

# COMMUNITY FEEDBACK – DRAFT 2025-26 BUDGET, DRAFT OUR DAREBIN PLAN & ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Feedback	Related Document
<b>THEME: ENVIRONMENT, PARKS &amp; SUSTAINABILITY</b>	
<p><b><u>Open space and recreation improvements - Whole of Central Preston community</u></b></p> <p>There has been a recent Federal funding announcement for female facilities at Preston City Oval. For a sector of the community, sporting facilities are important, and it is very positive to support increased participation for women and girls. Have no issue with investment in sporting facilities and appreciate that sports grounds, by necessity, take up a lot of space. However, in 2023, only 14.2% of the Victorian population participated in organised sports and only a very small fraction of the membership of the sporting clubs based at Preston City Oval live in Preston, or even in Darebin.</p> <p>The playground designed for pre-school children on the southeast corner of Preston City Oval was recently removed, with consultation only with those who live directly opposite. The new playground underneath the railway line is primarily designed for primary school-aged children. 5.3% of the population of Preston West are babies and toddlers, and 7.5% are primary school age. This leaves 87% who don't use playgrounds at all.</p> <p>Would like to see thought given to the open space and recreation needs of the whole of the current central Preston community, especially most of the community who don't play sport or use playgrounds. Added to this, the Activity Centre Plan approved by the state government, with significant input from Council, plans for more than 10,000 new homes in this location over the next 25 years, more than doubling existing dwelling numbers.</p> <p>With little or no prospect that any level of government will purchase land for new open space in the centre of Preston, we need a plan to optimise the utilisation of existing space. The areas surrounding Preston City Oval and the adjacent area underneath the elevated railway line could be developed for far greater use by a much wider cross-section of the community. For the population of this central part of Preston, Preston City Oval is their only local park for both active and passive pursuits, without needing to cross major arterial roads and walk 500-600 metres. This needs to be considered alongside ongoing use for organised sports.</p> <p>Ahead of the introduction of a simplified state Infrastructure Contribution mechanism in early 2027, I am asking that Council prepare a Master Plan for Preston City Oval and adjacent open space under the railway line. The Master Plan should gather ideas from the existing community, as well as have regard to the age and gender of the existing and forecast population.</p> <p>Having developed a draft plan, options should be consulted on. The Master Plan should include an action plan with indicative costings so that, as funding becomes available from various levels of government, different elements could be delivered over time.</p> <p>Please allocate \$100K to prepare a Master Plan for Preston City Oval and adjoining open space underneath the elevated railway line. Separate submission made to add an item to the Action Plan.</p>	<p>Capital Works Program 2025-26 to 2034-35</p>
<p><b><u>Lack of parks and playgrounds in the Preston area</u></b></p> <p>Concerned about the lack of parks and playgrounds in the Preston area (around the corner of High Street and Bell Street, Preston Market areas) for young families. Can see that money is allocated to playgrounds, but specifically what will be done? Including signage to these playgrounds and making them obvious for people to find. Concerned about the serious lack of green spaces. To sit and have lunch or have respite during a lunch break.</p> <p>There are so many workspaces in this area but no green spaces or parks full of people enjoying fresh air like you may find in other areas.</p> <p>Please make Preston greener, particularly Bell Street!!! It is so depressing.</p>	<p>Our Capital Works Program 2025-26 to 2034-35</p>
<p><b><u>UV-protective shade considerations</u></b></p> <p>Congratulations on the development of your draft Council Plan 2025–2029—an impressive and well-considered document that clearly reflects extensive consultation, expertise, and commitment to community health and well-being.</p> <p>As you continue refining the plan, we encourage consideration of a crucial yet often overlooked factor: cool, UV-protective shade. With more than 95% of skin cancer due to UV exposure, effective shade solutions play a vital role in reducing skin cancer risk. Shade also supports equitable access to outdoor spaces creating cool, safe, comfortable environments for community engagement, recreation, and active mobility.</p> <p>Incorporating specific mention of UV-protective shade in the plan would help ensure that public, play, and mobility spaces are designed with both thermal comfort and UV protection in mind. Without thoughtful integration, some shade designs and surface materials may inadvertently increase UV exposure, leading to unintended health risks.</p> <p>Please see 'Darebin City Council - SunSmart (CCV) suggestions for new Council Plans' attached for suggestions on integrating UV into your new draft plan.</p> <p>Greatly appreciate your time and thoughtful consideration of this important opportunity to enhance public health outcomes through smart urban design.</p>	<p>Our Darebin Plan 2025-29</p>

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<p><b><u>Embedding Sustainability across all departments</u></b></p> <p>Embed sustainability across all Council departments, particularly through its planning. New housing &amp; business builds should include sustainability measures to ensure we do not have new housing stock that are heavy emitters. What you approve to be built should also be included in Darebin Council emissions management schemes.</p> <p>Mass increase of high-quality bio-diverse plantings. Not just for flood mitigation or cooling purposes, but for bio-diversity purposes. Along train lines, in our parks, residential kerbside, all of these areas offer opportunities to draw down carbon and increase opportunities for nature to regenerate.</p> <p>Water sensitive planning, finding innovative ways to capture and reuse water will be crucial as we move into drought. Council major assets such as its performing arts centres and sports facilities offer perfect opportunities to capture and store water, hopefully for use in all the lovely bio-divers plantings being done!</p>	<p>Our Darebin Plan 2025-29</p>
<p><b><u>Suitable Tree Canopy selection</u></b></p> <p>Submission for the call for "Have your say" on the draft key strategic documents relating to this year's budget. Currently</p> <p>Submission provides evidence that the trees chosen for street plantings are not suitable canopy trees. In particular, the Brachychitons planted both sides of Mitchell Street Northcote from Victoria to High Streets are not at all suitable.</p> <p>They are stunted, subtropical bushes that have not thrived in 7 years and many are deformed. Submission is to request funding for a special project within this budget to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Have these Brachychitons in Mitchell Street Northcote replaced by another suitable species of canopied tree. Examples of options may be Lagerstroma, Gleditsia, E. Leucoxylon.</li> <li>2) In general, Council stop planting tall-straight or pyramidal trees that provide scarcely any canopy but soon need to be regularly pruned below power lines. These are not suitable Street trees. They are a source of frustration and waste of funds. My attached letter provides details as to why the current practice is unsuitable and why my requests above are justified.</li> <li>3) Concerns about the lack of safety for pedestrians crossing Separation Street at the Houptown Street junction.</li> </ol> <p>Request that Council funds in this budget, an upgrade of either the 40 KPH signs by installing them in the first place and ensuring they are visible, preferably using active signs.</p>	<p>Our Capital Works Program 2025-26 to 2034-35</p>
<p><b><u>Keon Park Master Plan</u></b></p> <p>Keon Park FC Proposal to pivot to a master plan for JC Donath East</p>	<p>Our Capital Works Program 2025-26 to 2034-35</p>
<p><b><u>Leadership in mitigating the Climate Emergency</u></b></p> <p>Commend the Council on its historic leadership in leading action to mitigate and respond to the climate emergency.</p> <p>Urge Council to fund all of the climate-related actions in the Darebin Annual Action Plan in full. Local Councils play an essential role in reducing emissions, coordinating community action and addressing the impacts of climate change on disadvantaged communities in particular.</p> <p>With the planet having already passed the 1.5-degree threshold far sooner than expected, drastic action is needed at all levels of government to curb emissions, build resilient communities and respond to the consequences of global heating that are already impacting our communities.</p> <p>Once again, Urge Council to prioritise funding for action on the climate emergency and fund the draft action plan in full.</p> <p>The Our Darebin Plan 2025-2029 needs to reflect commitment to action on the climate emergency, as set out in Darebin's Climate Emergency Plan 2024-2030.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Why have community climate education programs, targeted support for household electrification and energy efficiency measures for low-income households and renters been left out?</li> <li>- Why is there no transparent, separate budget allocated for the Climate Emergency Plan in the financial documents?</li> <li>- What has happened to the promised concierge program which was allocated \$50,000 in last year's budget to help 1000 Darebin households to electrify?</li> </ul> <p>Any delays in implementing these programs will mean delays in getting Darebin households off gas and leave low-income families continuing to deal with expensive, energy inefficient homes. It will also slow progress towards Darebin's goal of zero emissions.</p> <p>Each Council program area needs to demonstrate that it has taken climate risk into account and has appropriate responses in place.</p>	<p>Our Darebin Annual Action Plan 2025-26</p>

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<p><b><u>Greater Commitment to Climate Emergency Required</u></b></p> <p>Would like to see a greater commitment to fully funding the Climate Emergency Plan within the Darebin Annual Action Plan 2025-26. I am disappointed with the lack of emphasis on active transport, including the provision of separated bike lanes, accessible public transport (especially tram stops) and walkable streets.</p> <p>It is noted that Darebin Council is lagging behind other local government areas in supporting, committing to, and encouraging public fast-charging stations for electric vehicles. Would like Darebin Council to step up to be a leader in dealing with the climate emergency.</p>	<p>Our Darebin Annual Action Plan 2025-26</p>
<p><b><u>Elevate the Climate Emergency Plan Importance</u></b></p> <p>Currently, the Mayor's Message in the Draft Our Darebin Plan 2025-29 makes only brief mention of climate change and the new Climate Emergency Plan (CEP).</p> <p>Urge the Mayor and Council to revise the Mayor's Message to elevate the CEP's importance within the broader Council Plan by:</p> <p>Acknowledging Darebin's pioneering role in declaring a climate emergency and highlighting the strong community message heard during consultations that residents want urgent action on climate change.</p> <p>Mentioning the Climate Emergency Plan 2024-2030 as Council's ambitious, strategic, and sector-leading guide for climate action until 2030, including an outline or its four key pillars:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Caring for Country</li> <li>- Towards Zero Emissions</li> <li>- Community Resilience</li> <li>- Innovation and Leadership</li> </ul> <p>Highlighting the commitment to help the community plan, prepare, and adapt to climate impacts, particularly focusing on supporting those most at risk, such as renters and those experiencing disadvantage.</p> <p>Connecting climate action to health and wellbeing in the face of rising temperatures and extreme weather.</p>	
<p><b><u>Increase spending on Strategic Direction 4</u></b></p> <p>The table in Section 2.3 of the draft 2025-26 Budget indicates that \$32,553,000 (approx. 14% of total expenditure) will be allocated to Strategic Direction 4: Climate Leadership and Response.</p> <p>While recognising the focus on fiscal responsibility, I encourage Council to increase spending on Strategic Direction 4 to 15-20% of total expenditure. If that cannot be done in this year's budget, perhaps it could be a focus in future years? For both current and future budgets I would love to see Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explicitly prioritise and allocate greater resources to specific actions outlined in the CEP, such as programs to help upgrade homes and businesses (including for renters) and support for community groups and businesses to prepare for climate impacts.</li> <li>- Invest more significantly in measures to build community resilience to climate impacts and mitigate risks to Council and community assets, as suggested in the CEP as a crucial investment to avoid greater future costs.</li> <li>- Integrate a 'climate lens' more explicitly into budgeting decisions across all Council work, and use climate emergency principles to make informed financial decisions.</li> </ul>	<p>Our Annual Budget and Financial Outlook 2025-26 to 2028-29</p>
<p><b><u>Climate Emergency Plan Concerns &amp; Lack of Funding</u></b></p> <p><u>Feedback</u></p> <p>Putting forward a submission on behalf of Darebin Climate Action Now (DCAN) which has members and supporters from across the Darebin municipality. Our submission includes comments on the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Our Darebin Plan 2025-2029 and</li> <li>- Our Darebin Annual Action Plan 2025-26</li> <li>- Health and Wellbeing Plan</li> <li>- Financial Plans</li> </ul> <p>DCAN is concerned that critical actions in the Climate Emergency Plan 2024-2030 have been left out of the Our Darebin Plans and have not been appropriately budgeted. We are concerned that this will lead to potential delays and a weakening in the longstanding commitment of Council to act on the climate emergency.</p>	<p>Our Darebin Plan 2025-29</p>

