

**Report to the Future Melbourne Committee****Agenda item 6.1****Neighbourhood key issues and City of Melbourne Projects for East Melbourne****16 August 2022****Presenter:** Rushda Halith, Director Community Development**Purpose and background**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the East Melbourne neighbourhood community and upcoming key initiatives. (Refer Attachment 2).
2. On 14 December 2021, Council endorsed Future Melbourne Committee meetings to occur in neighbourhood locations to encourage and support more local residents, businesses, workers and students to participate, experience and engage in Future Melbourne Committee meetings through attending, observing, making a submission and/or asking a public question in a neighbourhood setting.
3. This initiative is part of a neighbourhood approach commenced last year to strengthen how the Council understands and works with different communities across the municipality as we continue to navigate the impacts of COVID-19.
4. The municipality is made up of a broad set of neighbourhoods, each with its own unique characteristics and needs – from densely populated urban environments, such as the central business district, to more residential areas, such as Kensington, Carlton and South Yarra. Using community development practice and a place-based approach, Council seeks to better understand the strengths, needs and priorities of communities to guide its work. Ensuring opportunity of access and participation of diverse voices and views will be a key priority as this approach is embedded this year through neighbourhood plans and projects, developed in partnership with communities.

**Key issues**

5. Locals describe East Melbourne as a small village of friendly neighbours, and an oasis within the busy and lively City of Melbourne. They highly value the area's green spaces and streetscapes, beautiful 19th century heritage homes and modern architecture.
6. Alongside tranquil residential precincts, there is also an epic scale to East Melbourne. Parliament House, the Old Treasury Building and St Patrick's Cathedral are all found in the west. Turn south to explore Melbourne's sports and entertainment precinct, including Melbourne Park, AAMI Park and the world-famous Melbourne Cricket Ground.
7. The area that East Melbourne sits on has rich Aboriginal heritage and continuing cultural significance. Many sites are mapped in the Mapping Aboriginal Melbourne project: [aboriginal-map.melbourne.vic.gov.au](http://aboriginal-map.melbourne.vic.gov.au).
8. Around Yarra Park and the MCG, for example, is a traditional gathering place for the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin. Three of six scarred trees in the City of Melbourne are found in Yarra Park. These trees provide an important living connection to Aboriginal peoples' ancestors and cultural practices, and are significant objects of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage.
9. The area is home to about 5800 people, comprising 3 per cent of the municipality's total population. The median age is 42, the highest among all neighbourhoods in the City of Melbourne. Yet residents aged between 25 and 34 make up most of the population. And the number of residential apartment developments is growing.
10. A third of residents were born overseas, and almost a fifth of residents speak a language other than English at home, compared with 53 per cent of residents in the broader municipality.
11. More than 550 businesses are based in East Melbourne, generating some 26,000 jobs. Many medical specialists have rooms in the area, close to local hospitals including the Epworth Freemasons and the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital.

12. East Melbourne has an active community with a residents' association and other resident-led groups that coordinate local programs and add to a rich community life.
13. At the heart of community life is the ecologically sustainable East Melbourne Library, which offers programs for adults, teenagers and children. More than 33,000 people visited this public library over the past year, browsing more than 26,000 library books, magazines and audio-visual items, making use of bookable spaces and the community garden. This year we will add 2800 titles to the collection.
14. Across the neighbourhood, moments of reflection and adventure can be found in significant open spaces including Treasury Gardens and Fitzroy Gardens, where City of Melbourne manages Cooks' Cottage, the Visitor Information Centre and The Pavilion. Big events such as Open House Melbourne, the Melbourne Marathon Festival and Red Bull Billy Cart Race all shine a light on the neighbourhood.
15. Together with the MCG and surrounding Yarra Park, these open spaces form part of the green belt that wraps around the city. Local parks can also be discovered like jewels across the suburb. Powlett Reserve, for example, is a municipal park boasting a five-court tennis facility, and a 51-place childcare centre and kindergarten. This year, we're also installing new fitness equipment in Powlett Reserve.
16. In the coming year, City of Melbourne is reducing speed limits and investing cycle infrastructure. We're upgrading lighting in Fitzroy Gardens. Investing in green space, infrastructure and cultural projects. Renewing roads, kerbs and channels, parks and landscapes. Undertaking maintenance works on community facilities and other properties. Improving pedestrian infrastructure and boosting urban forest health.
17. We are providing accessible creative opportunities through expanded arts and library programming. Getting started on the East Melbourne / Jolimont heritage review to make sure buildings, precincts and streetscapes of heritage significance are protected as the city grows and changes. We are also facilitating water management solutions to support increased greening, reduce flooding and pollution to the Yarra River – Birrarung and the bay.
18. A new Neighbourhood Planning Portal for East Melbourne will sharpen our focus on local priorities, strengths and needs. In the first phase of community consultation, we received 322 contributions from residents, workers, business owners and visitors. Second stage consultation is underway, and insights are welcomed at [Participate East Melbourne](#).

