



CEO Report

Issue 125, January 2025

Wominjeka. Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Kulin Nation. We acknowledge their legacy and spiritual connection to the land and waterways across the City of Port Phillip and pay our heartfelt respect to their Elders, past, present, and emerging.



City of Port Phillip

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Diversity

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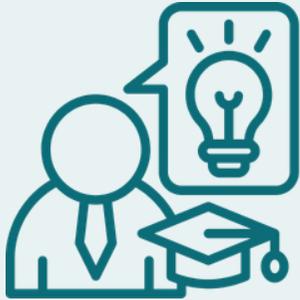
Please consider
the environment
before printing.

Welcome to the January CEO report
– an update on our progress
towards the Plan for Port Phillip
2025–2035.

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In January...



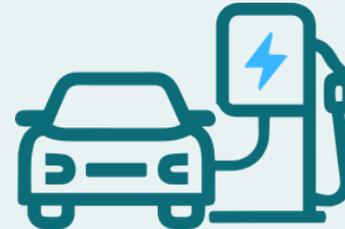
We opened applications for four new Advisory Committees to strengthen how we include community voices in our decision-making.



We supported a local textile artist to exhibit their work in Japan and approved \$20k in quick response grants for local organisations.



We coordinated donations from South Melbourne Market traders to communities impacted by recent bushfires.

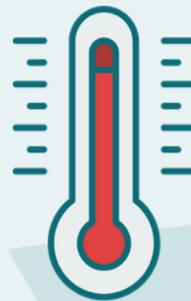


We activated the first three pole mounted electric vehicle charging stations in Port Melbourne and St Kilda.

Project portfolio performance

92%

projects on track
(incl. those at risk)



We promoted council libraries across the City to help residents stay cool during the recent heat wave.



Strategic direction 1

A healthy and connected community

Highlights

Quick Response Grant Program

We continued to support individuals and community organisations through the Quick Response Grant Program, which helps people deliver local projects that strengthen our community. We supported the Friends of the Botanical Gardens to host a big afternoon tea celebrating the anniversary of the opening of the St Kilda Botanical Gardens in 1861. Residents and visitors enjoyed live entertainment, a guided tour and discovery activities.

We also supported a local textile artist to exhibit their work at Gallery HARIISHA in Fukui City, Japan, giving them an opportunity to share their creative practice internationally.

The organisation category received seventeen applications, nine of which were approved, totalling \$15,456. The individual category received seven applications, and we approved five for a total of \$2,500.

Holiday fun for Middle Years and Youth Services

Across the summer 2026 holiday period, we delivered a vibrant program for children and young people aged five to eighteen that supported social connection, wellbeing and confidence. Activities included excursions to Werribee Open Range Zoo and paddle boarding at St Kilda Pier. Skinners and St Kilda Adventure Playgrounds offered engaging on-site programs such as skateboarding workshops, cooking sessions, tie dyeing, water play, and an Eco Centre visit focused on Indigenous plants, bush tucker and local insects. We prioritised accessible, low-cost activities to support participation for young people who may face financial or transport barriers.

Engagement remained high throughout the program, with an average of 30 Adventure Playground members attending daily and an

average of 26 Youth Services participants taking part in activities.



Eco-Centre staff at the Adventure Playgrounds

Australia Day Citizenship Award

We welcomed 150 new citizens from 41 countries at our Australia Day Citizenship Ceremony. The event brought our community together to celebrate the diversity and shared values that make Port Phillip a welcoming place to call home. The Low Rez Melbourne Male Choir performed on the day, adding to the warm and inclusive atmosphere.

Our next citizenship ceremony will be held on Thursday 19 March 2026. For more information and registrations, visit our [website](#).



Citizenship Ceremony at Town Hall

Midsumma events in our City

We delivered three Midsumma events that strengthened community connection and demonstrated our commitment to LGBTIQ+ inclusion.

The Pride Flag Raising Ceremony united Councillors, staff and community members, and featured a performance by drag queen Jimi the Kween alongside speeches from Mayor Alex Makin, Midsumma Board Chair Michael Parry and Port Melbourne Football Club's 2025 VFLW co-captain Liv Barton.-captain Liv Barton.

We also proudly joined the Pride March, where the City of Port Phillip Pride Network walked down Fitzroy Street with Councillors, staff, families and friends. Collectively, these events visibly affirmed our support for LGBTIQ+ communities.



Councillors and community representatives at the Pride flag raising

Major initiatives 2025/26

Council delivers multiple projects that contribute to **a healthy and connected community**. Following are the major initiatives (priority projects) we are starting, continuing or completing in 2025/26.