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<p><u>Feedback</u></p> <p>Deeply concerned that Council's commitment to act on the climate emergency has slipped from being an urgent priority as acknowledged in the recently adopted Climate Emergency Plan.</p> <p>While some actions have been included in the current planning documents, other critically important actions have been left out. These include community education programs, targeted support for household electrification and energy efficiency measures for low income households and renters. The overarching goal of embedding climate leadership and climate risk assessment across all programs also needs to be reflected in the planning documents. It is unclear how Council will meet its stated emissions reduction and social justice goals when these important actions are missing from the strategic planning and financial documents.</p> <p>Concerned that action on the climate emergency does not appear to be a top priority for Council. Key actions in the Climate Emergency Plan have been left out of the Our Darebin Four Year Plan and Annual Action Plan which may cause delays to their implementation.</p> <p>While the Our Darebin plan includes a commitment to implement the Climate Emergency Plan some actions have been included from this plan, but others haven't.</p> <p>This leads o think that some actions are being prioritised while other actions that have not been included will be overlooked or delayed. These include: community climate education programs, targeted support for household electrification and energy efficiency measures for low-income households and renters. There is also no separate budget allocation for the Climate Emergency Plan.</p> <p>There is a lack of reference to climate leadership and risk assessment across the plan so it continues to be treated almost like a stand along strategy when all Council services and programs need to consider climate risk and have appropriate responses in place.</p> <p>Some of the action items in the Climate Emergency Plan that I am particularly keen to see implemented are:</p> <p>(Item 2.2.1) Create a program that provides tailored support and a financing mechanism to support electrification and renewable energy for both households and transport, with a target of engaging 1000 Darebin households per year.</p> <p>(Item 2.2.2). By 2025 develop and begin delivery of an education campaign supporting Darebin households and businesses to electrify, improve efficiency and access affordable 100% renewable energy.</p> <p>(Item 2.5.3) By 2025 develop and deliver an education campaign supporting Darebin households and businesses to reduce consumption, increase reuse and repair and support a circular economy.</p> <p>(Item 3.6.1) Deliver community education and capacity-building campaigns on energy literacy and efficiency, food resilience and water saving, that reach at least 5,000 residents annually, prioritising people in Darebin who are most vulnerable to heat stress, food inequity and energy inequity.</p> <p>(Item 3.7.1) Increase climate resilience and energy equity in Darebin through a program to support low-income households and renters to increase energy efficiency and climate resilience, reaching 150 homes per year via direct interventions and engaging with a further 1000 households by 2027.</p> <p>And what has happened to the promised concierge program which was allocated \$50,000 in last year's plan? Presumably this was to help with item 2.2.1 - helping 1000 Darebin households to electrify.</p> <p><u>Feedback</u></p> <p>Very disappointed to find that recommended actions made in the Darebin Climate Emergency Plan are not included in the Darebin Plan 2025-29.</p> <p>It appears that the climate emergency is no longer a top priority for Council.</p> <p>Missing key actions are: community climate education programs, targeted support for household electrification and energy efficiency measures for low income households and renters</p> <p>There is no transparent, separate budget allocation for the Climate Emergency Plan in the financial documents.</p> <p>What has happened to the promised concierge program which was allocated \$50,000 in last year's budget to help 1000 Darebin households to electrify.</p> <p>How does the Action Plan demonstrate that each Council program area has taken climate risk into account and has appropriate responses in place. The risks to humans and animals are real and lives may very well be lost due to climate changes particularly very high prolonged temperatures. This will impact the need for council support.</p> <p>Darebin Council was once a proud leader in Climate Emergency recognition. It would be shameful to think that when it came down to actually putting its own recommendations into action, that council failed to care enough.</p> <p><u>Feedback</u></p> <p>Serious concerns namely that you are no longer prioritising in the Darebin Plan 2025-29 the Climate Emergency initiatives that were proposed and are now absent, which include an education program detailing how to move across to renewable hot water heat pumps, induction cooktops and electric ovens, and split system electric heating systems, and solar panels on rooftops, thus providing education and support to move away from using gas services.</p> <p>Simply don't understand why you are going backwards from the more progressive stance that our council took several years ago. Extremely disappointed in the now lack of urgency in prioritising these progressive environmental policies. Climate Change has not gone away; it has in fact sadly continued and hoped that we would be one of the leading councils in Australia to pave the way for other councils to implement the much-needed energy transition policies to keep our climate at a safe level for future generations.</p>	

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<p>Please explain your lack of vision and sense of urgency to tackle this existential threat we are all facing if we do not transition to renewables in a timely manner.</p> <p><u>Feedback</u></p> <p>Please include details on how the Climate Emergency Plan will be implemented over the next four years, specifically key initiatives such as those noted below. These actions are informed by 2 years of consultation with the community and expert advice. They focus on the crucial role that local councils play in practical support to households and businesses to reduce emissions and access cheaper electricity. They complement, rather than replace state and federal programs. They cannot be replaced by planting trees or improving storm water drains.</p> <p>These actions will require specific capabilities and resourcing. They require dedicated, ongoing programming every year and will not be achieved by 'mainstreaming' climate action. They will require clear KPIs, monitoring and reporting to the community.</p> <p>Climate Emergency work is a core function for all Councils, and part of their statutory responsibilities, and should be planned for and budgeted in the same way as provision of parks, roads, and community services (not as 'operating projects'). While temperatures are rising around the world, and people are facing the impacts of heatwaves and natural disasters in Darebin and around the world, Darebin needs to continue its leadership in this critical area.</p> <p>If a community of 500 households in the Illawarra, NSW can make the switch to electric, why not 1,000 households in Darebin?</p> <p>2.2.1 Create a program that provides tailored support and a financing mechanism to support electrification and renewable energy for both households and transport, with a target of engaging 1000 Darebin households per year.</p> <p>2.2.2 By 2025 develop and begin delivery of an education campaign supporting Darebin households and businesses to electrify, improve efficiency and access affordable 100% renewable energy.</p> <p>2.2.3 Advocate to other levels of government to accelerate households going electric.</p> <p>2.2.4 Advocate for funding to electrify and install renewable energy in public and social housing. Access funding from Australian and Victorian government programs.</p> <p><u>Feedback</u></p> <p>Urge you to give meaningful funding to the Climate Emergency Plan. Without proper support it risks becoming a goal on paper — not a vehicle for real action.</p> <p>The current Operating Projects list includes no dedicated funding beyond tree planting — valuable but nowhere near the scale a climate emergency demands. The Action Plan outlines routine measures — recycling, waterway management, tree planting and education — but nothing ambitious. There is no serious mention of decarbonisation or adaptation — the core of what a Climate Emergency Plan should be.</p> <p>As it stands this plan is tokenistic. Ask you to reflect on what a climate emergency really means. The climate crisis is not theoretical — it is already here. The 2019–2020 bushfires, floods, heatwaves and droughts showed us what's coming. Air quality will deteriorate, food systems may falter, quality of life could collapse. We are releasing energy into the atmosphere equivalent to countless atomic bombs — heating the planet and driving extreme weather. Nature is not benign — it is a beast we keep provoking. Our society depends on a stable temperate climate. If that collapses so does our way of life.</p> <p>This crisis will hit the most vulnerable hardest.</p> <p>But there are also opportunities. With state and federal partnerships councils can help lead the transition. Cleaner air from replacing gas stoves. Free or discounted electricity if solar is rolled out — something that's impossible in my apartment block without council coordination. Transport powered by e-bikes and EVs. These aren't pipe dreams — they're real possibilities. Council doesn't need to fund them all directly — but it can lead, convene and open doors.</p> <p>Darebin led the world when it declared a climate emergency. It slipped when it let funding slide. Now is the time to reclaim that leadership — and improve lives for all of us.</p> <p><u>Feedback</u></p> <p>The Operating Projects for 2025–26 reflect a lack of concern for the Climate Action Plan. For it to be meaningfully implemented it has to be reflected in funding. I understand there are fiscal constraints — but how are we meant to justify, at this moment in time, that we had the opportunity to address the climate crisis but didn't consider it a priority? If it isn't treated like the emergency, it is, then it isn't a Climate Emergency Plan — just a tokenistic Climate Action Plan. Urge you to redress this as a matter of priority.</p> <p>Households are getting hammered by energy bills from electricity and gas. Meaningful coordination from Council in aiding the transition will go a long way to addressing the crushing cost of living from these exorbitant utilities — and help us take action on the actual climate emergency. Everyone wins. We could move towards cleaner transport like electric bicycles or active transport for those able to take advantage of them — with Council assistance. There are additional opportunities for adaptation so that we may maintain our quality of living in the face of this looming crisis. Darebin Council can put its minds together to decide on the best way to use this funding for life-changing projects once the money is allocated — but then and only then will it be anything other than wishful thinking.</p> <p>Most people would see numbers on a spreadsheet. I see a crisis we can help avert — and opportunities, if the funding is allocated wisely through Council initiatives. Darebin Council isn't going to decarbonise the local government area alone — but it has a vital leadership role to play. All that matters is that the willpower is demonstrated. Where Darebin allocates funding is a statement of priorities and values. At the moment the Climate Emergency Plan is only a Climate Emergency Plan in name.</p>	