### **Recommendation from management**

19. That the Future Melbourne Committee notes the overview of the East Melbourne neighbourhood community and upcoming key initiatives.

### **Attachments:**

1. Supporting Attachment (Page 3 of 9)
2. East Melbourne: Neighbourhood Highlights and Initiatives (Page 4 of 9)

## Supporting Attachment

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### Legal

1. Council adopted the schedule of Future Melbourne Committee and Council meetings on 14 December 2021, in accordance with its Governance Rules. This included the locations for the community Future Melbourne Committee meetings, which are held from February until November 2022.

### Finance

2. The financial impact associated with the key initiatives outlined in the overview of the East Melbourne Neighbourhood community and upcoming key initiatives in Attachment 2 are in the 2022-23 budget.

### Conflict of interest

3. No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a material or general conflict of interest in relation to the matter of the report.

### Health and Safety

4. Council projects and activities in East Melbourne seek to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of the community.

### Stakeholder consultation

5. The holding of meetings in community locations, will increase the community's capacity to experience and participate in the democratic process, in addition to engaging with Councillors informally on a range of matters.

### Relation to Council policy

6. This report aligns with the community aspirations identified in the Council Plan 2021-2025 and the Governance Rules.

### Environmental sustainability

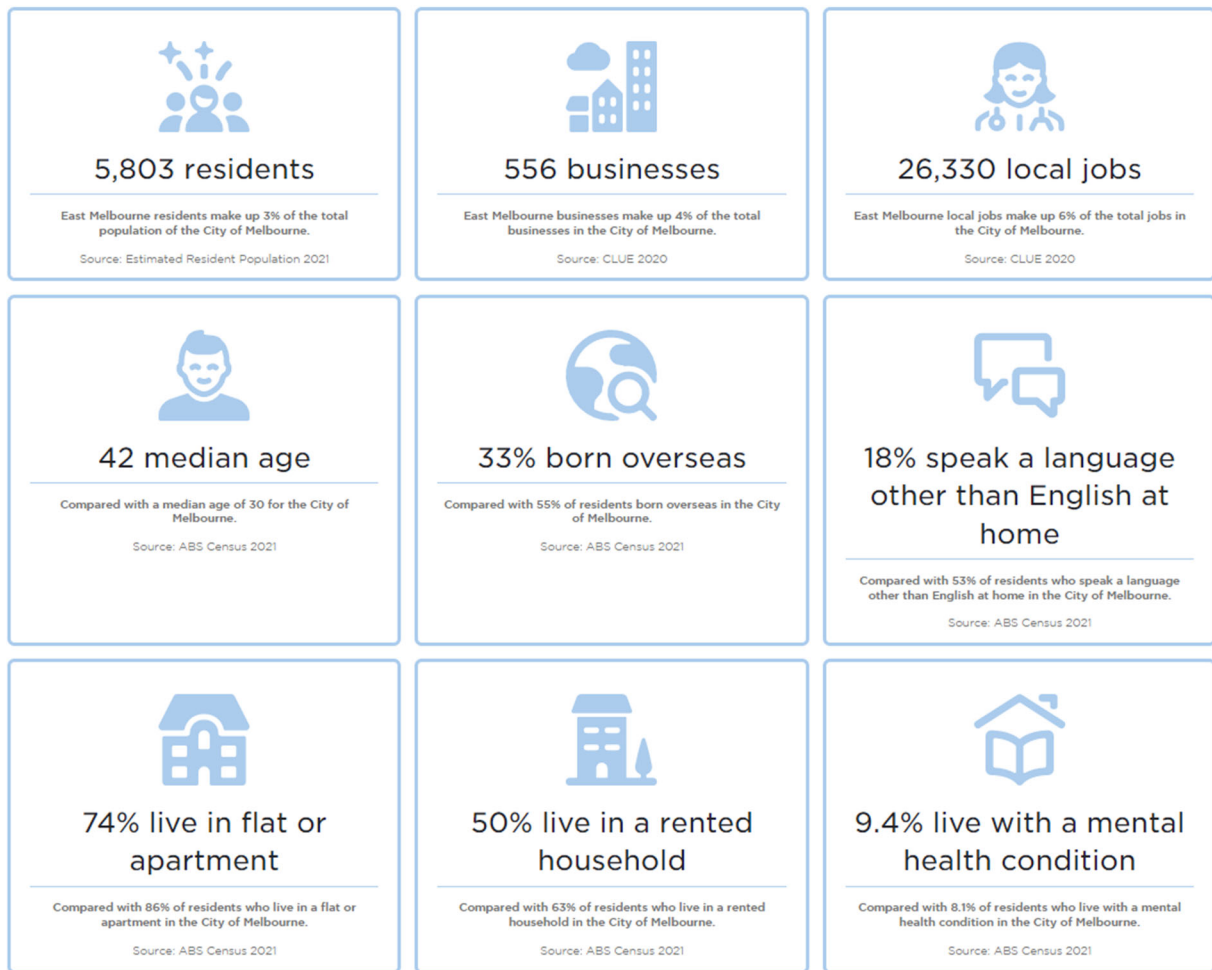
7. Council projects and activities in East Melbourne focus on enhancing both environmental and social sustainability.

