



Disability Action Plan

2026-2030

Version control:

Version	Date	Author
1.0	1/4/2026	Coordinator Community Access
2.0	6/8/2026	Coordinator Community Access

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters, now known as the City of Greater Dandenong. We honour their enduring connection to Country, their Cultural knowledge, and their sustainable stewardship of these lands and waterways over thousands of generations.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present, recognising their vital role in preserving and protecting the sacred lands and waterways of their Ancestors, their places, Traditional Cultural practices, and stories. We also acknowledge the Bunurong Land Council as the Registered Aboriginal Party, responsible for caring for the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage of this area.

In the spirit of reconciliation, we value the opportunity to learn from and work alongside Bunurong peoples, as Traditional Custodians.



Attribution:
Auntie Heather Kennedy
Trawalway Plermierner and Bunurong Artist
Coming Together as One
Acrylic on canvas

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Mayor's Message

It is my pleasure to present our Disability Action Plan 2026-2030 to the Greater Dandenong community.

Thank you to the hundreds of people with disabilities, carers, service providers, advocates and community members who consulted with us to develop this plan. Your valuable insights helped ensure it reflects community priorities and lived experience.

The new Disability Action Plan will guide our work together over the next four years so we can increase access and inclusion, as well as support for carers and families across Greater Dandenong.

To do so, we will focus on the following priority areas which were supported by our community:

- Inclusive employment and economic participation
- Accessible and inclusive community infrastructure
- Support for carers, families and access to services
- Community inclusion, awareness and leadership.

We are looking forward to building on our accomplishments in this space, to further improve the lives of people with disabilities and those who care for them.

Greater Dandenong Mayor
Councillor Sophie Tan



Executive Summary

Greater Dandenong City Council is committed to ensuring people with disability, their families and carers feel welcome, respected and included in community life.

This Disability Action Plan shows how we will make our community easier to access and more inclusive. It helps Council understand local needs, improve our services, and work with other organisations when issues are outside Council's control.

Through this plan, Council will:

- Support inclusion so people with disability can take part in all parts of community life.
- Make it easier to access Council services by identifying barriers and planning improvements.
- Support Council staff with training and resources to deliver inclusive services.

This plan replaces the 2017–2023 Disability Action Plan. It continues our commitment to removing barriers, increasing participation, and making sure everyone has equal opportunities.

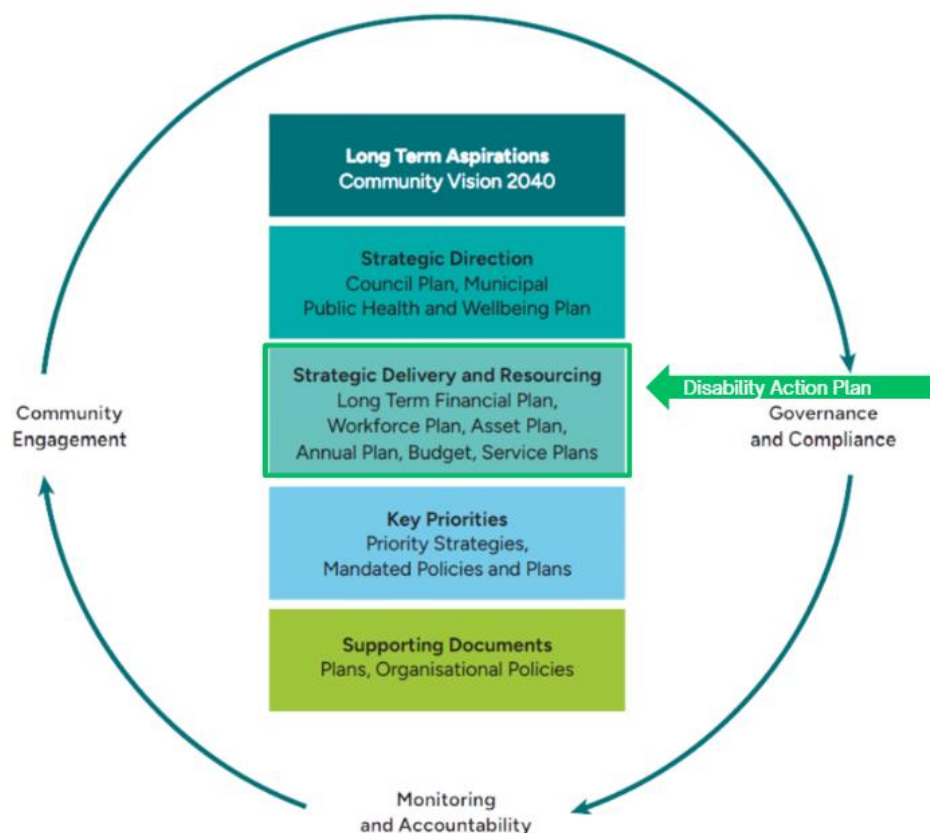
Key themes included in this plan:

1	Employment and Economic Participation	Supporting fair access to jobs, training and opportunities to help earn an income.
2	Accessible and Inclusive Community Infrastructure	Making community spaces, buildings and public areas safe, welcoming and easy to use for everyone.
3	Support for Carers, Families and Access to Services	Improving support and making it easier for people with disability and their carers to find and use services.
4	Community Inclusion, Awareness and Leadership	Building a community that understands, includes and values people of all abilities.

Integrated Planning Framework

Council's Integrated Planning Framework (IPF) outlines Council's planning in the long, medium, and short term. This planning approach is required by law and helps Council plan well, measure progress, and deliver better outcomes for the community.

The IPF guides the creation of strategies and plans, ensuring their alignment with both strategic and operational priorities.



The Disability Action Plan (DAP) is one of Council's key plans. It is required under the Victorian Disability Act 2006, along with other important Council plans.

The DAP supports the Greater Dandenong City Council's Community Vision 2040 by explaining how Council will improve access, fairness and participation for people with disability. This helps create a community that is welcoming, healthy and supports everyone to thrive.

By improving access, participation and wellbeing for people with disability, the DAP directly supports the goals of the Council Plan 2025-2029. This includes a strong focus on inclusion, community wellbeing and fair access to services.

The DAP also guides Council's internal policies and procedures and links with other plans. These help staff turn the actions in the DAP into everyday practice and support ongoing improvements to accessibility across Council.

Background

This Disability Action Plan uses the same meaning of disability as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability. Disability is described as a long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory condition. Disability happens when these conditions interact with barriers that stop people from taking part in society on an equal basis.

This way of understanding disability is called the social model of disability. It focuses on removing barriers rather than changing the person. This definition is also used in *Inclusive Victoria: State Disability Plan 2022–2026*.

Inclusive Victoria's State Disability Plan is the Victorian Government's plan for improving access, inclusion and rights for people with disability across Victoria. It sets clear priorities and guides how councils, including Greater Dandenong City Council, develop, deliver and review their Disability Action Plans.

Inclusive Victoria focuses on improving outcomes for people with disability, including:

- better access to healthcare
- more inclusive sport and recreation opportunities
- improved inclusion in schools
- better support for children with complex disability support needs.

 International	• United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
 National	• Australia's Disability Strategy (2021–2031) • Disability Discrimination Act 1992 • NDIS • Information Linkages and Capacity Building program • Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability
 Victorian	• Disability Act 2006 (Vic) • The Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018-2023 • Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic) • Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic) • Inclusive Victoria: State Disability Plan (2022-2026)
 Local Government	• Disability Action Plans

Australia's Disability Strategy 2021–2031 is a national plan to improve inclusion, participation and wellbeing for people with disability.

The Strategy focuses on important areas such as jobs, health, education, community life, safety, community attitudes, and access to support. It aims to make everyday life fairer and more inclusive for people with disability.

The Strategy highlights the need for governments, services and the community to work together to remove barriers, protect rights and support people with disability to take part fully in society.

It also recognises that some people with disability face extra challenges. The Strategy aims to improve outcomes for these groups through more inclusive policies and better services.

This Disability Action Plan supports the same aims of equity and inclusion as the Victorian Government and Australian Government plans. It turns these plans into clear, practical actions at a local level. All three plans work together to improve inclusion for people with disability.

Disability can affect people of all ages and backgrounds, and the Disability Action Plan recognises the diverse experiences and intersectional identities of people with disability, including children, older people, and individuals from varied cultural, social, gender, and community groups.

Council will continue to keep track of Victorian Government and Australian Government policies and programs that may affect our community. If there are any changes, Council will update future actions in the Disability Action Plan to reflect these changes.

Achievements of the Disability Action Plan

This Disability Action Plan is the sixth plan delivered by Greater Dandenong City Council.

The first four Disability Action Plans helped improve access and inclusion by making buildings and public spaces easier to use, supporting inclusive community programs, and building disability awareness and inclusion across Council services.

During the fifth Disability Action Plan, Council showed strong leadership in disability inclusion. This included better planning, strong partnerships with the community, improved access to facilities and services, new inclusive employment initiatives, and targeted support for people with disability and their carers.