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<p>Please change this.</p> <p><u>Feedback</u></p> <p>Would be very grateful to know that Council is continuing to employ staff to address the climate emergency plan.</p> <p><u>Feedback</u></p> <p>Proud of Darebin's history of leadership on climate action but deeply concerned that Council is de-funding the Climate Emergency Plan. Council has scrapped its Solar Savers program without replacement and has dropped its commitment to supporting households and businesses to move from gas to clean electricity, in its draft annual plan and budget for 2025-26. WHY?!</p> <p>The Darebin community overwhelmingly supports urgent action on climate change. That's why it is a pillar of the Community Vision Darebin 2041. It was an emergency when Darebin made the first emergency declaration in the world in 2016, and it's even more serious now.</p> <p>In recent years, we've seen some of the worst fires, floods, heatwaves and droughts in Australia's history, as global temperatures hit irreversible levels. We need to switch to clean energy as soon as possible, and all levels of government need to play their part.</p> <p>While the federal and state governments have introduced incentives for electric appliances (following Darebin's Solar Savers program), this is not enough. Councils have a critical role to play in supporting people at the local level to make the switch. The 2024-2030 Darebin Climate Emergency Plan (CEP) recognised this.</p> <p>Following two years of consultation with the community and expert advice, the CEP includes a target of engaging 1,000 households every year with tailored support to electrify their homes and transport.</p> <p>Strongly urge Council to fully fund delivery of the Climate Emergency Plan in 2025-26, and in every year of the Darebin Strategic Plan, as an ongoing part of Council's core business.</p> <p>Implore Darebin Councillors to once again play a leading role, and work in partnership with federal and state governments in making a safer city for future generations.</p> <p><u>Feedback</u></p> <p>Very disappointed to see that there is no funding allocated to the Climate Emergency Plan (CEP). Proud that Darebin council was the first government in the world to call a climate emergency. The CEP is a bold step in the direction of solving the climate crisis.</p> <p>It is imperative that we have funding to give the CEP the best chance of success. There must be funding to help upgrade homes (including for renters) and supports for the community to prepare for climate impacts as outlined in the CEP.</p> <p>More generally I want to see the budget to be considered with a climate lens. Every step we take now must have the climate in consideration as we are on the brink of climate collapse.</p> <p><u>Feedback</u></p> <p>Believe it is deeply important that Darebin Council continues to lead on climate action and must fully fund our Climate Emergency Plan. We face an existential crisis that starts on the local level and we all must be working together to ensure we take the strongest action possible.</p> <p>Hope to see allocation of budget funding towards supporting the upgrading of homes and business to prepare for climate impacts.</p> <p><u>Feedback</u></p> <p>Concerned that the Darebin Climate Emergency Plan is not fully funded. Although parts of it are funded, it needs all parts to be successful. Darebin led the world declaring a Climate Emergency, please don't relinquish that leadership. Fiscal responsibility is important but not at the cost of the Earth.</p> <p><u>Feedback</u></p> <p>Concerned that Council's commitment to act on the climate emergency is not as prominent or given urgent priority as was acknowledged in the recently adopted Climate Emergency Plan. Some actions have been included in the current planning documents; however other critically important actions are omitted.</p> <p>These include targeted support for household electrification and energy efficiency measures for low-income households and renters, along with community education programs. The overarching goal of embedding climate leadership and climate risk assessment across all programs also needs to be reflected in the planning documents.</p> <p>It is unclear how Council will meet its stated emissions reduction and social justice goals when these important actions are missing from the strategic planning and financial documents. I would like to see Council amend these documents.</p>	

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<p>Also, couldn't find a separate budget allocation for the Climate Emergency Plan. This should be crystal clear.</p> <p>As part of the need to strengthen the emphasis of climate action, more reference needs to be made about all Council services and programs considering climate risk and have appropriate responses in place which is committed to under the Climate Emergency Plan.</p> <p>Here is a description of action items in the Climate Emergency Plan that have been left out of Our Darebin Four Year Plan and Annual Action Plan:</p> <p>(Item 2.2.1) Create a program that provides tailored support and a financing mechanism to support electrification and renewable energy for both households and transport, with a target of engaging 1000 Darebin households per year.</p> <p>(Item 2.2.2). By 2025 develop and begin delivery of an education campaign supporting Darebin households and businesses to electrify, improve efficiency and access affordable 100% renewable energy.</p> <p>(Item 2.5.3) By 2025 develop and deliver an education campaign supporting Darebin households and businesses to reduce consumption, increase reuse and repair and support a circular economy.</p> <p>(Item 3.6.1) Deliver community education and capacity-building campaigns on energy literacy and efficiency, food resilience and water saving, that reach at least 5,000 residents annually, prioritising people in Darebin who are most vulnerable to heat stress, food inequity and energy inequity.</p> <p>(Item 3.7.1) Increase climate resilience and energy equity in Darebin through a program to support low-income households and renters to increase energy efficiency and climate resilience, reaching 150 homes per year via direct interventions and engaging with a further 1000 households by 2027.</p> <p>Let's keep building on that initial dynamism and continue to lead in getting results, reducing emissions, making great procurement decisions, electrifying and helping all in our community with challenges faced mitigating climate change.</p> <p><u>Feedback</u></p> <p>Writing as a resident of Northcote, to have my say on the 'Our Darebin Plan 2025- 2029' and the 'Our Darebin Action Plan 2025-26'.</p> <p>Concerned at the apparent de-prioritisation of climate action. I commend the Council seeking to reduce emissions of Council buildings and operations. However it appears the support for residents in moving to electrification is lacking.</p> <p>Would like to see community climate education programs specifically included in Darebin's plans.</p> <p>Would like to see this communication education program extended to helping people reduce the amount of waste generated, not just increase recycling. Keen to know why targeted support for householders to electrify their homes and become more energy efficient has been left out of the plan. Understand last year's budget allocated \$50,000 for a concierge program to assist residents. What has become of this program?</p> <p>The Climate Emergency Plan had a target of engaging 1000 Darebin households a year - how will this be delivered? And finally, a note on delivery: where is the budget allocated specifically for the Climate Emergency Plan? It appears there is little transparency around this.</p> <p><u>Feedback</u></p> <p>Expressing disappointment that the Darebin Climate Emergency Plan 2024–30 has not received adequate funding.</p> <p>Climate change is the biggest challenge of this century, and all levels of government have a responsibility to plan and adapt to its impacts. The Darebin council should be investing in its own Climate Emergency Plan.</p> <p><u>Feedback</u></p> <p>Would like to urge the Darebin Council to fully fund the Climate Emergency Plan. Specifically, concerned that essential actions, such as community education programs, targeted support for household electrification, and energy efficiency measures for low-income households and renters, are conspicuously absent from the proposed plan.</p> <p>These actions are vital not only for transitioning households away from gas dependency but also for mitigating the financial burden on vulnerable families living in energy-inefficient homes. Failure to include these initiatives in the immediate four-year plan will undoubtedly result in significant delays in achieving our community's goal of zero carbon emissions. Such delays will perpetuate reliance on fossil fuels and exacerbate the financial strain on those least able to afford energy upgrades.</p> <p>In light of the escalating climate crisis, it is imperative that Darebin Council demonstrates strong leadership by fully funding and implementing the Climate Emergency Plan without further delay. This plan must encompass all essential actions outlined, ensuring equitable access to sustainable living practices for all residents of Darebin.</p> <p>Urge you to prioritise these critical measures in your final draft and allocate the necessary resources to uphold Darebin's commitment to environmental sustainability and social equity. Look forward to seeing robust action from Darebin Council in addressing the climate emergency and securing a sustainable future for our community.</p> <p><u>Feedback</u></p> <p>How nice it would be to not have to be concerned about climate change.</p>	

Feedback	Related Document
<p>It has been noted about the "draft Key Strategic Document" that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- action on climate emergency is no longer a priority</li> <li>- the community climate education programs targeted support for household electrification measures has been left out of the budget 4-year plan</li> <li>- there is no transparent separate budget allocation for Climate Emergency Action</li> </ul> <p>Can you please consider these points about the budget 4 year plan and amend your document to include these issues.</p> <p>It would be so nice to not have to worry or think about climate change!!! BUT this is not the reality for the "next generation" ( i.e. I'm in my 60's - so the generation after me.....actually including me too!)</p> <p>As a community member you are in a very responsible position to assist our community, we don't get a good standard of living without a wholesome environment.</p>	
<p><b><u>No Climate Emergency</u></b></p> <p>Please avoid responding to climate alarmists. There is no climate emergency. Even the IPCC reports do not support a climate emergency. Be aware that so much more can be achieved by funding mitigation programs as needed rather than trying to reduce the quantity of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. It's time for common sense not radical action.</p>	Our Darebin Plan 2025-29
<p><b><u>Lack of Community Education Programs &amp; Household Electrification Measures</u></b></p> <p>Where are the community education programs, or the targeted support for household electrification and energy efficiency measures for low-income households and renters? The lack of these will delay getting Darebin households off gas and leave low-income families continuing to deal with expensive, energy inefficient homes. It will also slow progress towards Darebin's goal of zero emissions.</p> <p>Lack of tangible planning for a climate emergency. Need more support for low income and renters to move off gas and to electrify appliances.</p> <p>Also, very limited policy and enforcement of policy for keeping and increasing canopy trees especially with new approval subdivisions. New units and apartments in the Darebin need stronger mandate of green space including canopy trees.</p> <p>What has happened to elements of the many climate emergency plans that seem to be missing from the 25-29 plan? These are important.</p> <p>Funding for a program to help households go electric at home that was previously funded has been committed as has funding for community education and energy efficiency programs for renters.</p> <p>Transition Darebin would like to express our concern about the upcoming Our Darebin Plan 2025 - 2029 and its lack of detail regarding climate emergency measures.</p> <p>On behalf of Darebin members across the municipality, we strongly request that the following elements be explicitly factored into the plan:</p> <p>Community education programs on climate, building resilience in the community against climate extremes, assisting low-income earners to thrive in the face of climate change. We would like to see more assistance with food security in the Northern Suburbs and increased community support to divert waste and promote repair over disposal.</p>	Our Darebin Plan 2025-29
<p><b><u>Bracken Creek – Comprehensive Planning Required</u></b></p> <p>Undertake comprehensive planning for the 5.72 ha of new public open space, “Bracken Creek” waterway and relevant areas in Mayer Park and the Northcote Public Golf course. This area traverses both Northcote and Thornbury.</p>	Darebin Annual Action Plan 2025-26
<p><b>THEME: BUILDINGS &amp; FACILITY MANAGEMENT</b></p>	
<p><b><u>Coburg Cemetery improvements</u></b></p> <p>Has anyone ever thought about building a brick wall instead of a dilapidated \$2 fence?</p> <p>It's just not nice to see how disgusting and smelly the Coburg Cemetery is on Bells St?</p>	Our Capital Works Program 2025-26 to 2034-35



