving our education system
- greater access to essential services
- sustaining our quality of life
- assisting local businesses.

This has resulted in significant positive outcomes for the Wyndham community, some of which have been listed below. Wyndham City will continue to work with partners and the community to achieve change on key issues.

Right: Mayor Cr Adele Hegedich at the launch of the refreshed Wyndham 2040 Community Vision.



Schools

Wyndham’s schools are under increasing pressure to accommodate a growing number of students. Wyndham City’s schools4wyndham campaign has been advocating for schools to be built in the areas that need them the most since 2017. This campaign has successfully brought wider attention to the issue of a shortage of schools in Wyndham, with the Victorian 2021-22 budget including ten school commitments for Wyndham out of the 27 across Victoria, with funding for construction of five new schools to open by 2024 and funding to purchase land for another five future schools. Three of Wyndham’s existing schools will also be upgraded or expanded, with Alamanda College, Tarneit Senior College, and Manor Lakes P-12 all having new works funded.

Kindergarten

Since launching the national *I Love Kinder* campaign in 2017, Wyndham City has played a key role in national calls for secure Federal Government funding for kindergarten, rather than ad hoc annual renewals. Following ongoing advocacy over several years significant progress was made in May 2021 with the Federal Government offering to negotiate a new four-year national partnership agreement with the states and territories. However, the details of the new national agreement for kindergarten funding are yet to be finalised. Wyndham City will continue to monitor the issue ahead of the upcoming federal election.



Road Upgrades

Wyndham City continues to advocate for upgrades to our road network to improve mobility and reduce the risk of death or serious injuries. 2020-21 has seen many of the road upgrades associated with the Western Road Upgrade package come to completion as well as significant progress on the State Government ‘Big Build’ program across the network.

Wyndham City continues to liaise with State Departments and Ministers, seeking support and funding for key road upgrades and duplications. Key outcomes in 2020-21 included state funding towards the signalisation of the Point Cook/Sneydes Road intersection, announced in the 2020-21 State budget and the upgrade of the Derrimut / Boundary Road intersection announced in the 2021-22 State budget.

With the Derrimut/Boundary Road intersection, Wyndham City was also able to deliver an innovative solution to address immediate and critical safety issues at the intersection in collaboration with the Department of Transport through the use of portable signals.

Train Station Car Parks

Prior to COVID-19 restrictions, commuter parking at Wyndham’s railway stations was at capacity, limiting the number of people who could access public transport to travel to and from work, and adding to congestion on local roads. At the time, Wyndham City called for government funding towards improvements to parking at local train stations and increased bus services.

The State Government announced it would build up to 1,600 new and upgraded car parks at train stations, including Wyndham Vale and Tarneit, as part of its Carparks for Commuters Fund. Since then, it has commenced planning for both Wyndham Vale and Tarneit stations and has upgraded the commuter parking at Werribee.

Rail Infrastructure

Wyndham City strongly supports and advocates for the State Government’s planning and funding towards major infrastructure projects in Melbourne’s west, especially projects that will unclog our roads and improve liveability for our residents.

The State Government’s Western Rail Plan was welcome news for the Wyndham community.

The Western Rail Plan proposes to deliver a faster, high-capacity rail network to service growing outer suburbs and regional cities and planning is being undertaken alongside planning for the Melbourne Airport Rail.

Progress has been made as confirmed by announcements from the Federal and State Governments relating to the route for the Melbourne Airport Rail and the Geelong Fast Rail (Stage 1).

Wyndham City is advocating for continued funding towards the planning and construction stages to:

- deliver much needed capacity, for now and the future,
- deliver new train stations,
- connect the Wyndham Vale line to Werribee as proposed through Western Rail Plan/Suburban Rail Loop, and
- reconnect the Werribee line to Geelong as part of the Geelong Fast Rail project with a stop in Wyndham.

Western Intermodal Freight Precinct

As part of the 2021-22 Federal Budget, the Federal Government announced up to \$2.0 billion for the Melbourne Intermodal Terminal, subject to an equivalent contribution to be provided by the State Government, to be located at either Truganina or Beveridge.