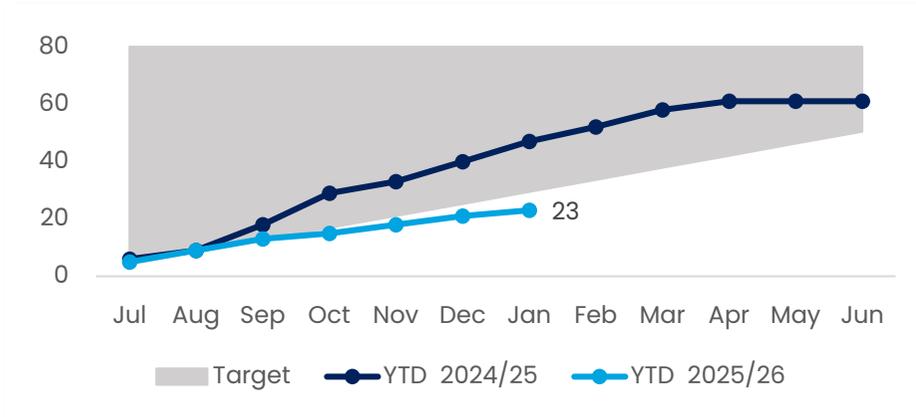
Major Initiative	Stage	Status	Update	Completion Date	Forecast \$'000	Budget \$'000
Affordable Housing and Homelessness Delivery of the final year of the In Our Backyard implementation project (previous housing strategy) and a funding allocation for Council's new Homelessness and Affordable Housing Strategy.	Delivery		Following adoption of the Homelessness and Affordable Housing Strategy 2025 - 2035 on 10 December 2025, work has focused on preparing a public facing version of the Strategy for publishing on Council's website, and commencing implementation of the Strategy, in particular year 1 priority projects under a Strategy Implementation Plan.	Jun 2035	1,600	1,600
Children's Facilities Upgrade Program Redevelop six Council and community-managed childcare centres across the municipality to improve condition and functionality.	Discovery & Concept/Delivery		<p>The program continues to progress across all project sites, with several locations moving through final approvals and preparing for upcoming works. At Eildon Road, progress is being made on securing the final building permit, with construction expected to begin in early 2026. The Avenue is advancing well, with the works contract now awarded and the building permit assessment underway.</p> <p>At Elwood, the building permit application and design documentation have been submitted to the Municipal Building Surveyor for review. North St Kilda has also reached an important step, with a town planning application lodged and now undergoing assessment.</p> <p>Design work continues at Lilian Cannam, where tender documents and drawings are currently being prepared ahead of procurement. Meanwhile, the decanting works across the program are largely complete, with only minor finishing tasks remaining.</p> <p>Overall, the program is steadily moving forward, with each site progressing through its respective</p>	Nov 2031	3,126	3,014

Major Initiative	Stage	Status	Update	Completion Date	Forecast \$'000	Budget \$'000
			approvals and preparation stages ahead of construction			
Community Infrastructure Plan Develop a municipal-wide Community Infrastructure Plan.	Project Initiation		Phase 1 Community engagement has now concluded, and the consultant has prepared the draft CIP utilising the engagement findings alongside the Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment. The draft will be presented to Councillors in Q3 for consideration ahead of further community engagement. Potential future community infrastructure needs are being considered as part of the State Government election advocacy plan.	Jun 2026	60	60
St Kilda Adventure Playground Upgrade A multi-year project to plan and deliver upgrade works to St Kilda Adventure Playground.	Delivery		Work on the project is progressing well, with the landscape tender closed at the end of January. The next stages of the tender process for major play equipment and the new clubhouse are progressing. New signage has also been installed within the park. Art options have been prepared, proposing new murals and artworks while retaining existing pieces to compliment the area and legacy of the Adventure Playground.	May 2027	1,160	1,438

Legend  On Track/Complete  At Risk  Off Track

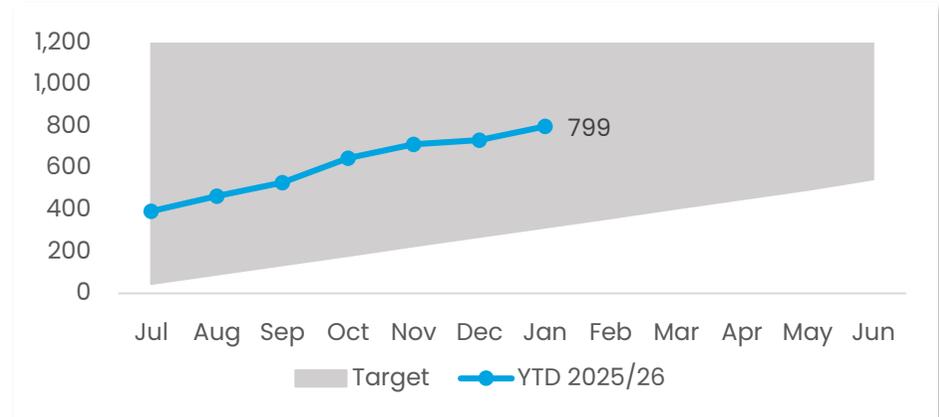
Service performance measures

Number of older persons housed



In January 2026, two vacancies were made available by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) through our sponsorship properties, bringing the total number of older persons housed this financial year to 23. This outcome is below our expected performance, and we anticipate this trend will continue as DFFH is closing two towers where we currently have nominations rights to support housing of residents. We are currently working through what the tower redevelopment announcement means in terms of our sponsorship rights going forward.

Number of individuals who access a Village Model Service



This indicator measures the number of individuals who access delivered meals, social support groups or transport service. Each individual may have accessed a service more than once during the month. This does not include the Hop-on-hop-off bus service or community connector services.

In January 2026, 66 individuals accessed these services bringing the year-to-date usage to 799. Of these 26 referrals were accepted from 24 clients for meals, social group and transport. Community Connector service received 17 referrals from 17 clients. We held three Community Connector events resulting in 25 interactions.



Strategic direction 2

An environmentally sustainable and resilient City

Highlights

Elster Creek Litter Action Plan Engagement

We worked with Melbourne Water, Glen Eira, Bayside and EPA Victoria to develop the Elster Creek Litter Action Plan in response to concerns raised by our community. The plan focuses on reducing litter across the 40 square kilometre Elster Creek catchment, which drains into Port Phillip Bay.

Engagement on the draft plan ran from 6 November to 14 December 2025 and generated strong interest across the catchment. We recorded more than 330 community interactions through surveys, pop ups, social mapping and voting activities. Glen Eira's and our Have Your Say platforms received more than 4,300 views and more than 270 downloads of the draft plan and supporting documents. The community contributed 61 submissions to Glen Eira and 14 submissions to Port Phillip across the survey and social map activity. Engagement pop ups

generated over 260 conversations, 264 voting ball contributions and 16 social map submissions that identified local litter hotspots.