Feedback	Related Document
<b>THEME: LEISURE, RECREATION &amp; COMMUNITY SERVICES</b>	
<p><b><u>Johnson Park upgrade</u></b></p> <p>Strong endorsement for capital works project No. 112 - Renewed irrigation and turf for Johnson Park.</p> <p>According to council's own vision for green spaces and rewilding it is disappointing to see one of Northcote's historic parks so stressed from lack of water and maintenance.</p> <p>Agree with the Strategic Plan that public green spaces are crucial for mental and physical wellbeing, and this park has become run down. Irrigation and turf will make a wonderful difference that will benefit the many users of this well-loved park.</p> <p>It would be great to see a consistent plan put in place to ensure the future health of our green spaces.</p> <p>Unfortunately, Johnson Park has taken a turn for the worst in recent years. I used to take my kids there on a regular basis, but the grass (actually, weeds) has become so unattractive and not at all nice to be around.</p>	Capital Works Program 2025-26 to 2034-35
<p><b><u>Support for Pitcher Park Renovation</u></b></p> <p>The Parkside Sports Club fully supports the allocation of funds towards Pitcher Park sportsground renovation. The improvement will underpin our club's requirement for an acceptable and safe playing surface for our football and cricket playing members.</p> <p>Excited at the prospect of a new surface at Pitcher Park.</p> <p>Removing the un-even surface, fixing the holes and new grass will make footy more enjoyable and, importantly, reduce the risk of injury.</p> <p>To have a new surface will enhance Pitcher Park, something to be proud of.</p> <p>In the context of Darebin Council's current financial position, I understand that only some recreational facilities can be prioritised, but it is entirely appropriate that it is the Pitcher Park playing surface and drainage that is prioritised. I thank you for your consideration and will eagerly monitor further announcements from the Darebin council.</p>	Capital Works Program 2025-26 to 2034-35
<p><b><u>Mayer Park Master Plan</u></b></p> <p>Mayer Park Master Plan to include suggestions in the upcoming budget.</p> <p>Would like to see some of the elements of the Mayer Park Masterplan identified and planned for delivery in the Capital Works Program. While a number of the elements have been implemented from both short-, medium- and long-term improvements identified in the plan, the number one item has not been identified or planned for. This was the development of a new Playspace for all age groups.</p> <p>Many of the items to date have been around organised sport for the soccer and cricket clubs. This item would provide for those in our community who do not necessarily play these particular organised sports. As the parent of tweens and teenagers this facility would provide a valuable resource for our community commencing with a basketball ring.</p> <p>The management of parking in this area is also becoming a real challenge. Moving to co-locating both parking and club facilities adjacent to/in conjunction with the golf course (as outlined in the Masterplan) needs to be planned for now with implementation to occur over the coming 3-5 years.</p> <p>As we enter the winter months, it has been wonderful to have the lights on for short periods of time to enable dog walkers to use the park after training activities. This is really critical as our park lands become under more pressure to provide for more residents. Extending the available time for these sorts of activities is much appreciated so thank you very much.</p> <p>The capital works program has one small project for Mayer Park which is very disappointing.</p> <p>The community prepared a masterplan five years ago, little of which has been actioned by Council except for capital works improvements for the soccer club.</p> <p>It is time that Council invested into Mayer Park with the improvements that were included in the Mayer Park Masterplan. Council doesn't even have the plan on its website which is disgraceful. We need improved recreational facilities such as a walking/running track, reinstatement of the footy goal posts at the golf course end, the promised basketball hoop and half court, playspace for kids, improved seating and BBQ facilities and the complete reworking of car parking that was meant to occur with shared facilities with the golf course. Car parking in Shaftesbury Pde is getting ridiculous on the weekend!! Council needs to allocate funds in the next decade for these works, and it is not acceptable for there to be little proposed in this 10-year budget and the plan is quite pathetic. Plus, there is virtually nothing for the upgrade of the golf course with an emphasis on the parts for shared community use except for one small section of path. Not good enough Council.</p> <p>Would like to see the Mayer Park Master Plan implemented. In particular all ages play space and to move the club house and add extra parking to the golf course. It is hard to find residential parking on Shaftesbury Parade, where we live. Thanks, Jerome</p> <p>Facilities at Mayer Park are inadequate for the sporting clubs and community members who use the park. There needs to be upgrades to parking, drainage of the oval, club rooms and exercise equipment, e.g. installing a basketball ring and a playground. There was consultation years ago, but nothing ever came of it.</p> <p>We have waited patiently for council to take next steps with implementing the Future Mayer Park Master Plan.</p>	Not provided

Feedback	Related Document
<p>It is time for the budget to include provision for progressing the Future Mayer Park Master Plan. The low hanging fruit would be the new accessible play spaces. Can this please be included in the next budget? The council could also prioritise, as an easy win, fixing the drainage of the playing surface, which is very poor and leads to holes and mud puddles during winter. Other long-term priorities should be to create better club room facilities with attached commercial spaces, probably including improvements to the golf club area to make it more attractive to the public</p> <p>Upgrade clubhouse at Mayer Park.</p>	
<p><b><u>Support for Johnson Park Improvements / Request increase of recurrent maintenance funding - Open Spaces</u></b></p> <p>Along with larger green spaces such as the well looked after All Nations Park, Darebin is fortunate to have many smaller parks. These are a wonderful asset for the local community and visitors to the area. Unfortunately, many of them are being loved to death, by which I mean they are extensively used and enjoyed but do not get an appropriate level of upkeep to maintain their amenity. A recent petition to Council (Revive Johnson Park) clearly demonstrated the lack of maintenance to these wonderful assets, pointing out the degraded condition specifically but not limited to Johnson Park, in stark contrast to similar parks in neighbouring municipalities. The petition made nine positive suggestions for improvement to Council for reviving Johnson Park.</p> <p>Welcome and support the inclusion of Item 112 “Oval &amp; Sportsground Renewal Program (Including Practice Nets, Irrigation &amp; Drainage)” in the 2025-26 to 2034-35 Capital Works Program.</p> <p>However, would also like to see an increase of recurrent funding in Council’s maintenance budget to provide better on-going care, specifically for Johnson Park, and if possible, for all our existing council parks and gardens that are so beneficial for community mental and physical health so that they do not continue to degrade.</p>	<p>Capital Works Program 2025-26 to 2034-35</p>
<p><b><u>Preston City Oval Lighting</u></b></p> <p>Submissions to City of Darebin for financial assistance regarding lighting for Preston City Oval.</p> <p>Submission is for sports field lighting at Preston City Oval - the home of the Northern Bullant and Darebin Falcons VFL Footy Clubs.</p>	<p>Our Capital Works Program 2025-26 to 2034-35</p>
<p><b><u>BT Conner Reserve – Improved lighting</u></b></p> <p>Inadequate lighting in carpark at BT Connor Reserve.</p> <p>Witnessed, rubbish constantly dumped in the carpark, burnt out cars, trucks using it as a carpark (for over three months and not moved on), unregistered caravans and containers pitched there, as well as unsavoury drug affected people wandering through the carpark of an evening. In constant contact with council about these issues</p> <p>Over 100 women and girls training at the facility most evenings of the week, and the carpark is an unsafe environment for them.</p> <p>Council spent \$30,000 on a feasibility study into lighting of our carpark in 2024. We have not seen the result of this study and we desperately need it addressed. Police and security comment on how unsafe the environment is and we would love a solution to this.</p>	<p>Our Annual Budget and Financial Outlook 2025-26 to 2028-29</p>
<p><b><u>Support Council plans - Recreation &amp; Sporting activities / Infrastructure upgrades</u></b></p> <p>1.4.1/1.4.4- I agree with these priorities. Council should look to best practice in other council areas as our facilities have a way to go to meet standard.</p> <p>(Detail for reference - 1.4.1 Implement and promote sport and leisure activities, including tailored activities and events for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, women and girls, people of all abilities, and multicultural and diverse communities. 1.4.4 Maintain, renew, upgrade and/or expand parks, recreation and sporting infrastructure to offer opportunities for connection, fitness and health, and public toilets to support gender inclusion.)</p>	<p>Darebin Annual Action Plan 2025-26</p> <p>Operational Budgets &amp; Capital Works Program</p>
<p><b><u>Northcote Aquatic &amp; Recreation Centre Heat Pumps</u></b></p> <p>Regards item number 5 Northcote Aquatic &amp; Recreation Centre Heat Pumps</p> <p>As both a regular user and member of a club that uses the outdoor 50m pool, would like to identify the impact on users, of the current pool heat pump situation.</p> <p>My understanding is that the original contract with the builders was signed off as a seasonal pool!!! Moving on from that issue the need is to upgrade to enable use of the outdoor pool in winter. The current situation with the pool at a temp around 20-21c (should be 27c) means it is not usable for anyone except the most hardy. It also sees both the swim club and the waterpolo club either use the indoor pool or travel to other facilities. The Waterpolo club now uses MLC over winter due to this situation and the swim club has several other locations. Basically, the facility is not fit for purpose so until the heat pump issue is fixed this situation will remain.</p>	<p>Our Capital Works Program 2025-26 to 2034-35</p>
<p><b><u>Cranross Tennis Club surface replacement</u></b></p> <p>Beyond grateful for the allocation of money towards court surface replacement at Cranross Tennis club. We only have 4 courts and 2 of them are not able to be used for competition tennis as they are desperately in need of replacement.</p>	<p>Our Capital Works Program</p>

