

Final Report

Banyule

Economic Development Strategy 2023-2028



Acknowledgement of Country

Banyule City Council is proud to acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as traditional custodians of the land and we pay respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Elders, past, present and emerging, who have resided in the area and have been an integral part of the region's history.

Our community is made up of diverse cultures, beliefs, abilities, bodies, sexualities, ages and genders. We are committed to access, equity, participation and rights for everyone: principles which empower, foster harmony and increase the wellbeing of an inclusive community

The Banyule City Council Economic Development Strategy was prepared by Urban Enterprise in collaboration with Banyule City Council.

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**urban
enterprise**


Banyule
City Council



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Executive Summary

Overview

The Banyule Economic Development Strategy provides Council with a five-year plan to support economic activity and sustained growth for the municipality. The document provides long-term economic development strategies and objectives, aligning with the Banyule 2041 Community Vision, as well as short-term deliverables for Council to implement.

The information in this Strategy is informed by independent research and analysis, as well as consultation with industry representatives, community groups, businesses, Council and Government stakeholders.

Banyule

Banyule is situated in Melbourne's north-eastern suburbs, between seven and 21 kilometres from the Melbourne CBD, and forms part of the northern metropolitan region. The municipality has a range of strategic locational attributes, including close proximity to Melbourne's CBD, Melbourne airport, rail access and proximity to open space and major trails in the Yarra Valley Parklands.

Banyule is renowned for its established activity centres and shopping precincts, which are dispersed across the municipality. These areas 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 and infrastructure role for the municipality.

The municipality also includes major employment precincts that support a range of businesses and support services for residents

Macroeconomic Influences



COVID-19 and Business Recovery



Remote and Flexible Working Arrangements



Workforce Shortages



Demand for Co-Working Spaces



Growing Demand for Health Care



Transition of Retail



Manufacturing



Environmental Sustainability and Circular Economy



Rise in Renewable Energy

Key Demographic and Economic Trends

Population and Dwelling Growth



129,387

Current Population

+35,869 Population Change
2021 - 2041



53,989

Current Dwellings

+12,814 Dwellings Change
2021 - 2041

Key economic indicators

Total Output



\$9.7 B

1. Health Care and Social Assistance 27%
2. Construction 15%
3. Manufacturing 7%

Regional Export Value



\$2.4 B

1. Health Care and Social Assistance 64%
2. Manufacturing 10%
3. Transport, Postal and Warehousing 5%

Local Jobs



48,413

1. Health Care and Social Assistance 37%
2. Education and Training 10%
3. Retail 9%



2.6%

Unemployment Rate

December 2022

Heidelberg West 6.3%

Greater Melbourne 3.9%



11,016

Registered Businesses

66% Non-Employing



780,000

Total Visitors



\$277 M

Visitor Expenditure

Daytrip Visitor



75%

of Total Visitors

\$102

Avg. Spend per Trip

Overnight Visitor



25%

of Total Visitors

\$859

Avg. Spend per Trip

Strategic Considerations

COVID-19 Recovery & Business Support



The Banyule economy is in a fragile position as it emerges from the significant economic, social and health impacts associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the effects of the pandemic have been substantial for the local economy, this also presents a number of opportunities, particularly in relation to economic recovery.

La Trobe National Employment & Innovation Cluster



The La Trobe NEIC will play an important role in Banyule's economic future, making it a critical focus for Council's economic development unit going forward.

Activity Centres



The Economic Development Strategy will need to consider the employment and business role of Banyule's activity centres and consider how they may develop to capture greater business activity in the future. Consideration should also be given to a precinct-based approach to the management of the activity centre network to align with Council's investigation of a place-based framework for its service delivery.

Labour Force, Skills & Training



Many businesses and organisations in Banyule face issues both accessing and retaining a skilled local workforce, particularly in key industries such as health, education, hospitality and retail. Providing a highly skilled local labour force could be achieved through a combination of workforce attraction from outside the municipality, upskilling the local labour force through education and training and attracting resident workers who are currently employed outside the municipality.

Inclusive Employment



Local Governments have a strong role in supporting an inclusive, socially sustainable economy. Banyule currently operates a successful suite of inclusive employment initiatives and services, which should be strengthened and promoted through the Economic Development Strategy.

Visitor Economy



Banyule's existing visitor economy is relatively small and immature, however, there is strong growth potential due to its unique characteristics. The delivery of quality visitor infrastructure, services and amenity will improve the visitor experience, enhance the perception of Banyule for visitors and increase spend opportunities. Opportunities also exist to expand the municipality's open space and trails network to better connect visitors to Banyule.

Environmental Sustainability



Consultation highlighted a widespread desire to grow the economy in a sustainable manner that minimises environmental impacts. There is an opportunity for 'green' business practices through promotion of renewable energy and circular economy practices that minimises waste and increase efficiencies of inputs. Banyule is well placed to harness the benefits of the circular economy philosophy across all sectors, with Council playing a lead role in promoting, attracting and supporting a sustainable business base.

Economic Development Framework

Themes and Directions

The following economic development framework includes the key themes and strategic directions for the Banyule economy. This is used to identify the project opportunities and future actions for Council to achieve desired economic outcomes.



Theme

1

2

3

A Dynamic & Supported Business Community

Support and grow the business community to generate industry growth and successful economic outcomes

Workforce Growth, Attraction & Diversity

Providing a diverse and ready local labour force that have an opportunity to work locally.

A Prosperous National Employment Cluster

Promote the development of the La Trobe NEIC and ensure the Banyule economy is a key beneficiary of the cluster's future economic success.

Strategic Directions

1.1

Promote business recovery and resilience

1.2

Support business investment and attraction

1.3

Improve business networking, engagement and collaboration

1.4

Reduce legislative and regulatory burdens on business

2.1

Attract and develop a 'job ready' local labour force to meet industry needs

2.2

Ensure workforce supply and diversity

2.3

Support procurement activity that generates social, economic and environmental outcomes

2.4

Activate and support social enterprise in Banyule

3.1

Support completion of planning for the cluster

3.2

Understand the future role of HWBP and ensure its sustainability

3.3

Facilitate growth of the health and food industries

Priority for Action

- Business Support & Assistance
- Business Attraction
- Business Networking
- Business Communication

- Workforce Investigation
- Workforce Gap Analysis
- Housing Strategy
- Workplace Diversity & Inclusion

- Planning & Advocacy
- HWBP Masterplan
- HWBP Renewable Energy Feasibility Study



4

Thriving & Vibrant Activity Centres

Activate and improve activity centres throughout Banyule to support a range of uses, increase visitation and usage and deliver benefits to residents, workers, businesses and visitors.

4.1

A coordinated and strategic approach to the activity centre network

4.2

Support a diversity of uses including retail, hospitality and commercial

4.3

Support and enable Traders' Associations to activate and enhance activity centres using an outcomes-based approach

- Neighbourhood Activity Centre Strategy
- Placemaking Program
- Activity Centre Governance Model Review & Implementation



5

A Desirable Destination For Visitors

Facilitate the growth of the visitor economy by leveraging Banyule's unique natural and economic assets and enhancing the visitor experience.

5.1

Enhance visitor amenity, infrastructure and services

5.2

Improve opportunities to expand and enhance the night-time economy

5.3

Promote and protect Banyule's existing tourism assets and activities

- Visitor Economy Strategy
- Night-time Economy Activation Program



6

An Environmentally Sustainable Local Economy

Create an innovative and environmentally sustainable economy that generates growth opportunities and influences future strategic investments.

6.1

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

6.2

Build business resilience to current and future climate impacts

- Business Support

Introduction

Overview and Purpose

The Banyule Economic Development Strategy provides Council with a five-year plan to support economic activity and sustained growth for the municipality. The document provides long-term economic development strategies and objectives, aligning with the Banyule 2041 Community Vision, as well as short-term deliverables for Council to implement.

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The Process

The approach to the Economic Development Strategy is summarised below.

T1. Strategy Approach

Strategic Context	Review and assess local, regional and state objectives and priorities relevant to economic development.
Economic Research and Analysis	Profile Banyule's economy and assess industry and employment specialisations and areas of advantage. Assess trends that are influencing Banyule's economy including macroeconomic conditions, growth and land use change, technological and environmental changes and innovations.
Consultation	Engage with local business, industry and community representatives, as well as local and state Government stakeholders to discuss issues, economic development priorities and opportunities.
Issues and Opportunities	Identify and discuss issues and opportunities for Banyule's economy, and prioritise those to be addressed, facilitated and investigated in the Strategy.
Background Report	Prepare a Background Report that summarises research, analysis and consultation.
Strategic Framework + Economic Development Strategy	Prepare a 5-year Strategy that includes an economic vision, objectives, action and implementation plan.