Litter collected from Elwood Canal in 1 hour after a storm

Participants consistently emphasised the impact of litter on the environment, local amenity and flooding. Residents highlighted concerns about cigarette butts, dumped rubbish, construction waste, stormwater pollution and litter around schools, railway stations and shopping strips. For Port Phillip, 56 respondents rated litter as a very serious issue, reinforcing the need for coordinated action across the catchment.

Charging ahead

We activated the first three pole mounted electric vehicle charging stations in Port Phillip in January. The new chargers are located in Liardet Street in Port Melbourne outside Edwards Park, in Chaucer Street in St Kilda outside Peanut Farm Reserve, and in Herbert Street in St Kilda outside the St Kilda Botanical Gardens. Each site has two dedicated parking bays for electric vehicles while they are charging, and two vehicles can use the 22-kilowatt chargers at the same time. Charging

costs 50 cents per kilowatt hour, and we do not charge for the use of parking bays while an electric vehicle is charging.

Community engagement in late 2023 helped identify these preferred locations, supported by technical assessments of electricity network capacity, the placement of utilities and open space, the accessibility of parking spaces and areas of highest current and projected demand. We expect to install more pole mounted electric vehicle chargers in 2026.



Pole mounted EV charger in Liardet St Port Melbourne

Major initiatives 2025/26

Council delivers multiple projects that contribute to **an environmentally sustainable and resilient community**. Following are the major initiatives (priority projects) we are starting, continuing or completing in 2025/26.

Major Initiative	Stage	Status	Update	Completion Date	Forecast \$'000	Budget \$'000
Greening Port Phillip Implement the Urban Forest Strategy by delivering urban forest projects across the municipality, increasing canopy cover, greening and biodiversity while reducing the urban heat island effect. (Includes Danks Street Biolink and Urban Forest precinct plans)	Discovery & Concept/ Planning & Design/ Delivery		Our greening and biodiversity projects continue to advance well, with major planting now completed at Fred Jackson and Sandridge Reserve. Tree species have been sourced for several upcoming planting projects, including Princes Street and Raglan Street, and planning is underway to identify 100 new Shady Paths sites. The Danks Street Biolink remains on track for delivery before the end of the financial year, supported by school engagement and finalised planning documents. The next two Urban Forest Precinct Plans are nearing community engagement, and consultants have begun work on the next six precincts. Tree planning in Gourlay Street is progressing, with removals identified and replacement design work commencing. The Community Garden Bed Project in Hewison Reserve is also advancing, and due to be delivered this financial year.	Jun 2034	1,533	1,563
Provision of Kerbside Collection Service Provision of Kerbside Collection Contract including specification, development, procurement, transition and implementation of new waste and recycling collection contract.	Discovery & Concept		Council decided to extend the existing contract, rather than award a new tender. As a result, the procurement element of the project is complete. A deed of variation has been prepared to extend the contract and is with the contractor for signing. A draft lessons learnt report has been prepared and awaiting approvals.	Dec 2025	74	85
Stormwater Harvesting Conduct feasibility and concept designs of potential stormwater harvesting schemes across the municipality	Discovery & Concept/ Delivery		The project continues to meet key planning and design milestones. The Cultural Heritage Management Plan is being developed and ongoing coordination with key stakeholders, including design, heritage, and funding partners, remains active and constructive.	Jan 2029	352	425

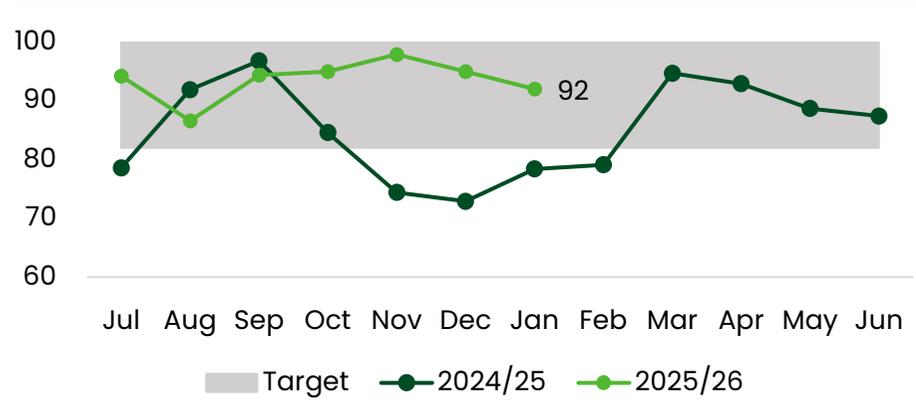


Major Initiative	Stage	Status	Update	Completion Date	Forecast \$'000	Budget \$'000
and make sure existing assets are maintained and renewed.						