Together, this work shows steady progress toward creating a more fair and accessible community for all residents.

Some key highlights from our previous DAPs include:

- Developed several inclusive employment programs at Council. These included a disability internship program, self-employment program for people with intellectual disability, school-based apprenticeships in parks and gardens, and involvement in a Municipal Association of Victoria project sharing the stories of employees and interns with disability.
- Delivered and promoted accessible community events that celebrate inclusion, such as inclusive sports days and Council festivals, and created an accessible events guide.
- Delivered International Day of People with Disability celebrations designed with people who have lived experience of disability. Events included activities at Noble Park Community Centre and Disability at Dusk, delivered with the City of Casey and Cardinia Shire.
- Supported people in the community to better understand and access the NDIS.
- Improved access to information, including making Council's website more accessible.



- Strengthened support for carers through programs such as the Carers Walking Group and by increasing carer-focused information on the Council website.
- Made accessibility upgrades to Council buildings and facilities, including Springvale Hub, Keysborough Hub and Dandenong Wellbeing Centre.
- Supported community connection through inclusive events, regional partnerships and community-led activities.
- Involved the community in the design and development of the All Abilities Playground in Noble Park.
- Strongly advocated for better accessibility across public transport, including for the redevelopment of Noble Park Station.
- Produced and supported the development of a range of videos to raise awareness about disability inclusion.
- Partnered with Sport4All to support local schools and sports clubs to become more inclusive.
- Introduced the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program to better support people with hidden disability.



Community Snapshot

Many more people live with disability than the Census shows. This is because the Census only counts people who need help with everyday activities and relies on people self-reporting. It does not include many people who have a disability but do not need this type of assistance.

Another survey, called the Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (SDAC), gives a clearer picture. It shows that 21% of Australians have a mild, moderate, severe or profound disability. Such a proportion would be equivalent to 36,000 people in Greater Dandenong.

The same survey concluded that 12% of Australians were carers, equivalent to 20,000 Greater Dandenong residents. Among them, 4.8% were primary carers, representing 8,000 residents.

The survey also shows the following:

Disability and Age

Disability is more common as people get older.



Young Children

~6%

Have disability



Older Adults

~33%

About 1 in 3 have disability



Aged 90+

80%+

Live with disability

Work and Disability

People with mild disability are much more likely to work full-time than those with severe disability.



Many workers with disability face limits on the type or amount of work they can do



Just over half receive support at work, such as flexible hours or special equipment

Greater Dandenong Snapshot

Women are more likely to be carers than men.



11.2%

Residents care for someone with disability

13.5% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents live with disability - almost double the rate for non-Indigenous residents

NDIS Participation



Greater Dandenong has **4241** NDIS participants

This is only **12.7%** of all residents with disability, meaning most people with disability do not receive NDIS supports

What this means for Council

- Our community includes many people with disability who aren't in the NDIS but still face barriers.
- Council planning needs to support everyone, with:
 - accessible buildings and spaces
 - inclusive services and programs
 - community supports for people who don't qualify for or need the NDIS.

For further information about our community visit www.greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/disability-and-carers-social-statistics.

Challenges and Opportunities

Greater Dandenong City Council faces some challenges in delivering the actions outlined in the Disability Action Plan.

Research shows that people with disability still experience poorer health, lower levels of education, fewer job opportunities, and difficulties accessing buildings, services and transport. This happens even though accessibility standards are in place. Research also shows that negative attitudes and a lack of understanding in the community continue to limit full inclusion and participation. Many of these issues are outside Council's direct control. Because of this, advocating to other organisations and levels of government is an important role for Council.

There are also many opportunities to improve outcomes. Council has already completed considerable work to improve access to public transport, create inclusive parks and public spaces, and support a strong network of disability service providers have arrived in the municipality.

These strengths provide opportunities to improve access, strengthen services, promote universal design, and increase community understanding and positive attitudes. Through this work, the Disability Action Plan will create a more inclusive, fair and supportive community for everyone.



Consultation – How was this Developed?

Initial community engagement, undertaken to inform Council's future role in aged care and disability services, together with consultation for the Council Plan and input from the Disability Advisory Committee, involved approximately 1,438 people. Participants included people with disability, older people, families, carers, service providers, employers and business owners. This engagement identified key community priorities and provided a strong foundation for developing the draft Disability Action Plan.