Wyndham City has been working with City of Melton to secure Truganina as the preferred site for Western Intermodal Freight Precinct (WIFP).

Building the WIFP will reduce congestion, increase productivity and efficiencies for freight transport and unlock the potential to create a freight and logistics precinct of national significance that can include a supply chain and logistics centre for excellence. Locating the WIFP in Truganina will ultimately have the capacity to support 39,000 jobs in Melbourne’s outer west, a region that will have a population of 1.26 million.



Wyndham Westlink – Ison Road Rail Overpass

Wyndham City has been advocating for Wyndham Westlink. This project includes:

- the construction of a four-lane Ison Road bridge over the railway line and additional works required at the Princes Freeway interchange,
- the signalisation of the Geelong Road (Princes Highway) roundabout, and
- the duplication of Ballan Road and associated Regional Rail Link bridge at the Ballan Road/Armstrong Road/Hobbs Road intersection.

As part of the 2021-22 Victorian Budget, \$13.9 million has been allocated towards the Wyndham Westlink project:

- \$10.3 million towards the early works for the Ison Road Rail Overpass, and
- \$3.6 million towards output for this project.

This includes funding towards the development of a business case for the Princess Freeway Interchange/ Werribee Main Road.

Council will continue to advocate for this project to ensure it is fully funded and delivered in a timely manner to support Wyndham’s existing and future population growth.

Local Employment Initiatives

Through the funding provided through the Regional Employment Trial and Community Revitalisation, Wyndham City has established an approach to working across business and community partners to support employment pathways for local residents. Across 2020 and 2021, this work has been solidified through the establishment of the Opportunity Wyndham network. This network involves local employers combining efforts with locally-based community service organisations.

Opportunity Wyndham is also the mechanism for ensuring that gaps in services are identified and existing services are not duplicated.

A range of initiatives have come out of the *Opportunity Wyndham* network, including supporting women to start small businesses and to enable jobseekers to build familiarity with industries. Other outcomes from *Opportunity Wyndham* are featured in the following videos: [Point of Difference Cleaning](#), [Western Leisure Services](#) and [Pack and Send](#).

The work established through the Regional Employment Trial and Community Revitalisation funding is being sustained over the next four years through a partnership between Wyndham City and the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, as part of the funding announced in the 2021/22 State Budget.

Wyndham Stadium Development

The successful bid for the Western United Football Club to become a member of Football Federation Australia National A League has led to a unique Public-Private-Partnership with Wyndham City and the Western Melbourne Group working together to build the Wyndham City Stadium. This 15,000-seat purpose-built stadium will be home to the Western United Football Club and will become the first major sports stadium built in Australia by utilising a value-capture financial model.

In February 2021 the Minister for Planning approved a planning scheme amendment to facilitate the Stadium development. In the past 12 months Aboriginal Victoria also approved the Cultural Heritage Management Plan for the site and design works commenced.



Sport and Recreation

Wyndham City has fostered a strong partnership with Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV). We have strongly advocated for improved consideration of greenfield projects as part of SRV’s grant programs. Greenfield projects have typically been poorly supported, as there has been a preference to provide grants to projects located in established sites with established participation bases.

This advocacy saw a \$3 million stimulus grant awarded to Wyndham City for the Truganina South East Master Plan Implementation project.

H3 Alliance

The Wyndham H3 Alliance is an alliance of health, housing and homelessness organisations working together to deliver and improve housing services and options in Wyndham. The operational funding for The Alliance was due to end in mid-2021. Wyndham City advocated strongly for state funding to ensure there is the continuation of the services provided by the H3 Alliance.

Wyndham City and the H3 Alliance welcomed the allocation of funding in the 2021/22 State Budget for the H3 Alliance. This funding will assist in preventing homelessness in the rapidly expanding Wyndham growth corridor by increasing access to housing supply, providing outreach, transitional, legal and health support, building capacity and addressing issues that lead to housing vulnerability.

Health Services

Wyndham City actively engages with health agencies and service providers, exploring innovative service models that complement the existing health service system and address system gaps in the Wyndham community.