Legend ● On Track/Complete ◆ At Risk ■ Off Track

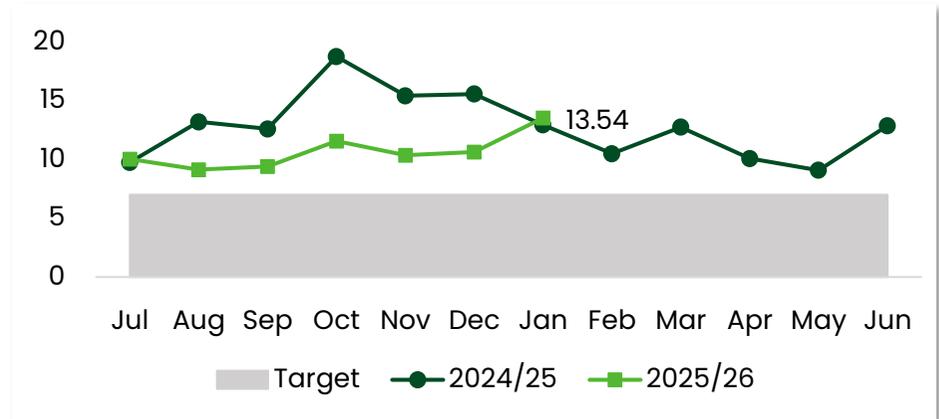
Service performance measures

Drainage and flooding requests completed on time



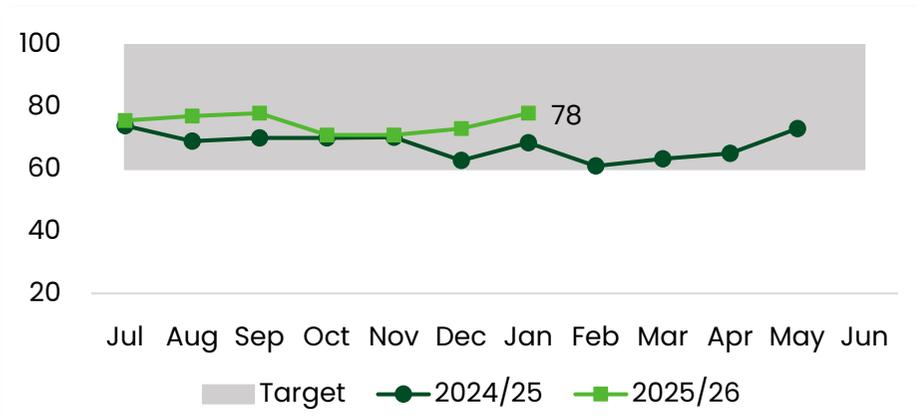
In January 2026, 92 per cent of drainage and flooding requests were resolved on time, which exceeds our target of 82 per cent.

Kerbside collection bins missed per 10,000 bin lifts



In January 2026, we missed 13.54 bins per 10,000 bin collections against a monthly target of no more than 7 missed bins per 10,000 bin collections. We continue to work with our contractor to minimise the number of missed bins in our city.

Investment in fossil-free institutions as a percentage of overall investment



We continue to exceed the 60 per cent investment in fossil-free institutions target with 78 per cent of the investment portfolio placed with fossil free institutions in January. This has increased from the 73 per cent in December. Council was able to prioritise fossil free investments in January whilst managing risk and return. We continue to monitor this closely to seek green options and ensure we meet all our investment targets.



Strategic direction 3

A safe and liveable City

Highlights

Proposed Local Law Amendment and Police Protocol

We considered proposed amendments to the Community Amenity Local Law and an Operating Protocol with Victoria Police following significant safety and amenity concerns raised by residents in late 2024 about an encampment near Fitzroy Street. Over several months, we worked with housing, health and outreach services and increased patrols with Police support until the encampment dispersed.

We reviewed community engagement from May and June 2025, which showed mixed views about changing Local Law powers. Survey responses were divided, with a slight majority opposing a proposed amendment that would allow designation of no-encampment areas as a last resort option to assist in resolving anti-social behaviours. Service providers did not support Local Law changes and instead advocated for

improvements to housing, mental health, alcohol and other drug and outreach services. Police supported a tiered approach that prioritises social and therapeutic support before enforcement.

Three options were presented regarding commencing a process to change to Local Laws:

Option A, to progress a new clause to allow temporary “no encampment” designations where safety or amenity is affected

Option B, to progress a new clause to allow authorised officers to remove encampment equipment across the municipality when behaviours impact safety or amenity

Option C, to make no Local Law changes

Option B was supported, and the required engagement will commence in March 2026 with findings being presented to Council for decision in May 2026.

We also presented a new Operating Protocol developed with Victoria Police, which outlines how we will work together through joint patrols, shared information and coordinated responses with service providers. The protocol prioritises connecting people to support and using enforcement only as a last step and will be updated to reflect any new Local Law proposed.

Cool Spaces During Extreme Heat

During the recent heatwave, we activated a coordinated response to help residents stay safe and comfortable as temperatures climbed above 40 degrees. As part of this response, we contacted clients on our vulnerable persons list to let them know that our libraries were open as cooling spaces and to ensure they had the support they needed.

We promoted cool, safe indoor spaces across the City, with extended opening hours at Albert Park, Emerald Hill, Middle Park, Port

Melbourne and St Kilda libraries. These locations provided air-conditioned spaces, drinking water, icy poles and a calm place to rest.

Information was shared across our city website homepage, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Instagram and Facebook Stories to maximise reach ahead of the hottest days.

At the libraries, people read, used the internet within the airconditioned library. People who visited the libraries appreciated access to chilled water and icy poles, with over 500 water bottles and 250 icy poles being provided to people within the libraries. For people who required assistance to get to a cool space or library, the community hop on hop off bus service was available to support this.



A Quiet, Cool Corner

Major initiatives 2025/26

Council delivers multiple projects that contribute to **a safe and liveable City**. Following are the major initiatives (priority projects) we are starting, continuing or completing in 2025/26.

Major Initiative	Stage	Status	Update	Completion Date	Forecast \$'000	Budget \$'000
Community Safety Plan Create and implement a new Community Safety Plan to enhance the safety and resilience of our community.	Delivery		Delivery on the new Feel Safe. Be Safe. Community Safety Plan 2025-2029 has commenced with. The Public Place CCTV Expansion Project (Action 1.17) has been launched following a delay with the procurement of a suitable provider.	Dec 2029	Operating Budget	
Elwood Foreshore Masterplan Develop and implement a master plan for the redevelopment of the Elwood foreshore including buildings, carparks and open spaces. The program includes working closely with Melbourne Water on the upgrade of the Elwood Main Drain.	Discovery & Concept/Planning & Design		Overall, the program is at risk due to delays engaging a program director. Procurement of the program director is underway and expected to be completed around March, in the interim minor refinements of the masterplan continue to occur. The Melbourne Water main drain project also remains at risk due to changes in Melbourne Water's program and timelines which are yet to be confirmed. Flood modelling to validate the Head Street Drain design is underway. The tender for Elwood Park Sports Grounds design services has closed and evaluation is underway. Design consultants have been engaged for the Elwood Croquet Pavilion Upgrade and design will commence once the Sports Ground tender is awarded to ensure the design consultants work concurrently.	Jun 2034	3,337	860
Fishermans bend Oversee the delivery of the Fishermans Bend Framework. Including new open space capital projects.	Discovery & Concept/ Delivery		Work on planning and design for the delivery of early Development Contributions Plan (DCP) funded projects on behalf of the State Government has progressed, including on Smith Street	Jun 2029	1,478	1,868