Feedback	Related Document
<p>The club is thriving, and all 4 courts are needed by the community so I'd like to thank the Council for making provision for these important works that will make the courts safe and ready for use by the entire community for many more years to come.</p> <p>These courts are heavily utilised and one of few tennis clubs in the area that cater to locals at a cost-effective rate. The works are long overdue as the court surfaces have deteriorated over the last 10 years and are hazardous to play on at times, particularly for juniors starting out and for the senior players.</p> <p>Court replacement will be of benefit to all members and casual hirers, both young and old alike.</p> <p>Courts will be safer and competition appropriate (We have previously advised Leisure team that our courts are not competition suitable and unsafe due to the sink hole/ridge on court 4 and the worn/flat surface).</p> <p>We have a great Tennis Club and is thriving with coaching, social and competition tennis - as we only have the 4 courts, they all need to be in a safe and suitable condition for all.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The courts upgrade will benefit all members and any other casual hirers.</li> <li>2. The courts upgrade will benefit all age groups</li> <li>3. The courts upgrade will make courts safer to play for both casual hirers and members who are part of the Cranross teams and local competitions</li> <li>4. The courts upgrade will bring our courts up to competition standard as we have been advised in the past that the courts are unsuitable and unsafe due to the sink hole/ridge on court 4 and the worn/flat surface).</li> <li>5. The courts have needed this upgrade for almost 4 years</li> <li>6. The Cranross club is very popular and a significant part of the facilities that we can access in our community. It is important that all 4 courts are up to standard as we only have these courts</li> </ol>	2025-26 to 2034-35
<p><b><u>Northcote Tennis court improvements needed</u></b></p> <p>Would like to flag the Northcote Tennis courts at 180 Victoria Road to be considered for asset renewal.</p> <p>The site is without a club house, or, more urgently, without any amenities. The lights are old and failing regularly</p> <p>The courts will also need resurfacing to sustain the usability of these much-loved courts.</p> <p>The current operator is a brilliant contributor and sports provider for the community.</p> <p>Investment into upgrading this facility would ensure longevity into what is already a thriving sports precinct, with NARC and McDonnell Park clubs.</p> <p>The tennis courts deserve the same investment.</p> <p>The current operators do an amazing job running the facility and are much-valued sports providers. We'd like to see Darebin Council invest in this site's long-term future, to ensure the continued enjoyment of the local community.</p> <p>Please prioritise asset renewal and infrastructure improvements at Northcote Tennis, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Permanent toilet amenities to replace the temporary porta-loo, which in not always practical, especially for younger children.</li> <li>2. Updated lighting and fencing</li> <li>3. Landscaping and improved pathways</li> <li>4. Court surface renewal to ensure longevity and safety for all players</li> <li>5. A proper clubhouse or pavilion to support community use year-round</li> </ol> <p>Investment in the tennis facility and the Team operating the facility, is an investment in community - one that welcomes people of all nationalities, genders and diversities.</p> <p>The facilities are in urgent need of some TLC. The removal of the temporary toilet and the installation of permanent, accessible toilets is a necessary step forward.</p> <p>A clubhouse would be a game-changer—not just for the club, but for the broader community. It would serve as a hub for community programs, coaching, events and inclusive sporting opportunities.</p> <p>Investing in the Northcote Tennis Club facilities is an investment in community wellbeing, connection and long-term participation in sport.</p> <p>Council has stated in the "The Our Darebin Plan 2025–29" that it emphasizes a commitment to health and wellbeing as a priority, aiming to create equitable, healthy, and sustainable neighbourhoods. Providing adequate sanitation facilities is fundamental to this goal, ensuring that all community members can engage in physical activity in a safe and inclusive environment.</p> <p>Urge the Council to prioritise the installation of permanent toilet facilities at the Victoria Road tennis courts. This improvement would not only enhance the usability of the courts but also align with the Council's strategic objectives to promote health, wellbeing, and inclusivity within the community.</p>	Our Asset Plan 2025-26 to 2034-35
<p><b><u>Baseball facilities at Merri Park.</u></b></p> <p>When is the council going to invest into the baseball facilities at Merri Park. These facilities are used by hundreds of women, children and people of diverse backgrounds. Despite this they have not seen investment for 20+ years and are amongst some of the worst in Victoria.</p>	Our Capital Works Program 2025-26 to 2034-35

Feedback	Related Document
<p><b><u>McDonell Park reserve Improvements</u></b></p> <p>Concerned that the Capital Works budget does not identify any works to the McDonell Park reserve, which needs on-going investment to properly maintain and enhance the natural and built elements of the park.</p> <p>The key improvements that are needed are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide lighting to entire surface of west oval (Darebin Outdoor Sports Infrastructure Strategy 2020 - Section 7 - Program of Prioritised Works; S 7.2 McDonell Park West Oval identified for 'Lighting Upgrade')</li> <li>- Irrigation to west oval - this oval is used for YJFL matches, school sports and junior cricket - it needs irrigation to be drought-proofed and to ensure the functionality of both sports fields is not compromised into the future. This oval also has a high recreational open space amenity value and must be looked after to provide functional green space for the local community.</li> <li>- goal post / cricket safety netting to northern end of east and west ovals. The west oval abuts Clifton Street, with balls being kicked or hit into the space all the time. It is a danger to drivers and to the kids or adults who have to go out on to the roadway to find and collect the balls. Safety netting would responsibly manage down the risk for the community. The east oval abuts the car park, where visibility is low due to parked cars and where it can be hard to find balls. Safety netting would responsibly manage down the risk. In relation to both ovals, it is recreational users, school groups as well as the sporting groups (training and matches with visiting teams) who would benefit from these nets, so it's a large, multifaceted cross- section of the community would benefit.</li> <li>- refurbishment of home side (west end of pavilion) internal spaces - corridor and change rooms. These rooms should have been updated in 2022 with the Visitor side rooms and budget constraints stopped the works. These internal rooms need rejuvenation as investment in the asset, to minimise preventable damage and deterioration from neglect (tenants cannot spend club money to make capital investment into the Council-owned facilities).</li> <li>- light touch upgrades to main pavilion room including repainting, new carpet to minimise preventable damage and deterioration from neglect (tenants cannot spend club money to make capital investment into the Council-owned facilities).</li> <li>- additional tree planting around the perimeter of the park (east side, south side, western side and northern frontage) to improve environmental values - more trees, more shade, more birds and wildlife, higher amenity values for all users</li> <li>- safety fencing along the northern edge of the west oval - as above - safety for all visitors and to help keep balls in the park reserve by providing a low fence along the north side of the reserve.</li> </ul>	<p>Our Capital Works Program 2025-26 to 2034-35</p>
<p><b><u>Aspiration for an inclusive Community</u></b></p> <p>The Council's concept of Community is selective and narrow. It is focused on a few minority groups. It is a deficit model. Yes, the rest of us have garbage collection and roads, but wouldn't it be lovely if we all experienced an inclusive sense of community that embraced everyone. The north end of Darebin is a social wasteland.</p> <p>We are bored and sad. What about a market, a festival in the lake park, some music, some cafes and restaurants, any glimmer of joy.</p> <p>We are out here paying our rates and taxes, raising our kids and grandkids, renovating the dilapidated old houses and mowing our nature strips - but where is our collective sense of community? Where is the leadership? Our Council is all function and no spirit! BTW, I don't know if it has escaped your notice, but Broadway and Edwards St need serious help! Most people won't go to our local villages unless it's unavoidable.</p> <p>Wouldn't it be nice to be able to shop locally and eat out locally for a family birthday? And while on the topic of streets, I really need to say, that the relentlessly dirty, ugly and embarrassing High St is a scar through the heart of Darebin.</p>	<p>Our Darebin Plan 2025-29</p>
<p><b><u>Recreation Centres at Northcote VS Reservoir</u></b></p> <p>Note that, under health and wellbeing commitments, the report states that recreation centres are provided in both Northcote and Reservoir, which is ostensibly true, however the level of service, amenity at each could not be further apart.</p> <p>When addressing questions of equity, please add to the mix the need for equity between our southernmost residents and our most northern. While Northcote has a modern state of the art facility, Reservoir is tired, often cold, draughty or mouldy.</p> <p>Not because the staff aren't working hard - for the staff there are their greatest asset - but because it is wearing out. Instead of cost cutting, how about investing in our future health and wellbeing? Skilled staff do come through the centre, and it is to their credit that they remain, but it is rare for a day without breakdowns, closures. Many of us have attended this gym for 10, 20, 30 years - we deserve equity, and so do our trainers.</p> <p>A spend \$3.4 million on Reservoir Leisure Centre between 2026 and 2035 is insulting to the residents of Reservoir when considering that in excess of \$60 million was spent on the redevelopment of Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre. This capital works program treats us as second-class citizens. If council doesn't have the budget to provide services to people in Reservoir to the same standard as have been provided to Northcote, then council needs to sell assets in order to free up funds.</p>	<p>Our Darebin Plan 2025-29 <b>and</b> Our Capital Works Program 2025-26 to 2034-35</p>
<p><b><u>Feasibility assessment request - lighting infrastructure at Edwardes Lake Park athletics track.</u></b></p> <p>On behalf of the Preston Athletic Club, Preston Reservoir Little Athletics Centre, and members of the Darebin community, we respectfully request that Darebin City Council consider allocating \$15,000 of its 2025–26 Capital Works budget for a feasibility assessment of the existing lighting infrastructure at the Edwardes Lake Park athletics track.</p> <p>This is a request that has dual support from the two local athletics clubs, members of the public and the local environmental group - Friends of Edwardes Lake Park.</p>	<p>Our Annual Budget and Financial Outlook 2025-26 to 2028-29</p>