The 2021-22 State Budget included further funding to support the health system in Wyndham. This included:

- Almost \$6 million for service and capital planning for the Werribee Mercy Hospital to determine the future requirements of adult emergency departments at Werribee Mercy Hospital.
- Funding towards the construction of the Point Cook Community Hospital.

It is anticipated the Point Cook facility will include an extensive range of public health including diagnostic services, pharmacy services, public dental services, general practice family and early childhood services, alcohol and other drug support services, and community-based palliative care.

Wyndham Justice Precinct

Wyndham City has been calling for State Government funding towards improvements to our court infrastructure.

In November 2020, as part of the 2020-21 Budget, the State Government announced \$272 million in funding towards a new Wyndham Law Court:

The new court will provide a full range of specialist court programs and services including hearing rooms, mediation suites and a specialist family violence court. This is part of plans for integrated services at the future Wyndham Justice Precinct which includes the new Wyndham police station.





Orange Door

Wyndham City has been actively advocating for improved family violence services in Wyndham.

In May 2021, Wyndham City welcomed the State Government’s announcement that the lease has been signed for the Orange Door Network in Western Melbourne, with a brand-new site in Werribee. This site, which will ensure more people can access assistance for family violence and child wellbeing, will bring together workers from specialist family violence, child and family, Aboriginal and men’s services.

Wyndham City has been advocating for the Outer Metropolitan Ring/E6 corridor, along with other councils in the western and northern metro regions. It was included in Wyndham City’s submission to the Infrastructure Australia Priority List and pre-budget submissions.

Wyndham City has welcomed the \$10 million Federal funding towards a detailed business case for this project.

Outer Metropolitan Ring

Werribee Irrigation Modernisation

Wyndham City alongside Werribee South Farmers have been advocating for the Werribee Irrigation Modernisation project and it has been included in Council’s previous pre-budget submissions.

Wyndham City has welcomed the Federal funding of \$11 million towards Stages 4 and 5 of this project, which will replace an inefficient channel-based irrigation network to reduce water losses and improve reliability.

The total project cost is \$31.5 million, and this funding will now ensure the project is completed.

Level Crossing Removals

Wyndham City has worked closely with government agencies, assisting with coordinating the delivery of Wyndham’s three level crossing removals.

The State Government is nearing completion of two projects located at Cherry Street and Werribee Street and works are well underway at Old Geelong Road. Council continues to advocate for improvements to the precincts that address community concerns.

Wyndham City also advocated strongly on behalf of the community for upgrades to the public realm at all three crossings, which is exemplified by the landscaping and skate park being delivered at Werribee Street.

Wyndham City continues to advocate for improvements to the Level Crossing Removal Project at Old Geelong Road. This includes providing design feedback to improve pedestrian bridge design, public realm, pedestrian and bicycle paths and amenities.

Smart Lighting and Smart Cities

The Australian Energy Regulator (AER) has approved the implementation of smart lighting control systems, paving the way for councils to pursue smart lighting and smart city programs. Further, the AER has approved network expenditure to upgrade the grid to support higher penetrations of local renewable energy resources such as solar and electric vehicles, a position supported through Wyndham City’s advocacy submissions.

Whilst expenditure on smart lighting control systems have been approved, a change to the National Electricity Rules is required before the associated energy saving benefits can be captured on council electricity bills.



Waste Management and Resource Recovery

Wyndham City is an active member of both the Victoria Landfill Working Group, which was established by the Waste Management Resource Recovery Association of Australia (WMRR) and the Australian Landfill Owner’s Association (ALOA). The Victoria Landfill Working Group, WMRR and ALOA have been advocating on issues including the new Environmental Protection Act and guidelines as well as the landfill levy.

Advocacy through these channels has resulted in a change in the implementation of the new landfill levy. A change to the way the levy is to be applied from 1 July 2021 (from waste deposited at a landfill to waste received at a landfill) would have resulted in a significant administrative burden and potentially increased levy payments to the government. Successful lobbying by Wyndham, ALOA and WMRR has seen EPA commit to excluding transfer stations at landfills from the landfill licence.