Council's Economic Development Achievements

Banyule's Economic Development unit has achieved a range of outcomes since the last Economic Development Strategy was prepared, including:

- Continued to support our 11 main retail precincts through our award winning Special Rate and Charge Program. (Mainstreet Award, 2016)
- Supported local businesses in response to the pandemic through educational webinars, business development programs, networking events and regular communication.
- Developed an award winning Rediscover Local campaign aimed to boost the local economy by encouraging residents and businesses to shop locally. (Mainstreet Award, 2021)
- Launched a Rediscover Local website and social media channels to promote the Banyule businesses events and attractions.
- Supported business growth and connections via training, workshops and events, including our popular Women in Business Luncheon.
- Developed and implemented the COVID-19 Business Grants Program where a grant funding pool of \$960,000 supported over 250 Banyule business, creating 39.7 new FTE and keeping over 250 employees in jobs.
- Ignited 87 start ups through the COVID-19 business Grant Program.
- Encouraged outdoor dining during COVID via implementation of parklets, outdoor activations and expanded footpath trading permits.
- Introduced the Business Concierge Service to streamline the permit approvals for small businesses
- Formalised the Heidelberg West Business Park Association Committee, which now has over 140 members representing the business park.
- Developed the new-look Banyule Business website
- Enhanced our communication reach through the growth of social media followers and monthly newsletter subscribers.
- Delivered the Banyule Best Biz Awards that celebrates business excellence as voted by the community
- Partnered with NORHTLink to recognize and reward outstanding business in Banyule through the Northern Business Achievement Awards.
- Partnered with NORTHLink to support food based and manufacturing businesses in Banyule and supported the development of the North and West Melbourne Data Analytics Hub.
- Delivered an LED replacement program to businesses across several activity centres.
- Designed and constructed streetscape improvements to retail centres including Rosanna, East Ivanhoe and Montmorency.
- Partnered with the Brotherhood of St Laurence to support refugee and migrant women establish small businesses in Banyule
- Participated in the Jobs Victoria Jobs Advocates program
- Established Council's Inclusive Employment Program
- Drove the La Trobe National Employment and Innovation Cluster advocacy with key stakeholders in the precinct.
- Advocated to NELP and LXR to drive best outcomes for the business community.

City Shaping Investment and Infrastructure

There is a significant level of public and private sector infrastructure projects that are planned, underway, or have recently been completed in Banyule.

Key infrastructure projects generate positive flow-on impacts for the local economy, providing economic stimulus throughout planning, design and construction phases, as well as deliver economic, employment and community benefits once complete and operational.

The following summarises the large infrastructure projects impacting Banyule.



North East Link – the North East Link is a proposed 26-kilometre highway that will connect the Metropolitan Ring Road at Greensborough with the Eastern Freeway at Bulleen. The \$17 billion project also includes significant upgrades to the existing road network, as well as the construction of a new dedicated busway and a series of walking and cycling paths.



Hurstbridge Line Duplication – this project includes building new train stations at Greensborough and Montmorency, and duplicating the rail track between Greensborough and Montmorency and between Diamond Creek and Wattle Glen, to allow more trains to run more often.



La Trobe University City of the Future – La Trobe is planning a \$5 billion campus transformation, focussing on the evolution of an existing campus into a “multi-precinct” offering by creating residential, commercial, retail and amenity across the site. The project is expected to deliver significant economic opportunities within Banyule across a number of industries including construction and education.



Bellfield Renewal Precinct - Bellfield comprises three decommissioned school sites that will include a new community hub, market and social housing, large green corridors throughout the site, integration with both the new community facility and Ford Park, water sensitive urban design interventions, a pedestrian-friendly environment, and a residential and retail offering.

Policy Context

A range of relevant strategic documents and policies were reviewed to identify the potential implications for the Banyule economy. This included state, regional and local documents listed below.

Relevant Documents

State-Wide Documents

- DJPR Strategic Plan, 2019-2023
- Yuma Yirramboi Strategy (Invest in Tomorrow) 2022
- DJPR Visitor Economy Recovery and Reform Plan, 2021
- Invest Victoria International Investment Strategy
- Recycling Victoria: A New Economy, 2020

Regional Documents

- Northern Metropolitan Partnership Priorities 2017
- Melbourne Industrial and Commercial Land Use Plan
- Latrobe NEIC Draft Framework Plan
- Plan Melbourne 2017-2050
- Northern Horizons 2020

Local Documents

- Banyule Economic Development Plan 2015-2020
- Banyule Community Vision 2041
- Arts and Culture Strategic Plan
- Banyule Inclusive Local Jobs Strategy & Action Plan 2020-2025
- Banyule Social Enterprise Strategy & Action Plan 2020-2025
- Heidelberg Structure Plan
- Ivanhoe Structure Plan

The key policy document informing the Economic Development Strategy is the Banyule Community Vision 2041. The vision statement for the document seeks to identify Banyule as follows:

“We in Banyule are a thriving, sustainable inclusive and connected community. We are engaged, we belong and we value and protect our environment.”

Whilst all themes are important for Banyule’s future, the “thriving local economy” theme sets the directions for economic development, which is driven by the following objective:

“A thriving, resilient, socially responsible, local and integrated economy that encourages, supports and advocates for a diverse range of businesses and entrepreneurship, providing local investment and employment opportunities.”

The policy review highlighted the importance of business development and support at a local level, particularly in relation to training, networking, facilitating business growth, attraction and investment.

Addressing inequalities of access to employment, as well as ensuring access to key services, infrastructure and diverse housing to meet resident needs were also identified as critical inputs to economic development.

A number of policy documents highlighted the link between workforce development and positive economic and social outcomes. In particular, ensuring local job seekers are supported and provided with the relevant skills and qualifications, and local employment outcomes are supported were considered crucial to supporting the local workforce.

Ensuring environmental sustainability is at the core of all future economic development practices was also a common theme within the policy review.



Macroeconomic Influences



COVID-19 and Business Recovery

COVID-19 has already had a significant impact on the global and national economy, as restrictions on business and travel impacted local communities and businesses. As Victoria continues to adapt its COVID-19 response and recovery efforts, it is likely that the pandemic will have an ongoing impact on the state and local economy.



Demand for Co-Working Spaces

Co-working spaces provide critical support infrastructure often required for small businesses. Demand for co-working spaces is growing, driven by a combination of tech and creative start-ups, the re-location of businesses away from the CBD, the growth in home-based businesses and rise in remote working arrangements.



Remote and Flexible Working Arrangements

COVID-19 has accelerated the rise of remote working, particularly for employees that work in traditional 'office-based' industries (including professional and financial services), that now have greater flexibility to work outside the office environment.

This has had a significant impact on Banyule, as professional scientific and technical services is a significant employer within the municipality.



Growing Demand for Health Care

As the population ages, there is growing demand for health care across Victoria and Australia. Given this demand, Health Care and Social Assistance is projected to make the largest contribution to employment growth in Victoria over the next five years, which will have implications for workforce demand in Banyule, particularly given the existing strength of the municipality's health industry.



Workforce Shortages

Workforce shortages and limited access to a skilled 'job ready' labour is often a key barrier to business growth and can adversely impact the operations of key industries. This is monitored across Australia by the National Skills Commission, which has identified an increase in recruitment difficulty for employers in 2021, particularly for higher skilled occupations. This is the result of skills shortages across a variety of industries and trades, particularly in the hospitality, construction (inc. tradespeople), agriculture, childcare and aged care sectors.



Transition of Retail

The unprecedented events since 2020 have resulted in a rapid and likely permanent shift in retail buyer behaviour; resulting in a major increase in online retail purchases. In addition, a shift towards regionalisation and 'shop local' campaigns has seen consumers access goods closer to their home and spend on products that are sourced or produced locally.

Retail centres and strips are increasingly adopting a 'place-based' approach to expand the role of strips to include civic and recreational destinations for communities. Traders, community groups and local residents are working with local councils to improve 'place-making' initiatives to promote a mix of retail and amenities. This aims to better leverage existing community assets such as public open space, recreation and civic spaces, which aims to increase foot traffic and community dwellers, with a view to benefitting retailers and retail strips.



Manufacturing

Manufacturing is critical to Australia's economy and is a vital part of responding during a crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Manufacturing has been a key part of Australia's COVID-19 response, particularly in responding to the global supply-chain impacts, and the need to produce certain goods locally.



Environmental Sustainability and Circular Economy

Both the Victorian and Federal Governments have committed to reducing emissions by legislating a long-term target for emission reductions. Businesses are also transitioning to more environmentally sustainable practices (i.e. circular economy), particularly as consumer demand is increasingly influenced by the environmental impact of goods and services. In response, the promotion and adoption of environmentally sustainable practices is playing an increasing role within economic development and influencing how Local Governments operate.



Rise in Renewable Energy

The energy sector is experiencing change both nationally and globally as new technologies emerge, combined with government commitments to sustainable practices. As a result, there is increased demand for investment in new, clean energy technologies and products to increase energy efficiency and reduce emissions. Given the high energy usage for some of Banyule's key industries, including health and manufacturing, there is scope for local industry to explore opportunities to leverage the transition to renewable energy.



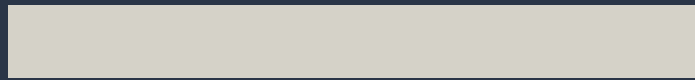


Banyule's Economy

Economic Snapshot

Key Indicators 2021

Total Output



\$9.7B

Regional Export Value



\$2.4B



48,413

Local Jobs

Top Industries 2021

By Output



1. Health Care and Social Assistance (27%)

2. Construction (15%)

3. Manufacturing (7%)

By Exports



1. Health Care and Social Assistance (64%)

2. Manufacturing (10%)

3. Transport, Postal and Warehousing (5%)

By Employment



1. Health Care and Social Assistance (37%)

2. Education and Training (10%)

3. Retail (9%)

Employment Profile



3.7%

Unemployment Rate

Greater Melbourne 5.4%



+2,061

Local Jobs Growth (0.9% p.a.)

Victoria 1.9% p.a.

25%

Job Containment Rate (2016)

71%

Total Commuting Out

Melbourne 21%

Darebin 8%

Business Profile

11,016

Registered Businesses

+184

1-Year Growth

Business Count by Industry

1. Construction (20%)

2. Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (17%)

3. Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services (11%)

4. Health Care and Social Assistance (10%)

66%

Non-Employing Businesses

32%

Small to Medium Businesses (1-19 Employees)

Visitor Economy 2019



780,000

Total Visitation

Domestic Daytrip 75%

Domestic Overnight 25%



\$277m

Total Expenditure

Domestic Daytrip \$102

Domestic Overnight \$859



Average Length of Stay

3 nights per overnight visitor

Economic Contribution

\$161m

Output
1.4%

864

Jobs
2%







Industry Specialisations

The economy (i.e. employment, output and exports) is driven by the industry specialisations shown below, which demonstrate Banyule's areas of strength and competitive advantages.