Feedback	Related Document
<p><b><u>Maintaining John Cain Memorial Park Precinct</u></b></p> <p>The Darebin plan details many health and wellbeing measures that Darebin will/are using to increase health and sport participation in the City of Darebin, however, does not reference the horribly underutilised John Cain Memorial Park precinct.</p> <p>Section 1.4.4 makes clear reference to maintaining and developing council land, sporting infrastructure, parks and recreational space yet doesn't mention the dilapidated bowls greens at the front of John Cain Memorial Park.</p> <p>Proposal on behalf of the La Trobe University Volleyball Club (Local Darebin volleyball club), The Volleyball Coaches Collective (Local Darebin business) and in partnership with Volleyball Victoria, is to turn the greens into a beach volleyball hub. This precinct would utilise a number of the greens, the functions rooms and bistro space bringing life back into the Commonwealth games legacy piece. We would drive community participation through structured competition, social competitions, come and try days, open community facility use and targeted programs to the hard-to-reach populations. Our sport is incredibly strong at junior and youth participation, especially with migrant and diverse populations and will revitalise a currently dormant precinct into a hub for community sport participation and recreational play. We believe using a tennis-like book a court system, will enable the precinct to be used by all, whilst generating revenue for the local association to ensure longevity and sustainability unlike previous tenants.</p> <p>Our proposal would also be more cost effective than other uses, as the precinct has many existing attributes to make the venue partially fit for purpose. All we would need is some minor capital works to renovate the existing greens infrastructure into beach volleyball courts and that's it! Major works on the precinct are not needed.</p> <p>We believe our plan would be able to be collaborative with other users for the space as well and have the potential to re-energise the space and promote a suite of shared services and complementary activities.</p> <p>Attached to this submission is some School Sport Victoria (SSV) data that reflects the participation data for sports played in schools. As you will note, volleyball sits 4th and has the best gender balance of any sport on this list. You will also note that in the second infographic (Map) Northern Metro Melbourne has a relatively equal level of participation to other areas of Melbourne. This demonstrates the need for more spaces to play in Darebin, as our two clubs that operate in the council are the only two clubs for the northern suburbs, largely due to an inability for these clubs (and clubs in the past) to find adequate court space to grow. Pair this data against the extreme lack of beach volleyball access and the picture for the demand and need for this new facility become very apparent.</p> <p>Unlike other major sports, we do not want to dominate the space, rather be a pillar of our community's values and reflect the diverse participants of our local area. The creative proposal responds to evolving community demand, fosters significant and meaningful partnerships, as well as providing a range of ways to enjoy volleyball. We would work closely with any other potential user group or shared tenant to better utilise and maximise the space and build a vibrant community space.</p>	<p>Our Darebin Plan 2025-29</p>
<p><b><u>Feedback on Draft Council Plans 2025–2029 – Community Sport Perspective</u></b></p> <p>Writing on behalf of Darebin United Soccer Club, a proud, independent, community-run club based in Thornbury. We are the only 2-Star FA Club Changer club in the City of Darebin, recognised for our strong leadership in gender equity, inclusive participation, and good governance.</p> <p>We commend Darebin Council for its commitment to inclusion, wellbeing, and sustainability in these draft plans. However, we would like to highlight some critical areas for consideration:</p> <p>Prioritise Clubs that Put Community First: Facility upgrades, and funding opportunities should focus on clubs that actively support participation and inclusion — not those charging families thousands per child. Clubs like ours operate on modest budgets and reinvest every dollar into community access and growth.</p> <p>Access and Affordability: At Darebin United, we offer scholarships, and payment plans to ensure no child misses out due to financial barriers. We believe Council can do more to recognise and support clubs that are genuinely committed to affordable, grassroots sport.</p> <p>Support for FA Club Changer Standards: As the only 2-Star FA Club Changer club in Darebin, we have proven our dedication to inclusion, diversity, and safe environments. Council frameworks and funding should reward clubs that meet and maintain these standards.</p> <p>Equitable Infrastructure Access: The Capital Works and Asset Plans should ensure that smaller, volunteer-run clubs — not just those affiliated with elite structures — are granted fair access to quality facilities. Many of us share aging spaces without the security or resources afforded to larger organisations.</p> <p>Ongoing Consultation with True Grassroots Clubs: We request that inclusive, community-focused clubs like ours be actively consulted in the rollout of Council initiatives, especially where they relate to junior participation, equity, and infrastructure use.</p>	<p>Our Capital Works Program 2025-26 to 2034-35</p>

Feedback	Related Document
<b>THEME: SUPPORTING BUSINESS/ CONTRIBUTION</b>	
<p><b><u>Requesting continued financial support to DIVRS &amp; RNH</u></b></p> <p>Submission from DIVRS and Reservoir Neighbourhood House requesting Council continue to invest in the Complex Support Program – a proven program that delivers on Council's commitment to the health and wellbeing of our community.</p>	
<p><b><u>Heidelberg Unit of the Victorian State Emergency Service (VICSES) – Grant support request</u></b></p> <p>We are writing to you from the Heidelberg Unit of the Victorian State Emergency Service (VICSES). We are a volunteer-based emergency response organisation dedicated to serving the community in the Northern suburbs of Melbourne.</p> <p>We service almost the entire of the City of Darebin area including Northcote, Preston, Reservoir, Alphington, Fairfield, Bundoora, Kingsbury, Macleod and Thornbury. We are the local SES unit for Darebin residents.</p> <p>We are committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of the Darebin community by providing timely and effective emergency response services. We protect life and property during emergencies, including storms, floods, and other natural disasters, through highly trained volunteer efforts. We also actively engage in community education programs across Darebin to raise awareness about emergency preparedness, provide resources and information to help community members mitigate risks, and promote resilience in the face of disasters.</p> <p>We are writing to you to highlight some of the budget pressures our unit is facing. Annually, we receive an allocation of \$33,000 from the State Government, while the minimum cost to operate our unit is around \$60,000 per year, with these costs rising. We rely heavily on fundraising and donations to sustain our operations.</p> <p>Our units are run by local volunteers who commit considerable time responding to Requests For Assistance from the community, Assisting Police, Fire and Ambulance in support roles, and conducting important Community Engagement activities to educate &amp; prepare the community for storms, floods and extreme weather events. Our volunteers also participate in weekly training. We manage our finances, facilities &amp; assets, develop our own training programs, clean our buildings, maintain our gardens, and oversee the recruitment, welfare and safety of our members. In addition to these responsibilities, our volunteers are required to commit significant efforts in fundraising,</p> <p>In the current budget review, we are seeking financial support from the City of Darebin to cover some of our operational costs, and to reduce some of the fundraising burden placed on our members. Previously, Darebin have provided an annual payment of \$5,000 towards the running of our unit.</p> <p>Please refer to attached previous letter sent to Darebin council requesting that this funding be re-instated. To date, we have not received a response to this request.</p> <p>Whilst we understand that Darebin council cannot approve every budget funding request, and that council needs to be responsible with ratepayers' funds, we would like to highlight that the Heidelberg SES takes a large load off council resources, which results in considerable cost savings to Darebin council.</p> <p>We respond to a large volume of incidents relating to trees down over roads, and in public spaces across Darebin, with each callout estimated as a \$1,000 cost saving to council. In the 24/25 Financial Year to date alone, we have responded to 281 requests for assistance across Darebin, with 109 relating to trees down.</p> <p>In consideration of our financial challenges, we are requesting that Darebin council allocate an annual and ongoing payment of \$5,000-\$10,000 to our unit within the upcoming budget.</p> <p>With your support, we are confident we can maintain the ongoing effectiveness of our emergency response efforts and further strengthen the safety and resilience of the Darebin community.</p>	Our Annual Budget and Financial Outlook 2025-26 to 2028-29
<p><b><u>Improved Graffiti Removal / Grant availability for street art promotion - Northcote</u></b></p> <p>An inclusion into the budget to begin work on a strategy to address graffiti removal &amp; amenity upgrades within the Northcote Business Activity Centre.</p> <p>Working group to focus on better visual presentation of business throughout Northcote.</p> <p>Strategies to discourage the reapplication of graffiti</p> <p>Stakeholder engagement –</p> <p>(a) Darebin Council, Business Tenants, Residents &amp;</p> <p>(b) State Government, Landlords, Yarra Trams/Citipower</p> <p>Seeking grant availability for considered street art</p> <p>Promotion of the precinct and the program</p>	Our Annual Budget and Financial Outlook 2025-26 to 2028-29
<p><b><u>Grant Request - Aboriginal Women &amp; Girls Sports &amp; Wellness Centre</u></b></p> <p>Submission for funding for \$200,000 towards the Aboriginal Women &amp; Girls Sports &amp; Wellness Centre.</p>	Not Provided
<p><b><u>Improved Graffiti Removal</u></b></p> <p>Budget consideration for Graffiti removal and application of anti-graffiti coats considering private property/buildings in High Street Northcote.</p>	Not Provided

Feedback	Related Document
<b>THEME: SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT</b>	
<p><b><u>Radford Road Improvements</u></b></p> <p>Please to see the following in the action plan:</p> <p>"Maintain and improve the transport network including pedestrian crossings, bike infrastructure, speed reductions and other road safety treatments to make Darebin's streets safer for everyone"</p> <p>Concretely, Radford Road is problematic for reckless drivers speeding and doing burnouts. It's concerning especially near a kid's swim school, sports ground with kids attending and a mosque. I think drivers specifically target this area because its 'at the back' before you hit the Merri Creek.</p>	Darebin Annual Action Plan 2025-26
<p><b><u>Streets Alive Darebin</u></b></p> <p>Streets Alive Darebin- Transport and related items.</p>	Not Provided
<p><b><u>Henty St / Gilbert Road intersection Improvements</u></b></p> <p>Please consider allocating funding towards a traffic impact assessment and design solution to improve pedestrian safety and traffic flow, inclusive of a pedestrian crossing at the Henty St / Gilbert Road intersection.</p> <p>This intersection is particularly dangerous as it is a key traffic point for trucks transiting to Newlands Industrial zone, as well as commuter traffic often travelling at speed through the roundabout.</p> <p>Pedestrians attempting to cross here often include families with young children, as there is a childcare centre Great Beginnings Reservoir also at this location, which make crossing the road perilous, and risk to safety of pedestrians attempting to cross over Gilbert Rd at this location is unacceptable, yet unfortunately unavoidable as there is no nearby safety crossing to this location.</p> <p>It is very unsafe and as a parent who needs to use it every day with small children it is an accident waiting to happen. I urge you to please roll out a solution as quickly as possible and invest in the growing number of young, professional, community-engaged families in Reservoir.</p> <p>As the Council finalises its strategic plans, I respectfully request that this intersection be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Explicitly acknowledged in the Capital Works Program or Annual Action Plan as a priority site for safety upgrades.</li> <li>•Considered for traffic signalisation or a redesigned intersection with clearly marked and protected pedestrian crossings.</li> <li>•Included in the “Your Street, Your Say” program with a clear commitment and timeline for improvements.</li> </ul>	Annual Budget and Financial Outlook 2025-26 to 2028-29
<p><b><u>Missing Capital Works Projects</u></b></p> <p>There are three key items of capital works missing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Darebin council needs to sort out traffic management, pedestrian safety (including a pedestrian crossing) and parking restrictions (including preventing parking to enable traffic flow and safe entry / exit to driveways) around the entrance to Great Beginnings Childcare in Henry St Reservoir (particularly focussing on safe entry / exit from the childcare centre.</li> <li>2) the park pathways (walking and cycling) do not connect from Edward's Lake to the Edgar's Creek path and down to Merri Creek Pathways. It should be easy to cycle or walk along off-road pathways from the Edgars Creek pathway at Glasgow Ave through Edward's Lake Park, then continuing along a new / improved pathway along the section of Edgar's Creek south of Edward's Lake, all the way through to the connection with the Merri Creek trail. This would encourage more cycling and less car use. This would connect Reservoir to Melbourne's network of Off-Road cycling paths.</li> <li>3) Traffic management at the intersection of Best St and Edward's St Reservoir is problematic. Parked cars cause frequent traffic jams, as cars turning off Edward's St in to Best St cannot proceed along best at due to the queue of cars on Best St trying to proceed on to Edward's St. Too many parked cars block the street on both sides, narrowing it to a single lane that had to be shared in both directions. Streets and roads are for moving traffic, not parked traffic. If housing developments didn't build enough off-street parking, that is their problem. Stop letting them block the street for everyone else.</li> </ol>	Capital works program and 4 year capital works program- Appendix C
<p><b><u>Pitcher Park – Installation of Keep Clear Zone signage</u></b></p> <p>Would also like to see a keep clear zone painted in front of the newly installed access bollards on Clarendon St, entering into John Cain Memorial Park/ Narrandjeri stadium. The newly installed bollards have been great for accessibility; however they are often blocked in the evening and on weekends when cars park in front of them, making this area inaccessible once more.</p>	Our Capital Works Program 2025-26 to 2034-35