To further refine the draft Plan, Council undertook targeted consultation with the Disability Advisory Committee, people with disability, carers, families, service providers, advocates, community organisations and the broader community. Engagement activities included an online Have Your Say survey, community drop-in sessions, targeted discussions with disability and carer groups, and promotion through stakeholder networks and partner organisations. The consultation reached more than 700 people through direct networks, attracted 420 unique visitors to the Have Your Say webpage, and generated more than 148 individual pieces of feedback, ensuring a wide range of perspectives and lived experiences were heard.

Across both stages of engagement, participants consistently highlighted the need for a more accessible and inclusive community. Key priorities included accessible infrastructure, transport and parking; improved access to information and services; stronger support for carers and families; increased employment opportunities; greater community awareness and understanding of disability; and ongoing involvement of people with disability in decision-making through co-design and lived experience leadership. Feedback demonstrated strong community support for the Disability Action Plan 2026-2030 and confirmed that the Plan reflects local priorities, needs and aspirations.

This sixth Disability Action Plan represents the next step in Council's ongoing commitment to accessibility and inclusion. Each plan builds on the achievements, learnings and community feedback from previous plans, ensuring continuous improvement over time. Earlier plans focused primarily on improving access to buildings, facilities and public spaces. More recent plans expanded this focus to include inclusive communication, participation in community life, and addressing attitudes and barriers that can limit inclusion. These learnings have informed the priorities and actions outlined in this Plan.

While recognising the progress made, the Plan acknowledges that barriers to inclusion still exist. It focuses on embedding accessibility and inclusion across all areas of Council's work, while strengthening advocacy on issues beyond Council's direct responsibility, such as transport, employment and community attitudes. Through these actions, Council will continue to work towards a community where people with disability can participate fully, contribute meaningfully and feel valued, respected and included.

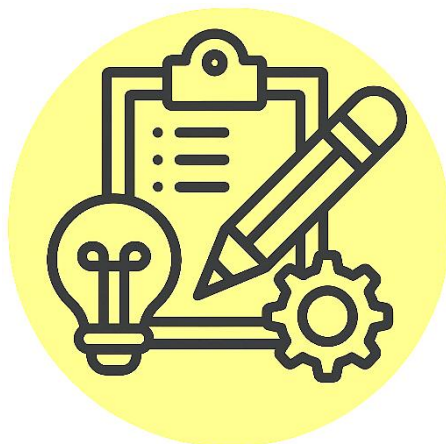
Key Themes Identified



1. Employment and Economic Participation

The community shared several challenges about work, including:

- **Limited employment opportunities:** People with disability often find it harder to get jobs or move forward in their careers. Many employers and the wider community do not always recognise the skills, strengths and contributions of people with disability, and there is a need for more employment pathways, training opportunities and workplace supports.
- **Balancing work and caring:** Caring responsibilities can make it harder for people with disability and their families to take part in work or study.



2. Accessible and Inclusive Community Infrastructure

The community identified a number of access issues, including:

- **Accessible buildings and spaces:** Public spaces, buildings and facilities are not always designed or maintained to be accessible for everyone.
- **Transport barriers:** Limited access to reliable and accessible transport reduces independence and makes it harder to take part in community life.
- **Parking access:** Disability parking rules are not always well understood, creating barriers for people who rely on these spaces.
- **Inclusive Design:** People with disability have valuable lived experience and expertise to contribute to the planning and design of public infrastructure. Greater involvement in decision-making helps create facilities, services and public spaces that are more accessible, inclusive and beneficial for everyone.



3. Support for Carers, Families and Access to Services

The community identified opportunities to improve services and support, including:

- **Access to services:** People with disability report facing barriers accessing specialist health and allied health services and navigating complex service systems.
- **Support for families and carers:** Families and carers need better coordinated support to manage caring responsibilities, including access to services and information.
- **Accessible information:** Information about services, including the NDIS and accessibility, is not always easy to find, understand or use.



4. Community Inclusion, Awareness and Leadership

The community raised issues about inclusion and participation, including:

- **Stigma and lack of understanding:** Negative attitudes, misunderstandings and limited awareness of disability, including hidden disabilities, can create barriers to social connection and community participation.
- **Representation and leadership:** People with disability are not always represented in leadership and decision-making roles, limiting opportunities to influence decisions, shape community outcomes and share their lived experience.
- **Inclusive design:** Involving people with disability from the earliest stages of planning and design leads to better outcomes by drawing on their expertise, perspectives and practical knowledge.