SUBMISSIONS

IN 2020-21, WYNDHAM CITY SUBMITTED AND PARTICIPATED IN INQUIRIES AND CONSULTATIONS ON A RANGE OF ISSUES INCLUDING PLANNING POLICIES, SOCIAL HOUSING, INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIES AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES.

Submissions provide committees, Departments and Ministers with more information and understanding on an issue and inform them about the issues faced by our community. Submissions can also influence their recommendations and outcomes.

The following section outlines some of Wyndham City’s submissions in 2020-21.

2021-22 State and Federal Pre-Budget Submissions

Wyndham City provided its priorities to the State and Federal Governments. These submissions focused on new infrastructure investment, enhanced employment services, new primary and secondary school facilities, upgrades to roads and public transport infrastructure, funding for active transport pathways, and greater support for Wyndham’s housing services associations.

Victoria’s Draft 30-Year Infrastructure Strategy

In early-2021, Infrastructure Victoria released their Draft 30 Year Infrastructure Strategy, which includes 95 draft recommendations aimed at creating a more prosperous, inclusive and sustainable Victoria. Infrastructure Victoria sought written submissions from local governments, members of the community and non-government organisations.

Wyndham City’s submission to Infrastructure Victoria provided a response to the draft recommendations and highlighted the importance of well-planned neighbourhoods for people’s health and wellbeing. It also outlined the need for significant investment towards local infrastructure projects and service improvements. This includes funding towards health infrastructure projects, the planning and construction of new schools, and major upgrades to our transport network.

Ten-Year Strategy for Social and Affordable Housing for Victoria

A submission was made to Homes Victoria on social and affordable housing as part of a 10-year strategy that will ensure more Victorians have safe, suitable and secure housing.

The pandemic highlighted the need for all Victorians to have access to suitable housing and also emphasised some glaring inequalities. In its submission, Wyndham City supports the State Government’s aims in Victoria’s Big Housing Build and the need for a strategy to guide the social and affordable housing challenge, recognising that this will require ongoing effort over many years, extending beyond the Big Housing Build and the ten-year time frame of the proposed Strategy.

The submission also highlighted the importance that partnerships between levels of government are necessary to provide social and affordable housing as essential infrastructure. It is Wyndham City’s view that all levels of government need to be involved in providing infrastructure to realise its full benefits due to the scale of investment needed and to ensure that the benefits are spread across the community.

The forecast growth of households and dwellings for Wyndham parallels the population forecast from 270,000 to over 400,000 by 2031. Wyndham was recognised in Victoria’s Big Housing Build as a priority local government in need of more housing to cope with demand.

Housing affordability is a recognised issue across the municipality. Wyndham housing needs assessment highlights the following:

- Local housing stock is considerably lacking in diversity with 3- or 4-bedroom dwellings comprising more than 75 per cent of stock, and social housing making up just 1.7 per cent of total dwellings.
- A quarter of households in Wyndham experience housing stress.
- As the dominant household type is families with children, the majority of households in rental and mortgage stress are families with children.

- Homelessness also increased in Wyndham by 76.3 per cent over the period 2011-2016, second only to the City of Melbourne.

The impacts of the pandemic have been experienced in Wyndham in a higher concentration than many other Victorian regions, as one of the hardest hit communities. In many instances the pandemic exacerbated already crowded living conditions and highlighted the housing challenges particular to Wyndham, including the lack of diverse housing options.

In response to the discussion paper, Wyndham City made and submitted a range of recommendations, including:

- Embrace guiding principles for the 10-year Housing Strategy that include long-term social and affordable housing provision and replenishment and consider social housing as essential infrastructure.
- The Strategy to prioritise particular groups according to their level of need in order to guide housing provision over the term of this strategy and beyond.
- Use the Strategy as a tool to also combat social exclusion and broaden negative perceptions of social and affordable housing populations.
- Homes Victoria considers stability (successful tenancy) within the social rented sector as a successful housing pathway.
- In consultation with diverse stakeholders, seek to address the diversity of housing needs, specific to each locale.
- Provide guidelines and regulations to ensure social housing developments are well located by setting priorities in consultation with local government authorities as well as guidance on the preferred compositions of housing types within a building development.