Feedback	Related Document
<p><b><u>Thomson Street, Northcote and connecting roads to access Heidelberg Road - Improvements</u></b></p> <p>Rat runners use Thomson Street, Northcote and connecting roads to access Heidelberg Road (and to a lesser degree Station Street). They turn left from Victoria Rd (heading south) at Cain Ave and Thomson Street, with the objective of avoiding traffic lights on designated arterial roads - Victoria/Westgarth/Jeffrey, Jeffrey/Heidelberg and Westgarth/Heidelberg.</p> <p>This results in significant commuter traffic volume on local residential streets, particularly on weekday mornings and weekends (mornings and through evening). Commuters primarily turn off Thomson into Henderson St and McDonald St or Rathmines St. Local residents have been urging the Council for action for years and a part time left turn trial on Victoria into Thomson and Westgarth has proven ineffective, with commuters simply ignoring the restriction.</p> <p>The situation is both dangerous and disruptive. Funds in the capital works budget should be allocated to close Rathmines Street and potentially also Gillies Street at Heidelberg Rd to traffic - this will significantly reduce the commuter traffic without inconveniencing local residents. Darebin Council has previously taken similar steps on Westfield St, Northcote, so there is a clear precedent. An alternative, which may be less palatable to local residents, would be closing Thomson St at Rathmines St. In any event, the part time turn restriction should be retained to deter rat runners using Henderson and McDonald Sts etc.</p>	<p>Our Capital Works Program 2025-26 to 2034-35</p>
<p><b><u>Wood Street, Preston Improvements</u></b></p> <p>Wood Street, Preston (between High Street and Plenty Road) needs to be assessed for its safety.</p> <p>There is a lot of community movement in this area, particularly small children due to the park, playground, childcare centre and access to Preston Primary School. But there are no permanent safe crossing points or traffic obstacles and there is a 50km/h speed limit, and it is a very narrow road. Furthermore, the road is very busy, acting as a route to Northland, High Street shops, Plenty Road and local schools.</p> <p>I have attached a petition with 17 hand-written signatures showing the concerns of community members, as well as a change.org petition with an additional 191 signatures.</p>	<p>Our Capital Works Program 2025-26 to 2034-35</p>
<p><b><u>Bike Lane Projects – Cease Funding</u></b></p> <p>Strongly urge that no further funding or resources be allocated to any new bike lane projects—particularly separated bike lanes—along Victoria Road in Northcote and Thornbury.</p> <p>This position aligns with the resolution passed at the Council meeting on 28 January 2025, where it was formally decided to abandon plans for separated bike lanes on Victoria Road. That resolution reflected clear community sentiment, as demonstrated by over 600 signatories opposing the project on the grounds that Victoria Road already has functional bike lanes on both sides of the road.</p> <p>Revisiting or continuing to explore separated bike lane options along Victoria Road would not only disregard the will of the residents but also divert valuable funds from other priority areas where need is greater, and consensus is stronger.</p> <p>We ask that Council respect the outcome of its previous decision and uphold the expressed preference by ensuring no further action is taken on this matter. Thank you in advance.</p>	<p>Our Annual Budget</p>
<p><b><u>Intersection at St Georges Road/Merri Parade Improvements</u></b></p> <p>The intersection at St Georges Road/Merri Parade where pedestrian and cyclist movements for those travelling from the south and north onto the St George's Road trail are exposed to highly unsafe conditions. There are 4 major issues with this intersection that create unsafety for cyclists:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As the cycle lane ends and is diverted onto a pedestrian footpath, there is often flooding in this area from even the lightest rain.</li> <li>2. Crossing Elizabeth Street, there is no priority for pedestrians or cyclists, despite Elizabeth Street being very low traffic, creating another pinch point and potential collision point.</li> <li>3. The wait time for this pedestrian crossing is very long and can take at least 2 minutes for a green man. This leads to queuing along the footpath of bicycles and pedestrians that makes it difficult to walk through and can sometimes back up over the Elizabeth Street crossing, making it more difficult for individuals to avoid traffic that does not have to offer them right of way.</li> <li>4. Once across the tram tracks, there are a series of gates that are difficult and narrow to navigate on bike, and the slow movement through these gates can result in all users not being able to cross on the green man, subjecting cyclists and pedestrians to either cram through the narrow space or risk collision with a car or tram.</li> </ol> <p>This intersection acts as a gateway from the CBD for cyclists and pedestrians into Darebin and as</p>	<p>Our Capital Works Program 2025-26 to 2034-35</p>



Feedback	Related Document
such, should reflect values of safety, equity, and care. These are not reflected in the current design.	
<b>THEME: CULTURE, EQUITY &amp; INCLUSION</b>	
<b><u>Prioritise First Nations issues and Diversity</u></b>  First Nations issues and diversity should come first in the council plan and then health and wellbeing after.	Darebin Plan 2025-29
<b><u>Proposed Re-Wording in Council Plan</u></b> Proposed suggestion is minor, but I feel important addition to this particular action (refer to pg.4).  Current wording: 1.1.4.1 Continue to support activities and programs such as food relief, health care, legal support and other initiatives that emerge from community during the year.  Proposed wording: addition of the word 'volunteering'. 1.1.4.1 Continue to support activities and programs such as food relief, health care, legal support, volunteering and other initiatives that emerge from community during the year.  Rationale: the term volunteering is used in Pillar 1 of the revised Vision, however, it is not included anywhere in the Council Plan Action Plan. Important to continue stating our commitment to supporting volunteering in the community, as we did in Council Plan 2021-25.	Our Darebin Annual Action Plan 2025-26
<b><u>Health, Climate Action, Equity and Inclusion.</u></b>  Items relating to Health, Climate Action, Equity and Inclusion.	Not Provided
<b>THEME: CITY PLANNING, APPROVALS &amp; DESIGN</b>	
<b><u>More direct action to address Heat Stress / Flood Modelling</u></b>  Overall feedback: too much focus on developing strategies, planning and stakeholder engagement particular pages 1 to 3. More direct action should be included in particular rather than more education about heat stress a focused tree canopy program for Preston and reservoir to combat the heat island would be more impactful. Preston is also left out of your actions for 2025/2026 activity centres even though it's in your objective. High st Preston would be a good focus for a revitalisation project. A flood risk audit should be completed for streets to identify drainage issues and develop a plan for improvement. Given council and Melbourne water are responsible for maintaining this it would be good to see more direct action rather than a communications plan.	Darebin Annual Action Plan 2025-26
<b><u>Residential Buildings – Improvement required to strategy</u></b> There's no action being taken to protect and reuse residential buildings.  Darebin is becoming a poorly designed residential wasteland packed with cheaply built town houses. Planning action needs to be taken to ensure building developments are sustainable and older buildings and areas must be heritage protected.  No one is going to want to live in a suburb filled with rendered cement board pieces of rubbish, yet the planning action plan contains no steps to help protect older buildings and nothing to incentivise protection of older building or discourage demolition in favour of building retention or upgrade.  If we have so many commitments to sustainability in the action plan, why isn't sustainable development a priority?	Our Darebin Annual Action Plan 2025-26
<b><u>Increase to number of Massage Parlours</u></b>  Glad your focus is to create a liveable with vibrant places and spaces, safe streets and a thriving local economy. I'm a resident of Reservoir and live near Tyler Street in Preston. However, there is a growing concern about the increasing number of questionable massage businesses opening up in our area.  On Plenty Road, between Wood Street and Tyler Street alone, there are already six such establishments, and I notice many more along High Street. It's quite apparent that many of these businesses are operating under the guise of massage therapy, but are in fact functioning as fronts for sex work—essentially skirting the legal requirements of licensed brothels.  What's particularly troubling is that these venues are located in broad daylight right next to hair salons, schools, cafés, and family restaurants—places where families should feel safe and comfortable. This kind of environment is not suitable for a residential area with young families and children.	Our Darebin Plan 2025-29