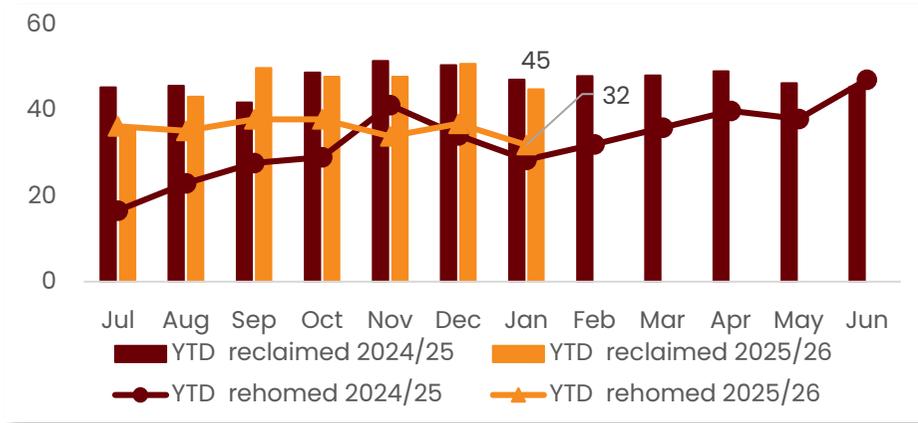
Major Initiative	Stage	Status	Update	Completion Date	Forecast \$'000	Budget \$'000
			Upgrades, Johnson Street Park and the Sandridge Recreation Precinct. However, some of these projects are identified as At Risk due to the complex nature of the projects and additional agreements required with the State Government and/or third parties to progress. The State Government continues to finalise the Fishermans Bend DCP and Montague Precinct Implementation Plan.			
Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) Review and renew the Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) for City of Port Phillip.	Complete		Project complete	Nov 2025		Operating Budget
Open Space and Tree Maintenance Contract Procurement Deliver the open space and tree maintenance procurement project to make sure the City's open spaces and urban forest are well maintained.	Delivery		The project transition period activities are ongoing as planned. Contractor and Council go-live readiness assessments have been completed with no major issues identified. An independent go-live assessor has also been engaged to ensure go-live readiness, with the assessment expected to be completed by mid-February Financial impacts arising from Legal Service Invoices (regarding contract compilation and signing) have been identified and these costs are being reviewed, however it is expected that these costs can be absorbed within existing operational budgets.	Jun 2025	880	1,044

Major Initiative	Stage	Status	Update	Completion Date	Forecast \$'000	Budget \$'000
Shrine to Sea works Upgrade Kerferd Road median strip and foreshore, increasing greening, pathways, wayfinding signage and pedestrian amenities.	Planning & Design		Specialist design inputs are being finalised for the next stage of design as it is prepared to go to tender. The project is at risk as we work with funding and project partners to adjust the timeline to reflect the design refinements underway.	Jun 2028	322	364
Sol Green Playground Upgrade Upgrade of Sol Green playground.	Awaiting Closure Report		The project is now complete and open to the public.	Jun 2025	880	1,044
St Kilda Pier Landside Works Upgrade Partner with the state government to deliver landside works for the St Kilda Pier including a feasibility study for Pier Road.	Discovery & Concept/ Delivery		The program continues to progress, with works advancing across the St Kilda foreshore precinct. For the St Kilda Pier Landside Works Upgrade, final approvals are being completed to allow the next stage of construction to begin. Several on ground activities have continued, including foreshore excavation, installation of tree pits and drainage elements, and the rollout of permanent safety bollards along the Bay Trail. Preparations are also underway for the planned kiosk removal, and community consultation has begun on the relocation of the Telstra payphone. Works in the Sea Baths car park have also progressed, with old line marking now removed.	Dec 2026	2,354	2,403
St Vincent Gardens Playgrounds Upgrade of St Vincent Gardens playground.	Awaiting Closure Report		The project is now complete and open to the public.	Jun 2026	1,325	1,355

Legend ● On Track/Complete ◆ At Risk ■ Off Track

Service performance measures

Percentage of animals reclaimed and rehomed



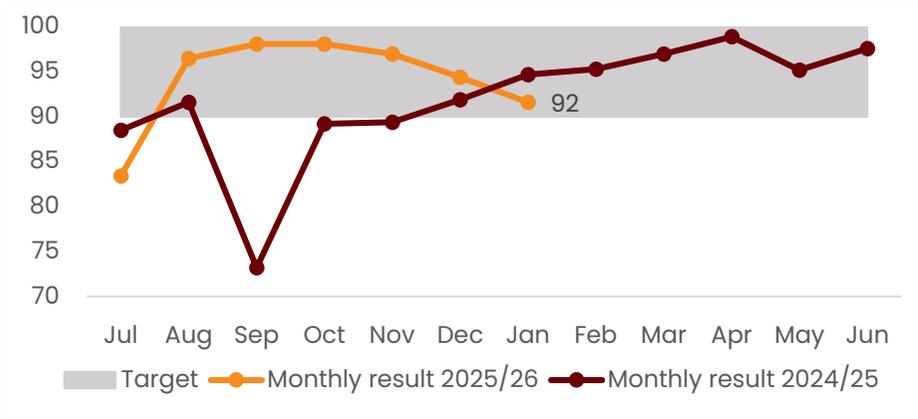
In January 2026, of the 115 animals collected from 1 July 2025 to 31 January 2026, 52 animals (45.22%) were reclaimed by their owners.