Combined, these industry specialisations make up a significant share of total jobs and output. As such, they are fundamental to the function and productivity of the local economy. Focusing on and developing these specialisations also provide flow-on benefits for other supporting and complementary industries and will help achieve business and employment outcomes.

T2. Industry Specialisations

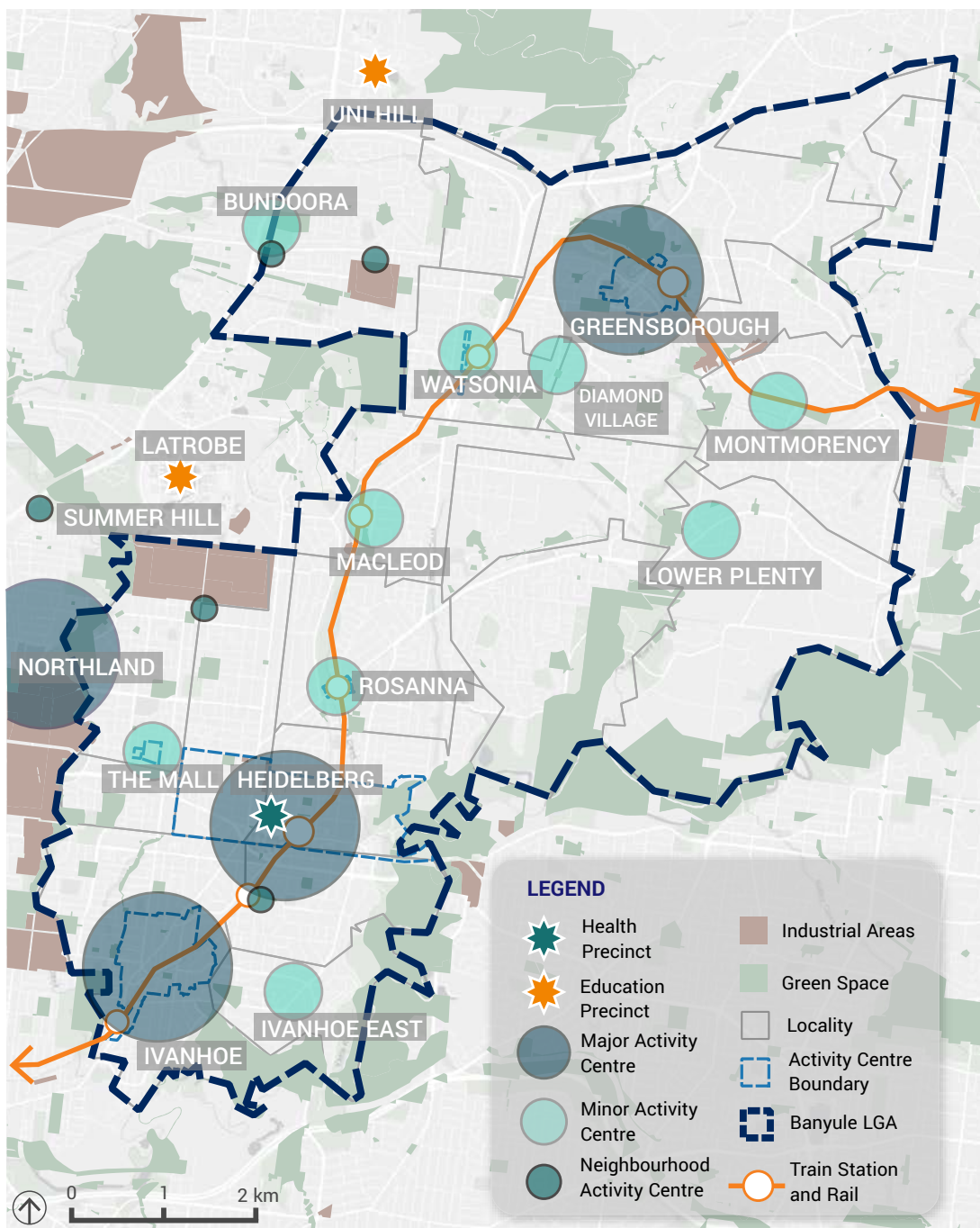
Specialisation	Key Sectors	Economic Contribution
	Health Health Care & Social Assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health care and social assistance is the largest industry in Banyule across all key economic indicators and represents a key sector of specialisation for the municipality. The medical precinct in Heidelberg is a significant driver of the local economy and is the main focus for employment in the local health industry 	36% Jobs 25% Output 63% Exports
	Knowledge Intensive Industries Professional, Scientific & Technical Services; Education & Training; Public Administration & Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The professional services industry is primarily supported by small enterprises, often operating as home-based businesses, and represents a potential growth industry for Banyule, particularly given some of the recent macroeconomic trends as well as Banyule's strategic location in proximity to the Melbourne CBD. Education and training is the second largest industry in Banyule in terms of employment and is primarily supported by the preschool and school education sub-sector 	21% Jobs 17% Output 10% Exports
	Industrial Manufacturing; Transport; Postal & Warehousing; Wholesale Trade; Construction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Banyule's manufacturing industry is supported by three key industrial precincts including Bundoora, Greensborough and Heidelberg West. These precincts are experiencing a transition phase, in-line with a broader national trend, away from large-scale traditional manufacturing to more technical and advanced manufacturing. 	18% Jobs 31% Output 18% Exports
	Population Serving Industries Retail Trade; Accommodation & Food Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite suffering a moderate decline over the past five years, the retail industry is still considered a significant contributor to the local Banyule economy. The various activity centres throughout the municipality support a large number of businesses and jobs within Banyule, and will continue to do so in the face of a range of external pressures 	14% Jobs 7% Output 3.3% Exports

Spatial Economy

Banyule is renowned for its established activity centres and shopping precincts, which are dispersed across the municipality. These areas 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 and infrastructure role for the municipality.

The municipality also includes key commercial corridors, health and education precincts that delivers key services to residents and supports economic activity and local employment. A visual representation of the major activity centres, employment precincts and other key assets for Banyule is illustrated below.

F2. Banyule Activity Centres & Employment Precincts



Population & Demographics

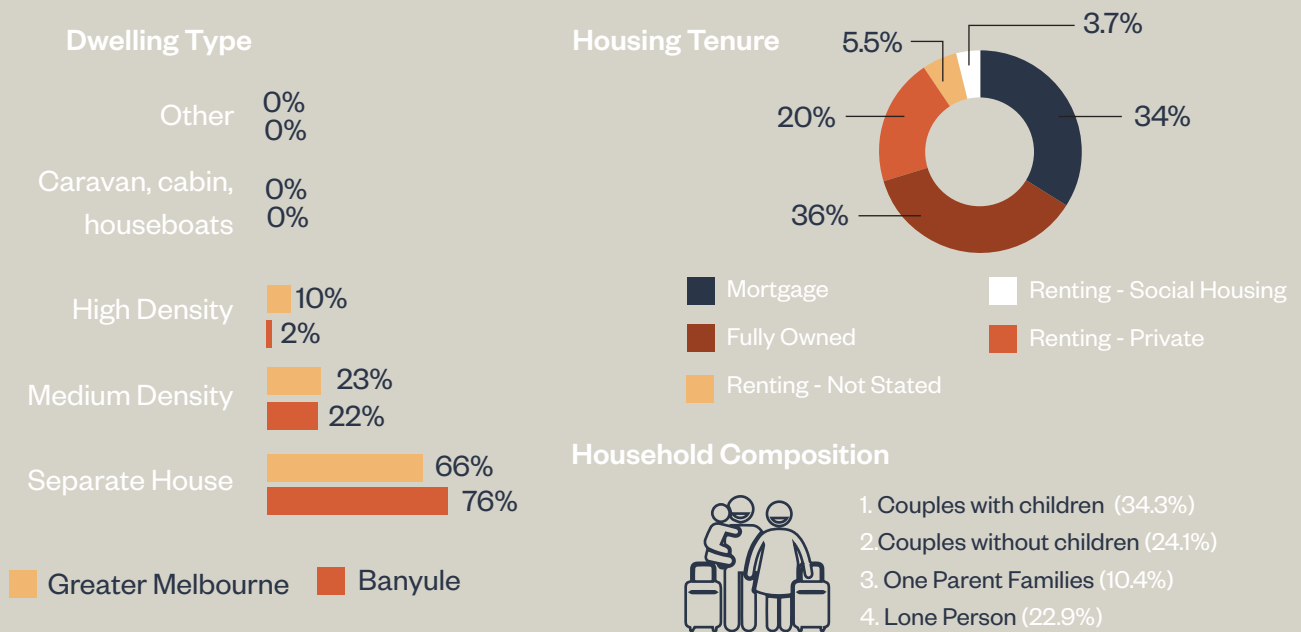
Population



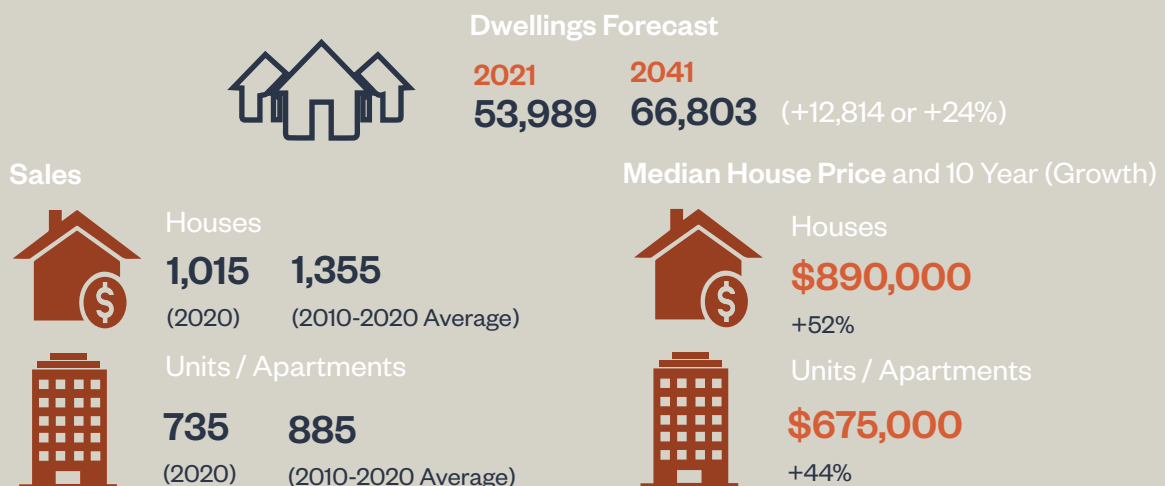
Social Economic Profile



Housing and Dwelling Profile



Property Market Indicators





Population & Demographic Trends

The population and demographic profile within Banyule has implications for the municipality's future. This provides the following opportunities and challenges for the local economy:



Age

The largest age cohorts in Banyule currently are parents and homebuilders (35-49 years), followed by the young workforce (25-34 years). These age cohorts play an important role in contributing to the local labour force. Banyule's population is also expected to shift towards an older age profile, which is likely to increase demand on services including the need for better health and aged care facilities.



Socioeconomic profile

The socio-economic profile of Banyule shows that residents have a high degree of wealth in certain areas, typified by income, employment, occupation, and home ownership. This is contrasted by pockets of disadvantage in other areas. This contrasting profile will impact Council's focus to help sustain affluence as well as provide opportunities to reduce inequality through quality services, infrastructure, and amenity.



Housing

The future rate of dwelling growth aligns with the expected population growth, which is critical to support existing and new residents. Dwelling growth will be driven by medium to high density development, primarily in Ivanhoe, Heidelberg, and Greensborough.

Facilitating housing diversity and density in proximity to Banyule's activity centres will be important to economic and liveability outcomes for residents, as well as create flow-on benefits for local builders, tradespeople and construction workers. Given the recent substantial price growth in Banyule, ensuring an appropriate level of affordable housing is available should also be a priority for Council. Affordable housing will support resident attraction from diverse backgrounds that will support economic and social outcomes in Banyule.

WANDER
NORTH



Strategic Considerations

Strategic Considerations

COVID-19 Recovery & Business Support



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Economic Development Framework

The outcomes of this Economic Development Strategy will align with the Banyule Community Vision 2041:

“Banyule is a thriving, sustainable and inclusive local economy that supports a diverse business base and provides investment and employment opportunities for all.”



Vision

Objectives

1. Support and grow the local business base
2. Provide a diverse and job ready local labour force
3. Promote the development and growth of the La Trobe NEIC
4. Activate and improve the activity centre network
5. Facilitate the growth of the local visitor economy
6. Create an innovative and environmentally sustainable economy



Themes and Directions

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Theme

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Workforce Growth, Attraction & Diversity

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A Prosperous National Employment Cluster

Promote the development of the La Trobe NEIC and ensure the Banyule economy is a key beneficiary of the cluster's future economic success.

Strategic Directions

1.1

Promote business recovery and resilience

1.2

Support business investment and attraction

1.3

Improve business networking, engagement and collaboration

1.4

Reduce legislative and regulatory burdens on business

2.1

Attract and develop a 'job ready' local labour force to meet industry needs

2.2

Ensure workforce supply and diversity

2.3

Support procurement activity that generates social, economic and environmental outcomes

2.4

Activate and support social enterprise in Banyule

3.1

Support completion of planning for the cluster

3.2

Understand the future role of HWBP and ensure its sustainability

3.3

Facilitate growth of the health and food industries

Priority for Action

- Business Support & Assistance
- Business Attraction
- Business Networking
- Business Communication

- Workforce Investigation
- Workforce Gap Analysis
- Housing Strategy
- Workplace Diversity & Inclusion

- Planning & Advocacy
- HWBP Masterplan
- HWBP Renewable Energy Feasibility Study



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4.1

A coordinated and strategic approach to the activity centre network

4.2

Support a diversity of uses including retail, hospitality and commercial

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Support and enable Traders' Associations to activate and enhance activity centres using an outcomes-based approach

- Neighbourhood Activity Centre Strategy
- Placemaking Program
- Activity Centre Governance Model Review & Implementation



5

A Desirable Destination For Visitors

Facilitate the growth of the visitor economy by leveraging Banyule's unique natural and economic assets and enhancing the visitor experience.

5.1

Enhance visitor amenity, infrastructure and services

5.2

Improve opportunities to expand and enhance the night-time economy

5.3

Promote and protect Banyule's existing tourism assets and activities

- Visitor Economy Strategy
- Night-time Economy Activation Program



6

An Environmentally Sustainable Local Economy

Create an innovative and environmentally sustainable economy that generates growth opportunities and influences future strategic investments.

6.1

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

6.2

Build business resilience to current and future climate impacts

- Business Support

Theme 1

Dynamic & Supported Business Community

Support and grow the business community to generate industry growth and successful economic outcomes

Overview

A core role for Council's economic development unit is to provide targeted business support to ensure the business base is able to strengthen and grow the local economy. Given the substantial impacts felt across the Banyule economy due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the provision of business support is particularly important over the short to medium term. Ensuring businesses have the tools to adapt, recover and grow in the long-term is critical to sustaining a prosperous business base.

As well, Banyule's business base is primarily (98%) non-employing or fewer than 20 employees (ie small-medium enterprises). Smaller businesses typically require additional support as they lack the resources to maximise growth opportunities or generate employment outcomes.

Strategic Directions

- 1.1: Promote business recovery and resilience**
- 1.2: Support business investment and attraction**
- 1.3: Improve business networking, engagement and collaboration**
- 1.4: Reduce legislative and regulatory burdens on business**

Indicators of Success

- Provide short and long term support to the business base through a variety of avenues
- Extend the business concierge program to continue providing planning permit support to small businesses
- Develop and maintain an up-to-date business database



Strategic Directions



1.1: Promote Business Recovery and Resilience

The Banyule economy is in a recovery phase as it emerges from the economic, social and health impacts associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. At the peak of the pandemic, Banyule lost more than 1,400 jobs and \$60 million in economic output as a result of government-imposed lockdowns placed on Melbourne.

Although the effects of the pandemic have been substantial for the local economy, this also presents a number of opportunities, particularly in relation to economic recovery. Recent Council efforts have been focused on business and economic recovery, in response to the COVID-19 restrictions that have impacted many businesses, particularly those industries (e.g. retail, personal services and hospitality) that are consumer facing and rely on population movements.

As the economy continues to transition out of the pandemic there should be a short-term focus on supporting the existing business base to grow the local economy. However, business support should not only focus on short-term recovery, but also ensure businesses have the capabilities to overcome future external shocks.

This should include the provision of business development assistance for activities such as:

- Marketing;
- Financial management;
- Business planning; and
- Accessing grants.



1.2: Support Business Investment and Attraction

Local Council's role in economic development includes the core activities to support existing industries and promote business growth and investment. These are typically facilitated through regular and meaningful engagement, with a view to helping businesses overcome specific challenges and providing a conducive environment to achieve positive business and employment outcomes.

Ensuring the existing (and future) business base has the tools to adapt, recover and grow in the long term is critical to fostering a thriving business community. Streamlining regulatory processes, ensuring appropriate commercial land and facilities and identifying business attraction activities targeting businesses that support Council's economic development agenda are important actions to ensure Council facilitates business investment and attraction within the municipality.

Providing a supportive environment for the small business community is a key priority for Council, given that the number of SMEs, which currently represent 98% of the business base, is expected to grow (particularly home-based businesses) in response to the rise in remote working and relocation of businesses from the CBD.

The provision of adequate employment land will also support future business investment and attraction. Council should consider undertaking a review of the municipality's employment land to identify opportunities to increase the supply of specialised employment land and encourage ongoing development of new office space.



1.3: Enhance Business Networking, Engagement and Collaboration

Building a connected and engaged business base helps facilitate industry collaboration, information sharing and creates B2B opportunities. This is vital to a thriving business community and ensures businesses have the skills and relevant support system to grow, particularly as most businesses are small and require additional resources to encourage growth.

Business networking offers a range of benefits for businesses including (but not limited to):

- Building relationships;
- Solutions to business problems;
- Business opportunities;
- Supply chain/customer opportunities;
- Improve social skills;
- Access new talent; and
- Benchmarking;

There is a potential for Council to facilitate and support additional networking and training opportunities for businesses, targeting those businesses who are seeking to upskill in certain areas of business management. This opportunity could be facilitated and administered through a dedicated CRM.



1.4: Reduce legislative and regulatory burdens on business

Ensuring the local business base is able to operate with freedom and flexibility will be critical to the municipality's future growth prospects. Council should identify opportunities to design and develop processes (e.g. Better Approvals for Business) to help businesses overcome regulatory barriers, improve the efficiency of planning permits and support investment.

Action Plan

The Action Plan provides a guide for the delivery of the projects and actions to achieve each theme's strategic directions and overall objective. The plan includes relevant actions, internal/supporting stakeholders, indicative costs and timeframes, categorised as follows:

- Short term (within 1 year);
- Medium term (1-3 years); and
- Long term (4 years +).

Note: Indicative costs are subject to confirmation and are assumed to be expenditure beyond the existing budget. In instances where projects are able to be delivered within existing resources, or where costs are unknown, these are listed as 'N/A'. Importantly, these costs do not refer to specific internal staffing requirements for Council.