Infrastructure Australia – 2021 Infrastructure Priority List

Wyndham City provided a submission to the Infrastructure Australia 2021 Infrastructure Priority List. The submission outlined potential infrastructure solutions to address nationally significant infrastructure problems and opportunities.

Wyndham Westlink, the fast rail to Geelong, upgrades to the Wyndham Vale line, preschool and school infrastructure, and the Outer Metropolitan Ring Transport Corridor were some of key projects listed in our submission that require federal and state government support.

2020 Review of the Disability Standards for Education 2005 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1992

This submission provided key insights into the application of the *Disability Standards for Education 2005* and the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* as they relate to children with disability in early education and care.

Several key themes outlined include challenges with disability awareness and diagnosis in the first year of early education, understanding and applying reasonable adjustment to enable services to be more inclusive, the impact of COVID-19 on learning and identification of developmental delay, and the need for greater sector collaboration to support early years transitions.

Arts and Culture

Wyndham City continues to strongly advocate for the arts and culture sector. In 2020-21, Wyndham City contributed to Public Galleries Association of Victoria’s and National Exhibition Touring Scheme’s submission to the *Inquiry into the impact COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism and events sectors*.

Moreover, in collaboration with Cardinia Shire Council, Casey City Council, Hume City Council, Melton City Council and Whittlesea City Council , there was a joint submission to the *Senate Inquiry into Australia’s creative and cultural industries and institutions*, which highlighted the impact of COVID-19 on the creative and cultural industries.

Environmentally Sustainable Design

A submission made to DELWP on proposed changes to the planning system relating to Environmentally Sustainable Development (ESD). Wyndham City agreed that there was a need to strengthen the provisions relating to ESD. However, it was noted that some aspects could be further improved, for example exploring how waste recovery and energy efficiency are incorporated into new developments. It is anticipated that a further round of consultation on the proposed changes by DELWP will occur in late-2021, providing further opportunities for feedback from Council.

Recycling and Waste Management

In December 2020, Wyndham City contributed to Municipal Association of Victoria’s response to the *Victorian Container Deposit Scheme Discussion Paper*. Wyndham City also provided feedback to the Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning, advocating for accessibility and convenience, job creation and retention of refunds locally.

In addition, Wyndham City noted the importance of integration with a separate glass collection or drop off model, preference for all glass bottles and jars to be accepted, and for the State Government to determine a shared benefit for local government and materials recovery facility operators.

Green Living Advocacy

Wyndham City contributed to the development of the *Municipal public health and wellbeing planning guidance: Tackling climate change* and its impact on health.

The consultation process involved seeking information on Council plans, initiatives and evaluation processes related to climate change and health and what councils would like to see in the guidance document. The key issues highlighted in Wyndham’s submission included:

- Messaging on climate change impacts need to clarify that climate change is an added stressor to existing health risks.
- Weather related disaster events are made worse by climate change.
- Ensuring the guidance documents are understood by non-climate change professionals.
- The incorporation of Sustainable Development Goals into the guidelines.

Container Deposit Scheme

Wyndham City provided a submission on the Victorian Container Deposit Scheme – a scheme aimed to increase beverage container recycling and reduce litter in Victoria.

Wyndham City’s submission outlined our support on the proposed objectives, the split responsibility governance model, a mix of collection points and a scheme that focusses on the local economy.

Cooling and Greening Draft Planning Reforms

The Cooling and Greening project by Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning looked at planning reforms to meet state canopy cover targets and encourage retention of existing trees. Wyndham City’s submission outlined that Council largely agreed with the proposal which had tree planting and deep soil area requirements for metro Melbourne and introduced a permit system for tree removal.

In addition, the following recommendations were made:

- Separate requirement for industrial zones.
- Include engineering soil solutions
- Improved wording relating to tree criteria.
- Inclusion of rural cities under the policy (in addition to metro Melbourne).

Review of Planning for Melbourne’s Green Wedges and Agricultural Land

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) invited feedback for a second time from stakeholders including individuals, organisations and local communities which sought input and views on several reform planning options intended to deliver lasting protection of Melbourne’s agricultural land and guide decision-making in green wedge areas. Wyndham City is considered a stakeholder to the project due to the extensive green wedge areas and state-significant agricultural land that are contained within the municipality.