Out of the remaining 63 animals, 20 animals were rehomed (31.75%).

A further 18 animals out of the remaining 63 (28.60%) animals were being assessed at the time this report was generated. All avenues are explored to ensure animals find new homes.

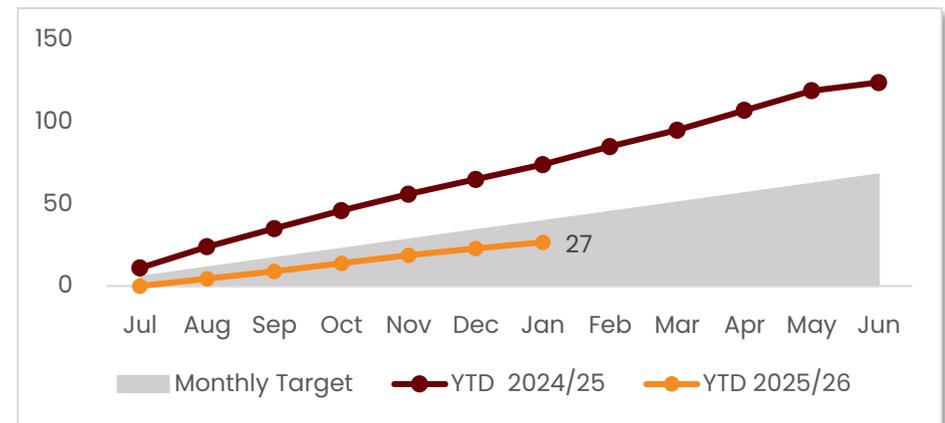
16 out of the 115 animals collected were surrendered by their owners (13.92%). Additionally, 11 of the 115 animals collected were on a seized court hold due to offences (9.57%).

Dumped rubbish requests completed on time



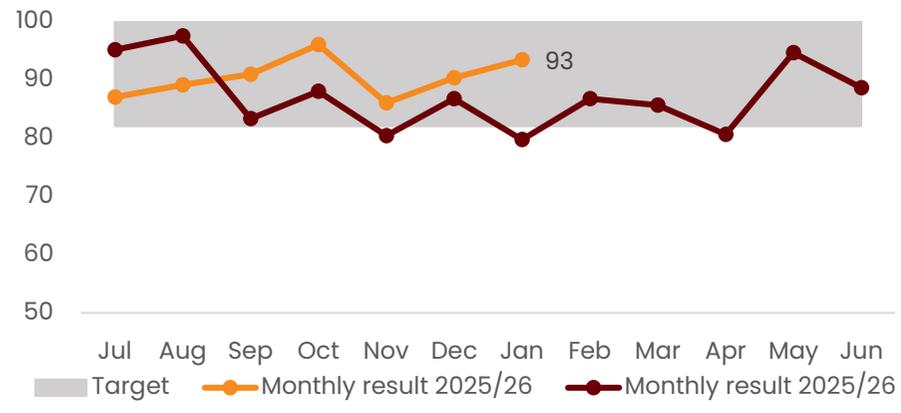
In January 2026, 92 per cent of dumped rubbish requests were resolved on time, which exceeds our target of 90 per cent.

Sealed local road requests per 100 km of sealed local road



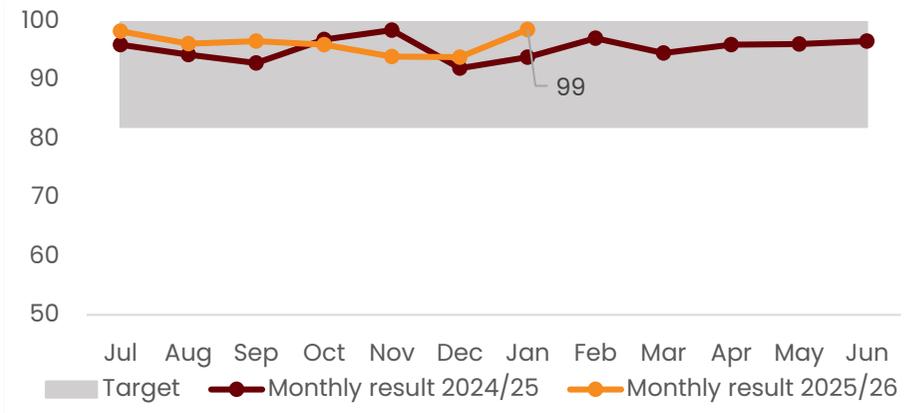
In January 2026, 10 requests were received regarding sealed local road conditions across a 266 km network. We are tracking well against the annual target of fewer than 68 requests per 100 km, currently sitting at 27 per 100 km.

Excessive or unreasonable noise requests responded to on time



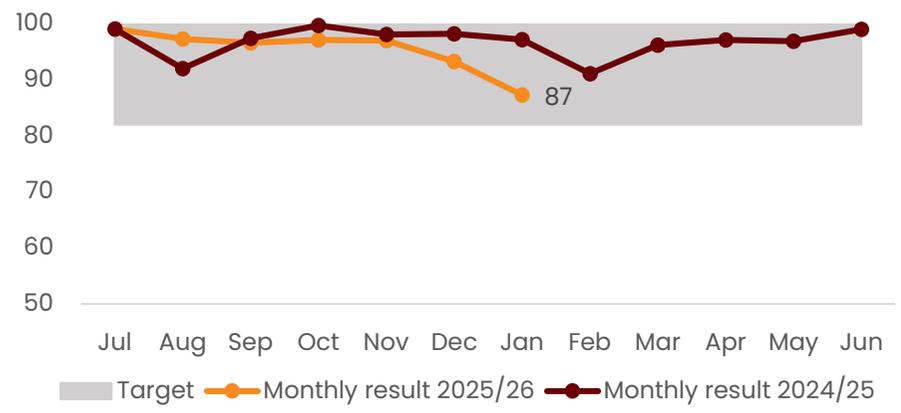
In January 2026, 93 per cent of excessive or unreasonable noise requests were resolved on time, which exceeds our target of 82 per cent.