Action Plan

Theme 1: Employment and Economic Participation

No	Action	Measurable Outcome
1.1	Promote employment programs and skill building opportunities through partnerships.	Increase number of disability employment and training programs promoted to the community.
1.2	Support employers to access inclusive hiring resources to support employees with disabilities.	Increase contribution to Greater Dandenong Business Network and other relevant networks to promote employment inclusion.
1.3	Identify opportunities to support carers to balance work and caring responsibilities.	Identify and implement new initiatives that strengthen support for carers balancing work and care.
1.4	Strengthen Council's role in inclusive employment by promoting accessible workplace practices and supporting opportunities for people with disability.	The number of activities identified and implemented that lead to increased opportunities for employment and support of Council staff with disability.

Theme 2: Accessible and Inclusive Community Infrastructure

No	Action	Measurable Outcome
2.1	Improve the accessibility of public spaces including car parking.	Community reported accessibility barriers in public spaces are addressed.
2.2	Advocate to improve access to public transport.	Public transport accessibility issues are identified and raised with responsible government organisations.
2.3	Provide opportunities for people with disabilities to contribute to the planning and design of Council facilities.	The number of Council facility and infrastructure projects that incorporate inclusive design principles and formal consultation with people with disability.
2.4	Increase accessibility awareness among businesses and service providers.	Increase the number of businesses and service providers who participate in information sessions and access resources.

Theme 3: Support for Carers, Families and Access to Services

No	Action	Measurable Outcome
3.1	Expand_peer support programs to include new members.	Increase the number of families and carers participating in peer support programs and social connection initiatives.
3.2	Promote resources to local healthcare and service providers to increase access and inclusion by people with disability.	The number of local healthcare and service providers reached through promotion and engagement activities.
3.3	Improve access to disability-related, Council and community service information.	Increase the availability of accessible disability related information across Council platforms (e.g., website, printed materials, translated resources).

Theme 4: Community Inclusion, Awareness and Leadership

No	Action	Measurable Outcome
4.1	Increase disability awareness within the community to promote inclusion, and improve understanding of accessibility, rights, and participation for people with disability.	Number of disability awareness and inclusion activities delivered to promote understanding of accessibility, rights, participation and hidden disabilities.
4.2	Strengthen leadership development for people with disabilities through meaningful involvement in committees, advisory groups and consultation activities.	Increase the number of people with disability participating in Council committees, advisory groups and consultation processes.
4.3	Provide opportunities for people with lived experience of disability, including carers, to be actively involved in planning and designing community facilities, programs and spaces.	Increase the number of Council planning and design projects that engage people with lived experience of disability and carers through co-design processes where possible.
4.4	Encourage greater participation by people with disability in Council programs, services, and activities by proactively addressing access barriers and promoting inclusive practices.	The number of Council programs, services and activities that review and address accessibility barriers and implement inclusive practices.

Implementation, Monitoring and Reporting

Greater Dandenong City Council will implement the DAP using a whole-of-Council approach. This means all Council departments are responsible for making sure their work is accessible and inclusive. Council will work closely with people with disability, carers, service providers and local businesses to support this work.

The Disability Advisory Committee plays an important role by providing advice and guidance on the plan. The Committee helps identify new and emerging needs, gaps in services, and links to Victorian Government and Australian Government priorities.

Each year, Council will review progress in consultation with the Disability Advisory Committee. The review will align with Council's planning and reporting processes and assess progress against the Plan's long-term goals and actions, including what has been achieved.

These steps help ensure transparency, accountability and continuous improvement, and support Council's commitment to creating an inclusive community.



Supporting Documents

The Disability Action Plan supports the goals of the Council Plan 2025-29 by helping build inclusion, encouraging people to take part in community life, celebrating diversity, and strengthening social connections.

The Council Plan emphasises priorities including:

- Our city is accessible to all and supports health and wellbeing
- Our city supports people in need
- Our city is vibrant and well planned for the future
- We have well-connected spaces and places
- We provide opportunities for our community to succeed
- We value the voices of our community in decision making
- We provide easy access to services for our community.

The Disability Action Plan helps put these priorities into action by making sure Council services, buildings and planning remove barriers and support inclusion.



Appendices

Disability Discrimination Act 1992

www.legislation.gov.au

Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-31

www.health.gov.au/our-work/australias-disability-strategy

Inclusive Victoria: State Disability Plan

www.vic.gov.au/state-disability-plan

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW)

www.aihw.gov.au/reports/disability/people-with-disability-in-australia/contents/social-support/community-attitudes

Centre of Research Excellence in Disability and Health

www.credh.org.au

Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability 2023

www.disability.royalcommission.gov.au/publications/final-report

Engaging with our community and stakeholders to understand Council's future role in aged and disability services

www.greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/aged-care-reforms

Council Plan 2025-2029

www.greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/council-plan-2025-29