## EAST MELBOURNE

### Neighbourhood Highlights and Initiatives



## Who lives in East Melbourne?



## About East Melbourne

East Melbourne is an established area to the east of the central city, home to many 19th century homes, iconic landmarks and places.

The areas that East Melbourne sits on today have rich Aboriginal heritage and cultural significance, of which many sites are mapped in the Melbourne Aboriginal Mapping project available on the City of Melbourne website: <https://aboriginal-map.melbourne.vic.gov.au/>.

East Melbourne has an active community with a residents' association and other resident-led community groups that coordinate programs that meet the needs of the local residents, communicate information that is relevant to the neighbourhood and supports people to participate in community life.

The East Melbourne community enjoys the local area's tranquil, leafy environment and its historic streetscapes and heritage buildings. Terrace housing is common in East Melbourne's leafy streets, alongside remnant mansions, some of which are listed on the Victorian Heritage Register, and a growing number of residential apartment developments.

The median age in East Melbourne is 42, which is the highest amongst all neighbourhoods in City of Melbourne. However, residents between ages 25 and 34 represent the largest proportion of East Melbourne's population.

The postcode area of East Melbourne provides a quiet residential precinct for its residents, but also contains many places which serve wider Melbourne and the state. Such places include Parliament House, the Old Treasury Building and St Patrick's Cathedral, located in the west of the neighbourhood and to the south, Melbourne's Sports and Entertainment Precinct, including Melbourne Park, AAMI Park and the world-famous Melbourne Cricket Ground.

East Melbourne also has a large health services industry with many medical practitioners locating in the area due to its proximity to local hospitals, including The Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital and Epworth Freemasons Hospital, which also service patients and clients from across the state.

East Melbourne locals have described their neighbourhood as a small village of friendly neighbours and an oasis within the busy and lively City of Melbourne. They highly value the area's green spaces and streetscapes, its beautiful heritage and modern architecture and having easy access to the variety of events, nightlife and eateries in the neighbouring areas.

## **Council Services**

### *Childcare and family services*

Powlett Reserve Children's Centre is a City of Melbourne facility leased to a Committee of Management. This centre provides a 51-place education and childcare centre with integrated kindergarten.

Family Services including Maternal and Child Health, Immunisation, Family Support and Counselling and Parenting Services are available to all East Melbourne families at the CBD pop up under the Multicultural Hub, Carlton Learning Precinct and Boyd Community Hub.

### *Libraries, cultural and community spaces*

The East Melbourne Library provides the loan of books and other materials from a collection of over 26,000 library books, magazines and audio-visual items. In the last year 2,050 people borrowed around 42,000 items from East Melbourne. 4,680 items were purchased and over 33,000 people visited over the last 12 months.

This year we will purchase approximately 2800 new books. We have bookable spaces at the library for community use, a local history room and service, computer access with 24-hour wi-fi, and programs for children, teenagers and adults.

City of Melbourne also manages Cooks' Cottage, the Visitor Information Centre and The Pavilion in Fitzroy Gardens.

### *Parks and open spaces*

East Melbourne contains a range of significant capital city open spaces including Fitzroy Gardens, and Treasury Gardens. Together with the MCG and the surrounding Yarra Park these open spaces are key contributors to the green circle which surrounds the city. Municipal parks such as Powlett Reserve and local open spaces dot the suburb.

Yarra Park, situated in East Melbourne and managed by the Melbourne Cricket Club, provides a dog off-lead area and a playground, which are frequented and valued by East Melbourne residents as neighbourhood amenities.

### *Neighbourhood Sporting and recreation venues*

Powlett Reserve Tennis Centre is a five-court facility catering for a range of community tennis programs, coaching and public court access.

Informal recreational facilities in Powlett Reserve include a playground a picnic and barbeque area and a former public building, which serves as the base for the East Melbourne Group.