Street and laneway cleaning requests responded to on time



In January 2026, 99 per cent of street and laneway cleaning requests were resolved on time, which exceeds our target of 82 per cent.

Graffiti management requests completed on time



In January 2026, 87 per cent of graffiti management requests were resolved on time, which exceeds our target of 82 per cent.



Strategic direction 4

A vibrant and thriving community

Highlights

January Civic Events

January is our busiest month for civic events, and we thank the staff who made these activities possible. On 18 January, we held the Raoul Wallenberg Tribute and the Albert Jacka Commemoration, followed by our first Citizenship Ceremony of 2026 on 26 January.

At Raoul Wallenberg Day, guest speakers Erica Frydenberg AM and Professor Frank Vajda AO shared insights into Wallenberg's life and legacy. Frank reflected on his escape from a German firing squad at age nine with Wallenberg's help. Mayor Alex Makin and Cr Buckingham attended, and the event attracted 150 guests, the largest turnout to date.

The 94th Albert Jacka Commemoration included a ceremonial march at St Kilda Cemetery and speeches from the Mayor, Chris Waters from Jacka's Mob and Colonel

Jason Cooke. Jacka was the first Australian Victoria Cross recipient in the First World War and a former St Kilda Mayor. The formalities concluded with afternoon tea at St Kilda Town Hall with more than 100 attendees.

On 26 January, we welcomed 150 new citizens at our first Citizenship Ceremony for the year. Mayor Alex Makin presided, joined by local MPs, Councillors and the Consulate General of Japan. Participants enjoyed a performance by the Low Rez Choir, and a sausage sizzle provided by the Port Phillip Rotary group.

Market traders support bushfire affected communities

On 25 January, South Melbourne Market traders donated goods to support communities impacted by recent bushfires in and around Longwood in Northeast Victoria. The collection was coordinated by local resident Robert Parke, who volunteers with Port Phillip Community Group. After

contacting Mayor Alex Makin, Robert worked with Market Management to organise the donation drive. He and his wife delivered the goods that evening to the Ruffy recovery team, who were grateful for the food and support provided by traders.

The donation drive was a success, and another two collections were organised, with Flinders + Co assisting with delivery.



Volunteers in Ruffy receiving the donated goods on Sunday evening

Up There Store pop up at South Melbourne Market

Melbourne fashion and sneaker boutique Up There held a pop up at South Melbourne Market on Sunday 18 January as part of their adidas Melbourne product launch. The activation supported the release of the adidas City Series, which celebrates iconic global locations. Up There worked with well-known Melbourne places, people and events to launch the “Our City, Our Shoe,” drawing inspiration from laneways, AFL greats, Flinders Street Station and Melbourne markets.

The activation was successful, bringing a new audience to the Market and generating strong engagement, with the partner very pleased with the response.



Up There pop-up stall at South Melbourne Market

Special Rate update

We invited affected property and business owners in the South Melbourne and Port Melbourne business precincts to lodge submissions or objections on the proposed Special Rate and Charge schemes for the period 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2031. Submissions closed on Friday 30 January 2026.

We will review all submissions and objections at the Council Meeting on 18 March 2026, and Council will consider declaring both schemes at the meeting on 22 April 2026.

Vacant shop audit

We conduct a vacant shop audit every six months across six retail precincts to help track economic performance and guide our programs and services. Our most recent audit in January showed a slight decrease in overall vacancies from 8 per cent in August 2025 to 7.8 per cent. Carlisle Street in Balaclava decreased from 10.1 per cent to 8.2 per cent, Ormond Road in Elwood decreased from 6.8 per cent to 4.1 per cent, and Acland Street in St Kilda decreased from 10.6 per cent to 6.7 per cent. Vacancy rates increased on Fitzroy Street in St Kilda from 9.2 per cent to 10.1 per cent, on Bay Street in Port Melbourne from 5.6 per cent to 8.6 per cent, and on Clarendon Street in South Melbourne from 6.9 per cent to 7.4 per cent.

The twice-yearly audit allows us to provide accurate and current data to business associations and real estate agents. Our ongoing work to support vibrant precincts includes working closely with local business associations, coordinating a Business

Reference Group, advocacy and grant applications, a Business Concierge service, street cleaning and pressure washing, graffiti removal, destination marketing and the facilitation of festivals and events.

Farewell to the Merchant of Fairness

After 41 years at South Melbourne Market, we farewelled Rod Cameron, known to many as The Merchant of Fairness. Rod’s bookstall became a much-loved space for stories, conversations and community, shaped by his deep knowledge of books, his warmth and his signature bow tie.



Rod Cameron, The Merchant of Fairness at South Melbourne Market

Major initiatives 2025/26

Council delivers multiple projects that contribute to **a vibrant and thriving community**. Following are the major initiatives (priority projects) we are starting, continuing or completing in 2025/26.