Project	Action	Stakeholder/s		Priority	Time frame	Indicative Cost
		Internal	Partner			
Business Support & Assistance*	Provide assistance, including promoting access to grants and financial/business planning. This should also include targeted assistance to help businesses alter operations in the wake of COVID-19, including supporting online presence/e-commerce opportunities, providing outdoor dining permits, etc.	Economic Development		High	Short	N/A
Business Support*	Identify opportunities to design and develop processes (e.g. Better Approvals for Business) to help businesses overcome regulatory barriers, improve the efficiency of planning permits and support investment.	Planning, Building & Local Laws, Economic Development, Environment & Transport		Medium	Short & Ongoing	N/A
Business Mentoring & Training*	Provide ongoing workshops, mentoring and training opportunities to improve industry capability and support business growth. This should focus on areas that businesses wish to upskill in (e.g. marketing, financial management, business planning etc.). This should include targeting relevant businesses through updating or enhancing Council's CRM database.	Economic Development		Medium	Ongoing	\$8,200/year
State Government Advocacy	Advocate to State Government to understand mechanisms to better support businesses in the future. This will allow Council to be at the forefront of emerging industry challenges and opportunities.	Economic Development, Corporate Governance & Communications		Medium	Ongoing	N/A

Project	Action	Stakeholder/s		Priority	Time frame	Indicative Cost
		Internal	Partner			
Business Attraction	<p>Identify diverse and innovative business attraction activities that targets businesses that support Council's economic development objectives, including the ability to generate economic growth and alignment with environmental sustainability. These activities should focus on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting Banyule's advantages to industry (via marketing channels); Establishing a program that targets innovative small businesses and start-ups; Engaging with prospective investors; and Measures/incentives to encourage business investment and relocation to Banyule (e.g. assistance with planning permits, access to parking, high-speed internet, etc.) <p>These activities should be linked to the business concierge service provided by Council.</p>	Economic Development		High	Medium	\$30k /year
Employment Land Assessment	<p>Identify opportunities to increase supply of specialised employment land and encourage ongoing development of new office space, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing current planning controls and the extent to which they encourage and facilitate employment floorspace delivery; If necessary, updating local planning policy to ensure employment floorspace is prioritised and encouraged in strategic locations (e.g. along commercial corridors, public transport networks and commercially desirable locations); and Ensuring that strategic planning process (such as preparation of structure plans) align with policies to facilitate investment in employment land and office development. 	Planning, Building & Laws, Strategic Planning & Urban Design		Medium	Medium	N/A
Business Engagement Project*	<p>Develop an engagement plan that guides Council's interactions and partnerships with Government and industry, focusing on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information sharing and collaboration. Identify shared priorities across industry for advocacy purposes. Increase opportunities for funding to deliver priority projects/infrastructure. <p>This could be supported through the development of an up-to-date Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software that allows ongoing communication with local businesses.</p>	Economic Development		Medium	Short & Ongoing	N/A

Project	Action	Stakeholder/s		Priority	Time frame	Indicative Cost
		Internal	Partner			
Business Networking*	Promote business to business activity and connections through business networking, which can be facilitated by Council in collaboration with other industry bodies (e.g. NORTH Link, Traders' Associations).	Economic Development		High	Ongoing	N/A
Business Communication*	Regular communication and promotion of external private and public support programs and resources available to businesses, including through traditional communication channels, such as newsletters and contemporary communication channels, such as social media.	Economic Development		High	Ongoing	N/A
Business Awards*	Present business awards to top performing businesses in the municipality on a two-yearly basis and facilitate the ongoing delivery of the Northern Business Achievement Awards.	Economic Development		Medium	Ongoing	\$40K (every two years)
Business Grants*	Provide business grants to suitable businesses within the municipality to support growth of the local business base. This is expected to benefit 10-15 recipients every two years.	Economic Development		Medium	Ongoing	\$40k (every two years)

*Note these actions/programs are already delivered by Council in some capacity.

Implementation of the Strategy should be monitored on an ongoing basis using the indicators of success and monitoring tools outlined below.

Indicators of Success & Monitoring Tools

Indicator	Monitoring
<i>Provide short and long term support to the business base through a variety of avenues</i>	Annually, via Council records
<i>Extend the business concierge program to continue providing planning permit support to small businesses</i>	Ongoing, via Council records
<i>Develop and maintain an up-to-date business database</i>	Review and update annually, using the Australian Business Register (ABR) or Council-operated CRM

Theme 2

Workforce Growth, Attraction & Diversity

Providing a diverse and ready local labour force that have an opportunity to work locally and have clear skills pathways.

Overview

Banyule has a relatively stable labour force that has experienced modest growth in recent years. Growing the local workforce is critical for future business growth, resident attraction and increasing economic activity associated with higher income levels (e.g. local consumption).

Despite a relatively healthy labour force, there are several workforce-related issues that need to be addressed in order to support economic and business growth. Many businesses and organisations in Banyule face issues both accessing and retaining a skilled local workforce, particularly in key industries such as health, education, hospitality and retail.

Challenges in employing 'job ready' people can stymie business' capacity to operate effectively and can have implications on growth prospects. As well, ensuring all residents have access to local employment opportunities is critical to maximising positive economic development and social outcomes in Banyule.

Strategic Directions

2.1: Attract and develop a 'job ready' local labour force to meet industry needs

2.2: Ensure workforce supply and diversity

2.3: Support sustainable local, social and environmental procurement

2.4: Activate and support social enterprise in Banyule

Indicators of Success

- A decrease in labour shortages and skills gaps in target industries (hospitality, education, health and retail)
- Ensure residents have suitable opportunities to gain employment
- Provide adequate support to social enterprises operating in Banyule



Strategic Directions



2.1: Attract and Develop a 'Job Ready' Local Labour Force to Meet Industry Needs

Providing a skilled labour force that meets the needs of Banyule's business base is critical to the municipality's future economic development. This can be achieved via a combination of upskilling local resident workers (via education and training) as well as workforce attraction from outside Banyule.

Understanding Banyule's role in the broader northern Melbourne region from a workforce perspective is an important aspect of this strategic direction. The municipality's regional role should be a key consideration to understand the nature and scale of upskilling local residents versus workforce attraction from outside Banyule.

Council should, in collaboration with industry, education/training institutions and regional organisations (e.g. NORTH Link), identify and support programs that can: attract skilled employees; and ensure current employees have the relevant skills to meet industry needs.

Consideration also needs to be given to the ability of the local workforce to attain appropriate housing. Ensuring a diverse and affordable housing stock exists in Banyule will be critical to supporting key workers, particularly given the substantial price growth in recent years. A municipal level housing strategy will provide a framework to address housing issues and opportunities in Banyule and ensure the local workforce's housing needs are met.



2.2: Ensure Workforce Supply and Diversity

Fostering workplace diversity and increasing the employment base in Banyule will provide strength across a variety of industries and create a solid platform for employment growth in the municipality.

To promote sustainable growth and increase the socio-economic wellbeing of all residents, it will be critical for Banyule to promote workforce inclusion and employment accessibility. This will help reduce existing inequities, ensure future prosperity is inclusive and provide businesses with a larger pool of employees to support business operations. Where applicable, opportunities to support disadvantaged communities including First Nations resident workers should be supported and implemented.

As the business and subsequent jobs base becomes more diversified, the local economy will become more sustainable and resilient, which is key to achieving long-term growth.



2.3: Support procurement activity that generates social, economic and environmental outcomes

Council is able to facilitate positive economic outcomes via public and private sector procurement. Ensuring businesses and government are focused on local procurement is critical to future industry development and will create substantial flow-on benefits throughout the local economy.

Council must support sustainable local, social and environmental procurement to show leadership to industry and ensure maximum economic and social value is captured locally as Banyule grows. The procurement process should also support First Nations employees and businesses where possible to foster positive economic and social outcomes for this cohort of the population.



2.4 Activate and support social enterprise in Banyule

Social enterprises are an emerging innovation on traditional business models that reimagine what it means to operate in the economy. They are businesses led by a mission to benefit the community, deriving a substantial portion of their income from trade and reinvesting most of their profits to fulfill their mission. Despite strong social and economic value, social enterprises face barriers to growth and challenges to becoming sustainable and maximising their community impact.

Council should provide support to existing inclusive enterprises in Banyule and those wishing to establish in the municipality in line with the priority actions identified in the Social Enterprise Strategy.

Action Plan

The Action Plan provides a guide for the delivery of the projects and actions to achieve each theme's strategic directions and overall objective. The plan includes relevant actions, internal/supporting stakeholders, indicative costs and timeframes, categorised as follows:

- Short term (within 1 year);
- Medium term (1-3 years); and
- Long term (4 years +).

Note: Indicative costs are subject to confirmation and are assumed to be expenditure beyond the existing budget. In instances where projects are able to be delivered within existing resources, or where costs are unknown, these are listed as 'N/A'. Importantly, these costs do not refer to specific internal staffing requirements for Council.