### **Key Initiatives**

Council work underway in East Melbourne:

- Development of a new Neighbourhood Planning Portal for East Melbourne as Council focuses on local priorities, strengths and needs. The first phase of community consultations ran from March and ended on 30 April. There were 322 contributions made by residents, workers, business owners and visitors, which are being analysed. Second stage consultation is underway. Community members are encouraged to provide feedback via [Participate East Melbourne | Participate Melbourne website](#)
- City of Melbourne is currently undertaking a Pedestrian and Road Safety Review of East Melbourne. This is a proactive review of pedestrian and traffic issues in the local area. It will investigate previous feedback from residents and the public, review any previous traffic/pedestrian studies and strategies, analyse crash history data and look at all available data and other connected strategies for the area. Part of this work will include working with local groups to hear about their issues and concerns. With all this background information, recommendations will be made on various road safety improvement projects in East Melbourne and Jolimont that could be implemented over the next 5 to 10 years. This work will also help build and plan our capital works program. The proposal to introduce the speed limit of 40km/h to all local roads in East Melbourne and Jolimont has been approved and will be implemented before 30 June 2023.
- Park renewal works including refit of toilets will occur in Treasury Gardens.
- Events supported via the Event Partnership Program in East Melbourne include:
  - July: Open House Melbourne, at various locations across in East Melbourne and municipality
  - October: Melbourne Marathon Festival, MCG and Yarra Park
  - November: Red Bull Billy Cart event on Lansdowne Street
- Melbourne Sports Tours that are conducted at the MCG, and the Australian Sports Museum were selected to be involved in the Tourism Australia 'National Experience Content Initiative'. This initiative aims to support tourism businesses across Australia in their recovery and drive increased visitation by helping them to better market their experiences and attractions. City of Melbourne supported this nomination.
- Increased marketing and promotional material has occurred for East Melbourne businesses on the 'What's On' Melbourne channels, with a combined audience of 1 million plus. 'Hero' pieces have been created to elevate the neighbourhood as a whole, and encourage visitation to the entire area. Photography has been commissioned to support this campaign.

- New marketing content was recently created featuring photography and an Instagram reel of KereKere Green in Fitzroy Gardens. The content was successful and resulted in over 194k impressions, 7.5k engagements, 6k reactions and 1,270 shares.

## **Council investments in East Melbourne**

### Capital works

New infrastructure investments in East Melbourne in the 2022-23 financial year include around:

- \$41,000 to reduce speed limits
- \$130,000 for cycle infrastructure
- \$170,000 for other green space, infrastructure and cultural projects.
- Proposed installation of fitness equipment in Powlett reserve
- Discuss plans to replace the current Lansdowne St public toilet in Fitzroy Gardens

We will invest around \$1.1 million on renewal works in East Melbourne on roadways, kerb and channel, renewal, parks, landscape, library collection and property.

We will invest around \$300,000, on maintenance works in East Melbourne on community facilities and other property, pedestrian infrastructure and for urban forest health.

## **Key activities**

This year we will:

- Provide accessible creative opportunities through expanded arts and library programming with a focus on digital literacy, life-long learning and wellbeing.
- Commence the East Melbourne / Jolimont heritage review. This review will ensure that buildings, precincts and streetscapes of heritage significance are protected as the city grows and changes.
- Deliver East Melbourne pedestrian improvements following recommendations from the Pedestrian and Road Safety Review currently underway.
- Facilitate integrated water management solutions to support increased greening, reduced flooding and reduced pollution to the bay and Yarra River – Birrarung.

## **Our strategic work in East Melbourne**

We will continue to implement:

### Fitzroy Gardens Master Plan

The Fitzroy Gardens Master Plan sets the strategic long-term direction and priorities for landscape character, use and future development of Fitzroy Gardens.

### East Melbourne Urban Forest Precinct Plan

The East Melbourne Urban Forest Precinct Plan (2013-2023) is a 10-year planting plan, developed in collaboration with community, which shows the current state of the urban forest in East Melbourne and the future initiatives and changes we are pursuing to enable a healthy, resilient and diverse urban forest. Each of Melbourne's 10 precincts has a 10 year Urban Forest Precinct Plan.



## Disaster preparedness and resilience planning

Through our new initiative on Community Disaster Resilience we will look to run programs to help our community be more prepared. We're keen to understand further what types of events, programs and support would be valuable in East Melbourne for building neighbourhood resilience for tackling climate change and disasters.

## Municipal Planning Strategy

Municipal Planning Strategy (2022) establishes the overarching strategic planning policy for the municipality. It considers the area's context, history, assets, strengths, attributes and influences and establishes the vision and strategic direction for future land use and development.

The new Municipal Planning Strategy includes greater emphasis on promoting sustainable development, promoting housing diversity and affordable housing, mitigating climate change, promoting employment, innovation and creative industries, providing infrastructure and elevating high quality design outcomes and design excellence.

For East Melbourne, it outlines the context and character of the area, the long term vision, key changes, challenges and opportunities across the built form and public realm, environment, water, economy, culture and heritage, infrastructure, land use and community wellbeing.