Feedback	Related Document
<p>Like to know what your office is doing in regard to this issue, and what steps, if any, are being taken to address it. It's reaching a point where residents feel the character of the neighbourhood is being undermined. We need action to clean up our streets and restore a sense of safety and integrity in our community. That whole strip looks like a ghetto!</p>	
<p><b>THEME: OTHER GENERAL MATTERS</b></p>	
<p><b><u>Shortfalls in the Council Plan &amp; Budget documents</u></b></p> <p>This submission raises ten key problems with the draft Council Plan and its supporting financial documents. The problems are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.The draft Council Plan is not a strategy. The Plan uses as its starting point the Community Vision. The Vision is an idealised set of values hoped to prevail across Darebin in 2041. Because the draft Plan chooses to start at this point, the Plan has no identification or diagnosis of challenges so it can't resolve problems facing Darebin simply because it hasn't given them attention. Problems and challenges are essentially out of scope.</li> <li>2. There is no coherent single strategic direction. The document immediately admits defeat on that front and splits the requirement for a strategic direction into six parts. There is no attempt to stitch together the disparate themes spanning the six directions and therefore the draft Plan has no narrative about where Darebin is going. Liveability could have been the binding theme and narrative.</li> <li>3. The draft Plan is full of non-actions that are either items that Council has already considered and is presumably acting upon or are mere statements of broad intent with no discernible action.</li> <li>4. The draft Plan is something of an imitation of the previous Council Plan, especially in its methodology, and although still in draft, appears to be capable of being equally disappointing.</li> <li>5. It would appear that Councillors have not been able put to their stamp on the draft documents. It raises questions about what their role and agenda might be – or even if they have one?</li> <li>6. The draft Plan has a massive under-emphasis on the urgent imperative to lift city presentation and significantly increase vegetation cover in streets and open space. This issue hardly rates a mention in the draft Plan with only one action (4.1.2) bearing any relationship to the matter and then it couches it as a maintenance issue. The closely related and equally important matter of climate is also poorly represented.</li> <li>7. The Parks budget is not disclosed in the financial documents because the activities of that department are accounted for as operational and not capital expenditure and no draft operational budget is presented. By contrast, the capital program is set out in some detail with all projects listed apart from an unallocated \$300,000.</li> <li>8. Reluctance to present an OPEX budget means the public have little idea where parks funding (over \$18M. – no small amount) will be spent. The public doesn't know how much of the \$18M will be spent turning around the enormous deficiency in vegetation cover that would help improve biodiversity and mitigate the impacts of climate change, nor whether the fraction of the \$18M directed to those efforts is sufficient. Improvement of vegetation cover is still clearly not being given adequate attention and emphasis by Darebin.</li> <li>9. The accounting quirk that keeps vegetation improvement outside the capital budget, along with the absence of a draft OPEX budget, reflects a hierarchy of importance within Council's presentation of its expenditure. The hard engineering works that make up almost the entirety of the capital program obviously still take pride of place. Moreover, the road re-surfacing and road reconstruction works that comprise a significant chunk of capital spending are still essentially the same type of works Council has been churning out for decades. There is little or no evidence that streetscapes are seen as sites for significant re-design to address climate mitigation, stormwater management and vegetation improvement. That would require more integration of planning across departments as per s. 89 of the Act. It can only be assumed that there is no appetite for that at Darebin.</li> <li>10. The draft documents tell two stories. The draft Council Plan paints Council as an ultraprogressive entity prepared to lead on social justice, Aboriginal issues and climate. Yet on the other hand, the draft budget and capital plan tell a different story - one of an organisation that just wants to do business as usual with funding going to a raft of traditional, hard engineering projects. This inconsistency suggests that the progressive words of the draft Council Plan are hollow. It could be readily overcome if an OPEX budget was presented that fleshed out where spending on vegetation and climate initiatives was to take place and to what extent they were being financially supported. Failure to present these initiatives suggests that Darebin does not consider such items to be important.</li> </ol>	<p>Our Darebin Plan 2025-29</p>
<p><b><u>Our Darebin Plan requires strengthening</u></b></p> <p>The 'Our Darebin Plan 2025-29' needs strengthening in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unlike previous Darebin Council Plans, there are no '10 big actions' that make it clear the significant actions that council wants to achieve in its four years. Without the 10 big actions, it's unclear where the council is wanting to go and what will actually be achieved in the four-year plan period.</li> <li>• Similarly, the plan's focus areas (page 12) talk about 'partnerships', 'working with', 'supporting', rather than delivery of outcomes. I also have concerns that there are 'plans' and 'frameworks' being delivered when the real game is surely implementation and delivery.</li> <li>• The strategic indicators need far more specific targets, particularly indicators where the target or desired trend is simple 'decrease' or 'increase'. For example, the indicator 'Emissions in council operations' simply has a target/desired trend of 'decrease'. Decrease by how much? Without a specific target, there is no way to know where council is trying to go, and if it has gotten there. Or take 'Number of new trees planted to support tree canopy growth' with a target/desired trend simply to 'Increase or maintain'. What percentage of tree canopy growth do you aim to reach in the four years? If you plan one extra tree compared to last year have you successfully 'increased' tree canopy growth?</li> <li>• Some initiatives are unclear and again, it is unclear what success will look like when the plan is complete and the initiative is, in theory, delivered. For example, 'Support the community's access to mental health and wellbeing programs and services to respond to diverse experiences and needs.' What does 'support' look like, and how will it be clear if this initiative has been delivered?</li> </ul>	

Feedback	Related Document
<p>I particularly do not support the aspects of the 'Our Darebin Plan 2025-29' plan where they do not match with the ambition of existing council plans and strategies.</p> <p>Notably, Strategic Direction 4: Climate Leadership and Response needs to match up far more closely with the Climate Emergency Plan, which has specific goals, such as "2.5 By 2030, transition Darebin towards zero waste with a goal of reducing waste emissions by 50%". I have particular concerns about the Our Darebin Plan's ability to meet the climate emergency plan goals in an 'emergency' setting when there are initiatives such as '4.2.1 Deliver the Climate Emergency Plan and prepare a new three-year action plan by 2027'. In an emergency context, Darebin Council cannot wait until 2027 to formalise an action plan, when the Climate Emergency Plan already has numerous actions to be complete within it. Council will not be able to deliver on the goals of the Climate Emergency Plan if actions are delayed until an action plan is written in three years' time.</p> <p>The Darebin Transport Strategy 2007-2027 has actions that include 'Double the share of walking, cycling and public transport for all trips by 2027' and 'Double the share of walking, cycling and public transport for journey to work trips by 2027'. This is a clear target that falls in the period of the four year Our Darebin Plan 2025-29 has no pathway to get there and no mention of building separate bike lanes or relevant actions from the transport strategy such as 'Develop high quality key pedestrian and cycle links across Darebin' and 'Increase pedestrian and cycle priority over vehicles within activity centres and along local streets.'</p> <p>The Our Darebin Plan 2025-29 also needs to match the ambition of Breathing Space: the Darebin Open Space Strategy by increasing the quantity and quality of open space all residents have within 500m of home. The strategy aims for all residents having access to open space within 500m walking distance of their homes and improving the quality of open space. This needs tangible actions in the Our Darebin Plan 2025-29 if it is to be achieved.</p>	
<p><b><u>Failure to Address Climate Emergency / Budget Document Content</u></b></p> <p>Oppose this document, having perused it and all the others available for submission.</p> <p>FIRST, failure to adequately address climate and environment, which in my view are closely related to social justice. The climate emergency SHOULD be a top priority for Council. It is galling that there is no specific budget allocation for the Climate Emergency Plan, especially given all the effort that went into that Plan and the considerable efforts of many Council staff and community members.</p> <p>Lack of priority, or even consideration given to, community education programs, targeted support for household electrification and energy efficiency measures for low-income households and renters.</p> <p>SECOND, disjointed nature of the documents, and specifically weaknesses in the Annual Budget and Financial Outlook 2025 26 to 2028 29, which is fundamental to the others. These problems make it difficult to support each of the documents. There is an associated difficulty of lack of clarity around the linkages between objectives, indicators, initiatives, and services. The Annual Budget and Financial Outlook 2025 26 to 2028 29 should, but doesn't, give a clear picture of where resources are being allocated. . It is not possible to reconcile the different figures in the Annual Budget and Financial Outlook 2025 26 to 2028 29 e.g. cost of services and allocations under each strategic direction . Critically, missing are: a detailed breakdown of allocations under each Strategic Direction (p.17), and alignment with the cost of services (pp.16-17). . How the annual budget allocations align with areas of manager responsibility within Council. There is no alignment in the budget with the portfolios of general managers or managers <a href="https://www.darebin.vic.gov.au/About-council/Council-structure-and-performance/Organisation-structure">https://www.darebin.vic.gov.au/About-council/Council-structure-and-performance/Organisation-structure</a>. What are the current and planned budgets and staff numbers allocated to each of the general managers, and the managers under them.?</p> <p>THIRD, workforce plan which is the one required plan that does not seem to be available (see diagram on page 5 of the Annual Budget and Financial Outlook 2025 26 to 2028 29). This plan surely should be available as it directly relates to resourcing of the Climate Emergency, social justice etc.</p>	<p>Our Darebin Plan 2025-29 &amp; Our Annual Budget and Financial Outlook 2025-26 to 2028-29</p>
<p><b><u>Street Parties - Waiving Council's permit fees / Traffic management support hours / Additional costs to residents</u></b></p> <p>Action items 3.2.5 and 3.2.5.3 - waive council's permit fees and provide 4 hours traffic management for up to 20 community street parties.</p> <p>Think this is a great idea, as we have an annual street party that our entire neighbourhood really values. It is instrumental in fostering our sense of community and coming together and meeting all newcomers. It really is wonderful, but we wouldn't be able to pay for the permit fee.</p> <p>Every year, Darebin make it harder.</p> <p>What has gone from something simple now takes hours and hours of red tape to organise. We now have to get a resident's register done, police party plan, sun smart plan, public liability insurance, responsible service of alcohol, notify public transport, notify all emergency services, food handling permit.</p> <p>Now we're not allowed a jumping castle, and the icing on the cake this year, was being told we need to pay \$400 for a traffic controller to deliver bollards for the 4 hours and then take them back. In previous years, we have volunteered to do this ourselves, which tells me council are simply happy to waste \$400 x 20 permits of our rates on traffic controllers. We already pay for things ourselves like the ice cream truck, the face painters, we feed everyone who turns up, we give the teenagers some cash for playing in the band.</p> <p>It's unclear whether the council proposes to limit the number of street parties to 20 a year, and there is no mention of the duration.</p>	

Feedback	Related Document
<p>* if there are more than 20 applications approved, is the permit fee waived for the first 20? Or will the council only approve 20 permits a year? And if the latter is so, how is made sure that that is done on an equitable basis?</p> <p>* do all street parties need a traffic controller? It increases the cost and arguably for many streets the conventional road closure signs would suffice. At our last street party, a traffic controller was present, but in my view it was unnecessary. The previous 2 years, we safely and very successfully organised permitted street parties with road closure signs and without a traffic controller.</p> <p>* From experience, believe a neighbourhood community really benefits from a 6-hour fee-free permit, rather than 4 hours, as it ensures time for play and interaction that builds community and trust</p> <p>Note that "Darebin is an equitable, vibrant and connected community". That is all we aim for with our street party; however it has become so bogged down in bureaucracy.</p>	