Project	Action	Stakeholder/s		Priority	Time frame	Indicative Cost
		Internal	Partner			
Workforce Investigation	Council staff to consult with business on their workforce labour challenges and work with them to address these issues.	Economic Development		High	Short	N/A
Workforce Gap Analysis & Strategy	Prepare a Workforce Gap Analysis, in collaboration with industry and local employment providers, to identify employment and skills gaps in key industry sectors and identify common issues for employers and jobseekers. This should include investigation of training programs that could be initiated by the private sector to promote recruitment, up-skilling, including both public and 'in-house' training processes. The Workforce Gap Analysis should be complemented by a Workforce Attraction Strategy to address key gaps and provide a pathway for jobseekers.	Economic Development	North LINK, Victorian Skills Authority, DPJR	High	Medium	\$80k
Housing Strategy	Develop an overarching Housing Strategy that investigates the issues with housing supply and solutions to providing housing that meets the needs of existing and future residents (inc. provision of rental properties). This should look to leverage the recent State Government funding announcement for social and affordable housing. The Strategy should also identify investment opportunities for housing targeted to resident needs in proximity to key employment nodes within Banyule.	Strategic Planning & Urban Design		High	Medium	\$50k

Project	Action	Stakeholder/s		Priority	Time frame	Indicative Cost
		Internal	Partner			
Workplace Diversity & Inclusion*	Develop, facilitate and promote workplace diversity and inclusion programs for the public and private sectors to promote accessible employment opportunities for all communities, including First Nations residents. This will align with the focus areas and actions identified in Council's Inclusive Local Jobs Strategy, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stimulate inclusive employment opportunities; Strengthen pathways to employment; and Advance inclusive employment practices across the local government and private sector. 	Inclusive Enterprise & Local Jobs		High	Medium	N/A
Procurement Policy Review	Review Council's Procurement Policy with the view to promoting purchasing and use of local, social and environmentally responsible products and or services.	Procurement, Economic Development Inclusive Enterprise & Local Jobs Transport & Environment		Medium	Ongoing	N/A
Inclusive Enterprise Support*	Provide support to existing inclusive enterprises in Banyule and those wishing to establish in the municipality in line with the priority actions identified in the Social Enterprise Strategy.	Inclusive Enterprise & Local Jobs		Medium	Short	N/A

*Note these actions/programs are already delivered by Council in some capacity.

Indicators of Success & Monitoring Tools

Indicator	Monitoring
<i>A decrease in labour shortages and skills gaps in target industries (hospitality, education, health and retail)</i>	Annually: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth and share of local jobs across target industries, ABS Census of Employment. Feedback from tertiary education providers. Feedback from business and traders associations. Feedback from local businesses.
<i>Ensure residents have suitable opportunities to gain employment</i>	Annually, via Council's records and/or community feedback
<i>Provide adequate support to social enterprises operating in Banyule</i>	Annually, via Council's records

Theme 3

A Prosperous National Employment Cluster

Promote the development of the La Trobe NEIC and ensure the Banyule economy is a key beneficiary of the cluster's future economic success.

Overview

The La Trobe NEIC is a critical economic precinct for the Banyule economy. The precinct includes La Trobe University, the Northland Shopping Centre and the Austin Biomedical Alliance Precinct, plus a concentration of other health, research, commercial and retail activities in and around the Heidelberg MAC.

Given the limited planning for the cluster to date, Council and government need to distil La Trobe's value proposition for target industry sectors, enterprise and service providers. Industry sectors that stand to benefit from the cluster and its future amenity, service and infrastructure advantages need to be identified and targeted for facilitation and investment attraction.

The following strategic directions and projects are designed to leverage Banyule's specialisations within the precinct and ensure substantial economic benefits are captured within the local economy.

Strategic Directions

- 3.1: Support completion of planning for the cluster**
- 3.2: Understand the future role of HWBP and ensure its sustainability**
- 3.3: Facilitate growth of the health and food industries**

Indicators of Success

- Planning for the cluster progresses towards completion
- Support growth in the health and food industries within the cluster
- Increase in infrastructure funding from the public sector for the precinct in Banyule



Strategic Directions



3.1: Support Completion of Planning for the Cluster

To date, there has been limited work undertaken to understand the economic development opportunities for the La Trobe NEIC. The Framework Plan for the cluster has remained in draft form since 2017 and is supported by very limited economic research.

Council must encourage completion of planning for the cluster given the significant economic benefits, particularly from an employment perspective, expected to flow into Banyule as a result of the precinct's future growth. Although cluster planning is a state-led initiative, Council has an opportunity to facilitate (and fast-track) the planning phase through advocacy efforts and can also ensure the municipality is positioned to maximise benefits as the precinct develops over time.

There are significant assets within the NEIC that sit outside the Banyule municipal boundary, including La Trobe University and Northland Shopping Centre. These two sites are planning significant investment over the next decade to expand their footprint within the broader economy.

This presents a strong opportunity for Banyule to leverage the significant investment planned in proximity to its municipality. This will need to consider the nature of the planned investment, as well as alignment to existing strengths of the Banyule economy.



3.2: Understand the Future Role of HWBP and Ensure its Sustainability

There is an emerging and changing role for the Heidelberg West Business Park, which is considered an important asset for Banyule's economy. Whilst the precinct continues to provide manufacturing and warehousing in a traditional industrial form, there is an evolving role for the precinct to support higher technology production and services.

Understanding the future profile of the industrial precinct is important to ensure the growth potential of the precinct is maximised. Opportunities exist to explore the potential of leveraging future investment at La Trobe University in the food science and biotech industries, as well as activating the precinct via the night time economy.

Consultation indicated existing issues associated with parking, lighting, streetscape, amenity and public transport access (particularly the southern end) that also need to be addressed in future planning. There is also an opportunity over the longer term to transition the management model of the activity centre network to include industrial precincts and provide a more holistic approach to the management of all economic precincts in Banyule, including HWBP.



3.3: Facilitate Growth of the Health and Food Industries

Ensuring the health precinct is able to reach its growth potential in a sustainable and orderly manner should be a focus for the Strategy. Supporting the precinct is also important given the substantial share of economic value associated with the health industry in Banyule.

Consultation with the local health sector revealed the potential for much stronger collaboration between the industry and Council, as well as an opportunity to implement training and skills support that aligns with the employment needs of the health sector.

Food manufacturing and warehousing is an emerging industry that can attract significant business (and government) investment and support domestic market opportunities, including tourism. There is an opportunity to grow this sector further through targeted investment attraction.

Action Plan

The Action Plan provides a guide for the delivery of the projects and actions to achieve each theme's strategic directions and overall objective. The plan includes relevant actions, internal/supporting stakeholders, indicative costs and timeframes, categorised as follows:

- Short term (within 1 year);
- Medium term (1-3 years); and
- Long term (4 years +).

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Project	Action	Stakeholder/s		Priority	Time frame	Indicative Cost
		Internal	Partner			
Planning & Advocacy*	Continue advocacy work with state government to complete planning for the cluster. Council should also establish a steering committee that includes a mix of key industry and government stakeholders to regularly meet and discuss progress of the cluster's development. The committee could also explore the key economic development opportunities for the cluster, with a focus on benefits accrued in Banyule.	Economic Development, Strategic Planning & Urban Design, Advocacy, Engagement & Communications	Industry representatives, Darebin City Council	High	Ongoing	N/A
HWBP Masterplan	Develop a masterplan to understand and address the future industry profile and role of the HWBP. The investigation should have consideration for the evolution of surrounding areas, such as La Trobe University, and the precinct's ability to leverage changing economic landscapes (e.g. food science, biotech industries).	Strategic Planning & Urban Design, Economic Development		High	Medium	\$50k
HWBP Governance Review	Undertake an investigation into the ideal governance and funding model for the HWBP going forward.	Economic Development		Medium	Medium	\$20k
HWBP Renewable Energy Feasibility Study	Investigate the feasibility for HWBP to transition to renewable energy generation.	Transport & Environment, Economic Development		High	Long	N/A

Project	Action	Stakeholder/s		Priority	Time frame	Indicative Cost
		Internal	Partner			
Industry Attraction Strategy	Develop an Industry Attraction Strategy for the health and food industries that includes business attraction strategies promoting Banyule's advantages, and also identifies measures that encourages businesses to relocate. This should be linked to Council's business attraction services.	Economic Development		Medium	Long	N/A
Employment Land Assessment	Ensure adequate zoned land supply to attract new industry in appropriate locations within the cluster (in Banyule). This includes provision of sufficient commercial and/or industrial land, to ensure there is availability for potential businesses to invest.	Strategic Planning & Urban Design		Medium	Medium	N/A

*Note these actions/programs are already delivered by Council in some capacity.

Indicators of Success & Monitoring Tools

Indicator	Monitoring
<i>Planning for the cluster progresses towards completion</i>	Annually, via Council's records
<i>Support growth in the health and food industries within the cluster</i>	Annually, via ABS data/Council's records
<i>Increase in infrastructure funding from the public sector for the precinct in Banyule</i>	Annually, via Council's database

Theme 4

Thriving & Vibrant Activity Centres

Activate and improve activity centres throughout Banyule to support a range of uses, increase visitation and usage and deliver benefits to residents, workers, businesses and visitors.

Overview

Supporting Banyule's activity centre network will help foster economic development outcomes and deliver flow-on benefits throughout the local economy.

Banyule's activity centres and shopping precincts are key assets that provide a range of social and economic benefits for the region. Industry and stakeholders consulted indicated that activity centres in Banyule are facing a variety of challenges including ageing facilities and amenity, labour shortages, sub-optimal business mix as well as impacts associated with the pandemic.

Strengthening the employment and business role of Banyule's activity centres and ensuring they develop to capture greater business activity will be critical to the future success of the network. Many business stakeholders identified the need to improve public spaces in activity centres to make them more desirable to users as well as improve placemaking of centres. Ensuring the municipality's activity centres are managed in a strategic nature will also play an important role in futureproofing their sustained economic value.

Strategic Directions

4.1: A coordinated and strategic approach to the activity centre network

4.2: Support a diversity of uses including retail, hospitality and commercial

4.3: Support and enable Traders' Associations to activate and enhance activity centres using an outcomes-based approach

Indicators of Success

- Increase in visitation/footfall across a representative sample of the activity centre network
- Increase in expenditure/turnover across the activity centre network
- Delivery of a program of public realm investment across activity centres.