Melbourne’s green wedges and surrounding farmland are critical to our economic prosperity. They provide thousands of jobs in agriculture, conservation, and tourism as they host a range of activities including food production and agritourism. They also provide critical infrastructure like

water treatment plants, and raw materials to build our houses. They also include some of the world’s best parks, wetlands and nature reserves, and contain a rich Aboriginal and post-contact cultural history.

Protecting the significant features and assets found in these areas is important for ongoing environmental, economic, cultural and health and wellbeing outcomes for all Victorians.

Wyndham City’s submission to the State Government review of Melbourne’s Green Wedges and Agricultural land supported the need for robust planning controls to maintain the benefits provided by green wedges and manage land use to support long term agricultural use that serves the needs of Melbourne’s growing population.

The submission response supported planning initiatives and actions that help to mitigate and/or resolve the key challenges that are being experienced in Wyndham’s green wedges.

These include:

- Locking down a permanent Urban Growth Boundary that protects Melbourne’s remaining green wedges, biodiversity values, and agricultural land from urban encroachment.
- Supporting farming in the peri-urban areas, in particular the Werribee South Market Gardens, by providing security of water supply, quality of water supply (i.e. appropriate salinity levels), and appropriate water pricing.
- Developing an integrated water delivery network to support the above.

The submission advocated for such actions to be reinforced by the coordination of whole of government policy, including the allocation of resources and budgets for related infrastructure.

Western Alliance for Greenhouse Action and Victorian Greenhouse Alliance Submissions

Wyndham City is an active member of the Western Alliance for Greenhouse Action (WAGA) and the Victorian Greenhouse Alliance.

WAGA and the Victorian Greenhouse Alliance councils work collaboratively to respond to climate change across the region and encourage their communities – residents and businesses – to make a transition to a low carbon society. Their plans and projects focus on both mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and adaptation to the impacts of climate change.

In 2020-21, WAGA and the Victorian Greenhouse Alliance made a number of submissions and sent correspondences to Victorian Ministers. This includes:

Interim Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Targets

In letters to the Victorian Premier and the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, the Victorian Greenhouse Alliance outlined their support for an interim reduction target of 67 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030. This was based on the State Government's Independent Expert Panel's conclusion that a target of that level is necessary to secure an even chance of limiting warming to 1.5°C.

The Victorian Greenhouse Alliance did not support the panel's recommendation of a lower target (45-60 per cent by 2030).

Climate Positive Stimulus Projects

In a correspondence to the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change and other key stakeholders, WAGA advocated for the opportunity to link the economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic with the need to develop the local skills and supply chains to transition to zero carbon emissions. It also outlined the need to consider the unique capabilities and capacity of councils to support local economies, create jobs and tackle climate change.

Clean Jobs Plan

WAGA contributed to a submission lead by the One Million Homes Alliance, calling on the State Government to implement a Clean Jobs Plan in alignment with the Government's climate and energy jobs commitment. This included:

- Expanding the Solar Homes program.
- Major funding to upgrade public and community housing.
- A new Victorian Energy Upgrades schedule for the replacement of gas hot water and ducted heating systems.
- Investing in energy efficiency skills and training programs.
- Sufficient funding for the Greener Government Building Program for public buildings.
- Amending the Victorian Building Authority minimum 6-star energy provisions to include heat pumps as acceptable.

Proposed Electric Vehicle Tax

In a correspondence to the Victorian Treasurer, WAGA outlined their concerns regarding a standalone road usage tax on electric vehicles without broader policy reform around sustainable transport and road funding. WAGA outlined some of the key issues with the tax included its negative impact on the electric vehicle industry, potential negative impacts (social, economic, environmental and health impacts), and that it is not an optimal way to reform and fund road usage.

WAGA recommended that the State Government:

- consult with key stakeholders about wider reform before committing to this tax, and
- ensure that any reform of the transport system and road usage in Victoria supports rather than threatens the nascent electric vehicle industry.



FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information or to receive a copy of this document in an alternate format, please contact:

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