Strategic Directions



4.1: A Coordinated and Strategic Approach to the Activity Centre Network

Given Council plays an important leadership role in the management and funding of Banyule's activity centre network, facilitating a coordinated and strategic approach will be critical to the network's future success. Council should ensure shopping precincts cater to the need of the local community and visitors, and are accessible and inclusive for all users.

The current approach to activity centres has been described as piecemeal, and is lacking a strong strategic vision. There is a need for a municipal-wide activity centres strategy that clearly defines the hierarchy and role of each centre, as well as a uniform set of individual strategies that are aligned. Placemaking is also an important component of shopping precinct improvement and should inform future investments and strategic decisions.

Consideration should also be given to the adoption of a precinct-based approach to activity centre management in the future to align with Council's investigation of a place-based framework for its service delivery.



4.2: Support a Diversity of Uses including Retail, Hospitality and Commercial

Fostering a diverse range of economic and community uses within activity centres promotes sustainable growth.

For the activity centres and shopping precincts to generate visitation and local consumption, Council should support diversity of uses that caters to all users, including residents, workers and visitors. This should focus on the retail, hospitality and commercial industries, which are the core business base of the activity centre network and provide key services and amenity.

As demand for temporary business/meeting spaces and supporting services increases due to the shift to remote working, activity centres in Banyule should explore opportunities to capture additional economic activity within the local economy. These activities could also support the development of a more diverse and innovative business base, as providing support to SMEs could attract new start-ups, digital enterprises and entrepreneur-based businesses.



4.3: Support and Enable Traders' Associations to Activate and Enhance Activity Centres Using an Outcomes-Based Approach

Traders' Associations are important assets for Council as they represent and support key activity centres and shopping precincts and provide/facilitate key services. They provide a useful collaboration mechanism for local businesses and facilitate precinct development initiatives. Council should support existing associations using an outcomes-based approach to ensure efficient use of funding, particularly given Council's substantial ongoing investment in these associations.

Council is currently considering adopting a place-based framework for its service delivery over the longer term horizon, which is likely to have implications for its approach to managing the activity centre network.

The key objectives of the place-based framework are to:

- Tailor local government service delivery, including town planning, economic development, community services and open space investment to the liveability needs and aspirations of Banyule's distinct communities; and
- Design Council's internal operations to ensure service delivery is:
- Prioritised according to evidence; and
- Coordinated to achieve financial and operational efficiencies.

If this place-based framework is adopted, Council's approach will shift from undertaking one-off activity centre improvements to integrating investments across precincts to ensure economies of scale in service delivery and cohesive precinct-based outcomes are achieved.

Findings from a review of the activity centre network's management and funding model found that improvements can be made to the existing model to ensure optimal community and economic outcomes are achieved.

Action Plan

The Action Plan provides a guide for the delivery of the projects and actions to achieve each theme's strategic directions and overall objective. The plan includes relevant actions, internal/supporting stakeholders, indicative costs and timeframes, categorised as follows:

- Short term (within 1 year);
- Medium term (1-3 years); and
- Long term (4 years +).

Note: Indicative costs are subject to confirmation and are assumed to be expenditure beyond the existing budget. In instances where projects are able to be delivered within existing resources, or where costs are unknown, these are listed as 'N/A'.

Importantly, these costs do not refer to specific internal staffing requirements for Council.

Project	Action	Stakeholder/s		Priority	Time frame	Indicative Cost
		Internal	Partner			
Activity Centre Performance Indicators	Investigate the implementation of consistent performance indicators across all major and minor activity centres within the municipality. This could include the installation of pedestrian counters or a subscription to expenditure data Spendmapp. This would provide an evidence base to make informed investment decisions and track the performance of individual centres.	Economic Development		Medium	Short & Ongoing	\$22k/year
Neighbourhood Activity Centre Strategy	Develop an Activity Centre Strategy which provides an overarching framework and hierarchy for the activity centre network in Banyule. The strategy should align with Council's place-based framework and would ideally provide an evidence base to define a series of precincts within the municipality. This will provide clear guidance to the community and businesses as to the future role of each activity centre and ensure a coordinated and strategic approach going forward.	Strategic Planning & Urban Design		High	Medium	\$20k
Co-working Feasibility Study	Investigate the potential to provide co-working facilities and supporting infrastructure in strategic locations to support small businesses, home-based businesses and remote workers in Banyule. This could include provision of Council-owned facilities/meeting spaces or advocating for private investment in co-working hubs.	Strategic Properties & Projects	Private investors	Medium	Medium	\$20k
Development Program	Establishing effective internal program to engage with local property owners and the investment and development community to promote Banyule development opportunities within (or in proximity to) activity centres.	Strategic Properties & Projects	Private investors	Medium	Medium	N/A

Project	Action	Stakeholder/s		Priority	Time frame	Indicative Cost
		Internal	Partner			
Placemaking Program and Streetscape Renewal Program	Prepare and fund a place making and streetscape renewal program that identifies future prioritisation for streetscape upgrades and place making projects to activate all major and minor activity centres, including initiatives that enhance utilisation and increase local business activity as well as build community attachment and value to local places. These projects will be identified and prioritised according to the outcomes of the Integrated Placed Based Framework and the Activity Centre Strategy.	Strategic Planning & Urban Design, Arts & Culture, Economic Development		High	Medium/ Long Term	N/A
Activity Centre Governance Model Review & Implementation*	Implement the recommended improvements to the current activity centre governance model as detailed in the 2022 review. Council should also review the activity centre governance model in line with recommendations made in the 2022. The timing of the review should align to the completion of Council's investigation into the adoption of a place-based framework for its service delivery.	Economic Development		High	Short	N/A

*Note these actions/programs are already delivered by Council in some capacity.

Indicators of Success & Monitoring Tools

Indicators	Monitoring
<i>Increase in visitation/footfall across a representative sample of the activity centre network</i>	Quarterly, via pedestrian counters
<i>Increase in expenditure/turnover across the activity centre network</i>	Annually, via Spendmapp database*
<i>Delivery of a program of public realm investment across activity centres</i>	Annually, via Council's database
<i>Increase in liveability across Bayule's precincts</i>	Biennial Liveability Survey

*Spendmapp and Living in Place subscriptions are under consideration.

Theme 5

A Desirable Destination for Visitors

Facilitate the growth of the visitor economy by leveraging Banyule's unique natural and economic assets and enhancing the visitor experience.

Overview

Banyule has an opportunity to leverage greater economic outcomes from tourism by supporting sustainable growth in the visitor economy. Growing the Banyule visitor economy is critical for economic development as it stimulates business investment, promotes local consumption and commercial activity, and supports the creation of new local jobs.

Although tourism in Banyule is a developing industry, the municipality's unique characteristics position it well for future growth. These characteristics include quality green open spaces and waterways in close proximity to Melbourne's CBD as well as a large and growing health precinct that provides access to a significant visiting friends and relatives market.

There are substantial opportunities to establish Banyule as a successful visitor destination, particularly through:

- Leveraging the municipality's natural and water-based assets;
- Providing supporting product and infrastructure to enhance visitor amenity and generate yield (e.g. quality accommodation, food and beverage, retail etc.); and
- Activation of the night-time economy.

Growth in the tourism industry will also serve to diversify the local economy and reduce reliance (and leverage at the same time) key industries such as the health sector.

Strategic Directions

5.1: Enhance visitor amenity, infrastructure and services

5.2: Improve opportunities to expand and enhance the night-time economy

5.3: Promote and Protect Banyule's Existing Tourism Assets and Activities

Indicators of Success

- Provide adequate support to tourism proposals that assist in achieving visitor economy growth
- Increase in the number of investment enquiries, commercial planning and building permits issues related to accommodation proposal's in Banyule
- Increase in the number of night-time events/activities occurring in Banyule



Strategic Directions



5.1: Enhance Visitor Amenity, Infrastructure and Services

The delivery of quality visitor infrastructure, services and amenity will improve the visitor experience, enhance the perception of Banyule for visitors and increase spend opportunities. While Council has some influence in the level of visitor amenity and quality of infrastructure, this will also require significant private investment in order to drive real change in the local visitor economy.

There is no existing visitor economy strategy for Banyule to guide tourism development. This presents as a useful document for the municipality that would provide a strategic framework for the tourism industry going forward.

One of the key opportunities identified during consultation was an increased provision of accommodation for hospital visitors in Banyule. This has the potential to capture significant economic benefits that are currently leaking out of the municipality (primarily Melbourne CBD) due to a lack of accommodation options.



5.2: Improve Opportunities to Expand and Enhance the Night-Time Economy

A strong night-time economy has the potential to generate significant economic and social benefits in Banyule, including (but not limited to):

- Add vibrancy and a sense of uniqueness to an area;
- Create social cohesion and civic pride;
- Improve safety;
- Generate economic activity outside 'traditional' working hours; and
- Strengthen the tourism and cultural brand for the municipality.

There is an opportunity to expand Banyule's night time visitor economy through the provision of contemporary dining experiences, activation of industrial precincts and the introduction of night markets (amongst others).



5.3: Promote and Protect Banyule's Existing Tourism Assets and Activities

To create a successful visitor destination, it will be important for Council, in collaboration with government, industry and tourism stakeholders, to develop a unique brand that promotes Banyule to visitors. This should market Banyule's key natural assets, products and experiences to attract visitors and promote the region as a desirable place to visit. There is also an opportunity to leverage Banyule's proximity to other visitor destinations (e.g. Yarra Valley, Heidi MOMA etc.)

This could be achieved through development of marketing collateral that provides visitors with an up-to-date guide of key activities, packaged itineraries and local tourism services.

Action Plan

The Action Plan provides a guide for the delivery of the projects and actions to achieve each theme's strategic directions and overall objective. The plan includes relevant actions, internal/supporting stakeholders, indicative costs and timeframes, categorised as follows:

- Short term (within 1 year);
- Medium term (1-3 years); and
- Long term (4 years +).

Note: Indicative costs are subject to confirmation and are assumed to be expenditure beyond the existing budget. In instances where projects are able to be delivered within existing resources, or where costs are unknown, these are listed as 'N/A'. Importantly, these costs do not refer to specific internal staffing requirements for Council.

Project	Action	Stakeholder/s		Priority	Time frame	Indicative Cost
		Internal	Partner			
Visitor Economy Strategy	Appoint a consultant to prepare a visitor economy strategy that clearly defines Banyule's key focus areas to develop and strengthen its tourism industry and provides an investment blueprint for the future. The strategy would be used to identify key tourism product and supporting infrastructure which will meet the needs of existing and future visitors to the region and support economic growth.	Economic Development, Open Space Planning, Arts & Culture, Strategic Planning & Urban Design	NORTH Link	High	Medium	\$60k
Support Retail & Hospitality Investment	Support retail and hospitality investment in popular visitor destinations, such as Heidelberg and Ivanhoe, through engagement with industry and private investors.	Economic Development	Private Investors	Medium	Ongoing	N/A
Night-time Activation Program	Develop a night-time activation program to assist local businesses, creative agencies, community groups and entrepreneurs build a vibrant night-time economy by developing new and interesting experiences and destinations	Economic Development		High	Medium - Long Term	N/A
Outdoor Dining*	Support outdoor dining opportunities at key night-time locations throughout the municipality to improve vibrancy during the evening.	Planning, Building & Laws, Economic Development		Medium	Ongoing	N/A
Precinct Activation	Investigate the night-time activation opportunities at underutilised precincts across the municipality, in particular the HWBP.	Economic Development, Planning, Building & Laws		Medium	Medium	N/A
Night Market Feasibility Study	Investigate the opportunity to establish a regular night market in Banyule. The investigation should consider key night-time locations and seek to leverage existing economic strengths of the region.	Economic Development, Community Programs		Medium	Medium - Long Term	N/A

Project	Action	Stakeholder/s		Priority	Time frame	Indicative Cost
		Internal	Partner			
Building Activation	Investigate the use of existing buildings for night-time uses e.g. commercial office lobbies used after-hours as an art gallery or small bars. Council could work with developers and landlords to activate vacant premises with evening and night-time uses. This could provide affordable opportunities for local start-ups, creative workers and community groups.	Economic Development, Strategic Planning & Urban Design, Development Planning, Property Operations, Strategic Projects	Developers/land lords	Medium	Medium	N/A
Night-time Transport Support	Provide a safe and reliable transport environment to support the night-time economy. This could include relaxed night-time parking restrictions, improving way-finding and connectivity and advocating to state government for late-night public transport to key entertainment nodes	Transport & Environment, Economic Development		Medium	Ongoing	N/A
Visitor Guide	Develop an official visitor guide that showcases key visitor attractions and services and leverages visitor assets in proximity to Banyule.	Economic Development		Low	Medium	N/A

*Note these actions/programs are already delivered by Council in some capacity.

Indicators of Success & Monitoring Tools

Indicator	Monitoring
<i>Provide adequate support to tourism proposals that assist in achieving visitor economy growth</i>	Annually, via Council's records
<i>Support night-time events/activities occurring in Banyule</i>	Annually, via Council's database
<i>Develop a unique brand and associated marketing collateral</i>	Annually, via Council's records

Theme 6

An Environmentally Sustainable Local Economy

Create an innovative and environmentally sustainable economy that generates growth opportunities and influences future strategic investments.

Overview

Council, the community and industry has expressed the desire to grow the economy in a sustainable manner that minimises environmental impacts. There is strong local (as well as state and national) policy support for this initiative – such as the recently adopted Community Climate Action Plan – that seeks to reduce the City's environmental footprint. Council has also set a target of becoming carbon neutral by 2040 within the Plan.

The linkages between environmental sustainability and economic development outcomes have strengthened in recent times, driven by improved efficiencies and reductions in waste via sustainable business practices, circular economy opportunities to re-use waste (i.e. outputs) as a resource (i.e. inputs) and government policy (and funding) support for environmentally sustainable practices and achieving waste reduction goals.

Opportunities identified for 'green' business practices include promotion of renewable energy and circular economy practices that minimises waste and increase efficiencies of inputs. Banyule is well placed to harness the benefits of the circular economy philosophy across all sectors, with Council playing a lead role in promoting, attracting and supporting a sustainable business base.

Strategic Directions

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

6.2: Build business resilience to current and future climate impacts

Indicators of Success

- **Develop a policy to encourage environmental sustainability outcomes for commercial development**
- **Provide advice and promote opportunities about government funding to support and subsidise environmentally sustainable outcomes**
- **Promote industry best practise through distribution of fact sheets**
- **Organise a Council forum to promote sustainable development practices**



Strategic Directions



6.1: Support the Development of a Sustainable and Circular ‘Green’ Economy

Building a sustainable local economy in Banyule requires active involvement from Council through the following channels:

- Delivery of education and training programs;
- Leading by example;
- Investigate feasibility of major sustainability projects;
- Provision of enabling infrastructure; and
- Advocating to other levels of government and industry.

At a precinct level, Council must advocate and examine opportunities for on-site renewable energy generation in Heidelberg to meet the needs of the health precinct. Council should also investigate the feasibility for HWBP to transition to renewable energy generation.



6.2: Build Business Resilience to Current and Future Climate Impacts

Banyule’s business base will need to build resilience to future climate impacts to ensure they are able to operate in a sustainable nature going forward. Sustainable business practices will reduce operational emissions, whilst simultaneously realising greater cost reductions. The emissions profile of businesses will vary significantly depending on service. For example:

- Manufacturers: emissions are likely to be dominated by energy consumption during the production process and material transportation
- Hospitals: emissions profile likely to be dominated by significant heating, cooling and lighting demands
- Cafes/restaurants: equipment operation and food waste processing will largely contribute to their emission profile
- Retail stores: packaging and store energy consumption will often determine overall energy performance.

Council should facilitate and support sustainable business growth through policy development, advocacy, information sharing and education channels where appropriate. There are also a broad range of government funding opportunities available to businesses that should be promoted to the local business base.

Action Plan

The Action Plan provides a guide for the delivery of the projects and actions to achieve each theme's strategic directions and overall objective. The plan includes relevant actions, internal/supporting stakeholders, indicative costs and timeframes, categorised as follows:

- Short term (within 1 year);
- Medium term (1-3 years); and
- Long term (4 years +).

Note: Indicative costs are subject to confirmation and are assumed to be expenditure beyond the existing budget. In instances where projects are able to be delivered within existing resources, or where costs are unknown, these are listed as 'N/A'. Importantly, these costs do not refer to specific internal staffing requirements for Council.

Project	Action	Stakeholder/s		Priority	Time frame	Indicative Cost
		Internal	Partner			
Business Support	Promote opportunities about government funding to support and subsidise environmentally sustainable outcomes for the local business base	Economic Development, Transport & Environment		High	Ongoing	N/A
	Promote industry best practise through distribution of fact sheets (e.g. fact sheets promoting financial incentives and savings of environmental upgrades).	Economic Development, Transport & Environment		High	Ongoing	N/A
Circular Economy Business Case	Prepare a business case to support circularity assessing material flows across the municipality.	Transport & Environment, Economic Development		Medium	Medium	N/A
Circular Economy Training	Identifying circular economy training needs, developing short courses to meet these needs and planning various events to showcase the circular innovations already happening in Banyule. This should also include delivery of the Circular Advantage training program for businesses.	Transport & Environment, Economic Development		Medium	Medium -Long Term	N/A

Indicators of Success & Monitoring Tools

Indicator	Monitoring
<i>Develop a policy to encourage environmental sustainability outcomes for commercial development as part of a broad ESD focus</i>	Annually, via Council's records
<i>Provide advice and promote opportunities about government funding to support and subsidise environmentally sustainable outcomes</i>	Annually, via Council's records
<i>Promote industry best practise through distribution of fact sheets (e.g. fact sheets promoting financial incentives and savings of environmental upgrades)</i>	Annually, via Council's records
<i>Organise a Council forum to promote sustainable development practices to Council and stakeholders including the investment and development community</i>	Annually, via Council's records

Next Steps

To deliver the Economic Development Strategy, the document is supported by annual action plans. The annual action plans will provide a guide for the implementation of the project opportunities identified in the Economic Development Strategy. It includes relevant actions, lead/supporting stakeholders, indicative costs and timeframes.

It is intended that Council (led by the Economic Development team) may be required to lead, support or advocate identified projects, which may be delivered in partnership with State Government and/or the private sector. In addition, funding contributions (either in full or part) may be required to deliver certain projects.

Implementation of the Strategy should be monitored on an ongoing basis using the indicators of success and monitoring tools outlined throughout the annual action plans.



GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Gross Regional Product	The total value of final goods and services produced in the region over the period of one year.
Output	Represents the gross revenue generated by businesses/ organisations in each of the industry sectors in a defined region. This term is also referred to as total sales or total income.
Employment	Employment data 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.
Regional Exports	Represents 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.
Daytrip Visitor	Those who travel for a round trip distance of at least 50 kilometres, are away from home for at least 4 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.
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.
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.
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.

ACRONYMS

AAGR	Average Annual Growth Rate
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
EDS	Economic Development Strategy
ERP	Estimated Resident Population
IVS	International Visitor Survey
LGA	Local Government Area
PA	Per Annum
NVS	National Visitor Survey
TRA	Tourism Research Australia
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Index for Areas
SME	Small to Medium Enterprise



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Economic Development Strategy