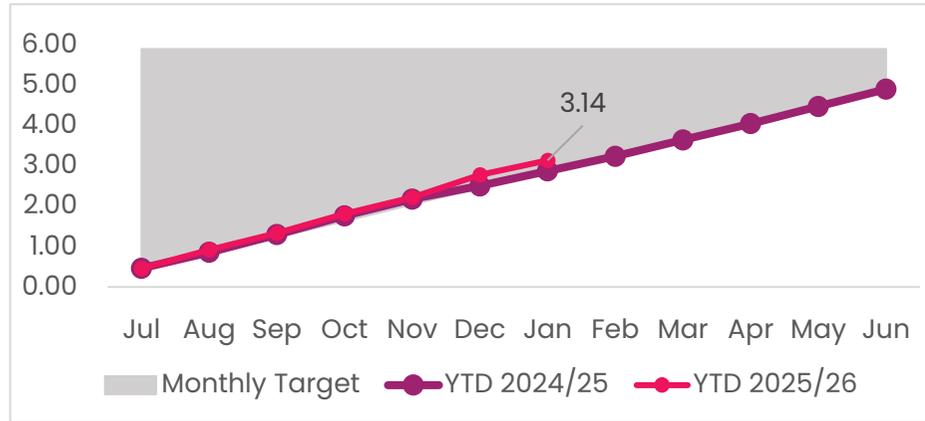
Major Initiative	Stage	Status	Update	Completion Date	Forecast \$'000	Budget \$'000
Carlisle St Carparks Strategy Execution Redevelop the Carlisle Street carparks to facilitate the creation of the Balaclava Retail Renewal Precinct.	Delivery		Officers are finalizing negotiations in preparation to formalize the sale. An independent valuation was received for the site, following which Coles exercised their right to obtain a second valuation. The Australian Property Institute (API) was contacted to provide a valuer to undertake this. The valuer has been engaged and is expected to complete their assessment by approximately March. In the interim, discussions with neighbouring shop owners regarding the extent of the future easement at the rear of Carlisle St are ongoing.	Jul 2026	13	-
Lagoon Reserve Pavilion & Park Improve Deliver the new multi-story Lagoon Reserve pavilion project.	Awaiting Closure Report		The project's primary construction and delivery phases are now complete. Sports clubs have been inducted to the facility and have commenced utilising the space, with positive feedback received to date.	Jan 2026	3,545	3,780
Port Melbourne Netball Infrastructure Deliver expanded netball facilities in and around Port Melbourne for the growing and inclusive sport.	Planning & Design		Community engagement for the proposed project relocation to JL Murphy Reserve will run through February and March 2026. The outcome of engagement will be shared in April/May.	Jun 2029	160	1,777
South Melbourne Market Connect Project Design and start delivery of the South Melbourne Market Project Connect to upgrade and renew the Market.	Discovery & Concept		Project kick-off meetings and documentation sharing has commenced, and the Concept design is well underway. Project Connect is a strategic capital development initiative designed to renew and upgrade the Market's buildings and public spaces. The goal is to enhance the experience for customers, improve safety and productivity for	Jun 2031	462	533

Major Initiative	Stage	Status	Update	Completion Date	Forecast \$'000	Budget \$'000
South Melbourne Town Hall Renew South Melbourne Town Hall and work with the Australian National Academy of Music on the reopening of the Town Hall.	Delivery	■	<p>traders, and strengthen the Market's connection with the surrounding precinct.</p> <p>The project is off track as the forecasted remaining contingency is insufficient to cover the remaining construction period despite value management efforts. A report is being prepared for Council in February 2026 seeking additional funding.</p> <p>The Main Hall structural upgrade works are 95% complete.</p> <p>Building permits have been issued for the Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM) Western Cold Shell and Masard Seismic Works, and design coordination is underway. Mobilisation for these works however is currently on hold while completing the inground sewer & stormwater layout design coordination. An extension of time has been submitted for the associated delay. The contractors are actively mitigating the delays where possible by commencing temporary engineering works.</p> <p>Progression of the Eastern amenities are awaiting an architectural design resolution and provision sum pricing for the structural seismic upgrades required for the clock tower have been submitted and are being reviewed.</p>	Dec 2027	13,713	8,962

Legend ● On Track/Complete ◆ At Risk ■ Off Track

Service performance measures

Library visits per head of population



In January 2026, our libraries recorded 40,696 visits, maintaining almost identical visitation compared to the same time last year (0.37 visits per head of population). This brings the cumulative total to 3.14 visits per head against an annual target of 4.9.



Strategic direction 5

An engaged and empowered community

Highlights

Have Your Say on the Plan for Port Phillip (including budget)

In January we progressed Year 2 of the Plan for Port Phillip (including budget), building on the 10-year Plan and Budget adopted in June 2025. The community engagement period for Year 2 opened in November, earlier than previous years, to give people greater influence over priorities for the 2025–26 financial year. Residents and community groups were invited to share ideas through an online form, information sessions and accessible submission options.

We have been reviewing community ideas and assessing opportunities to refine next year's priorities. This includes trialling a new structured engagement model with clearer processes and earlier input to ensure feedback can meaningfully shape the budget.

Once engagement closes, we will prepare the draft Year 2 Plan and Budget for public feedback, which will be released in April on our [Have Your Say Page](#). The final Plan will be presented to Council for adoption in June

City of Port Phillip Advisory Committee

We opened applications for four new Advisory Committees to strengthen how we include community voices in our decision-making. The committees cover Active Ageing, Disability, LGBTIQ+ inclusion and Multicultural communities. They bring together people who live, work, study or volunteer in Port Phillip to share lived experience and provide advice that supports fair, inclusive and well-informed Council decisions. Members will meet up to eight times each year and applications remain open until 2 March.



Community members in Town Hall

Toyota Community Fund

We opened applications for the Toyota Community Fund, which provides grants of up to \$2,000 to help local not-for-profit organisations and community groups purchase essential equipment. This funding supports programs that strengthen community participation and improve the services that assist people across our city. The fund guidelines and application process are now available on our website.

Major initiatives 2025/26

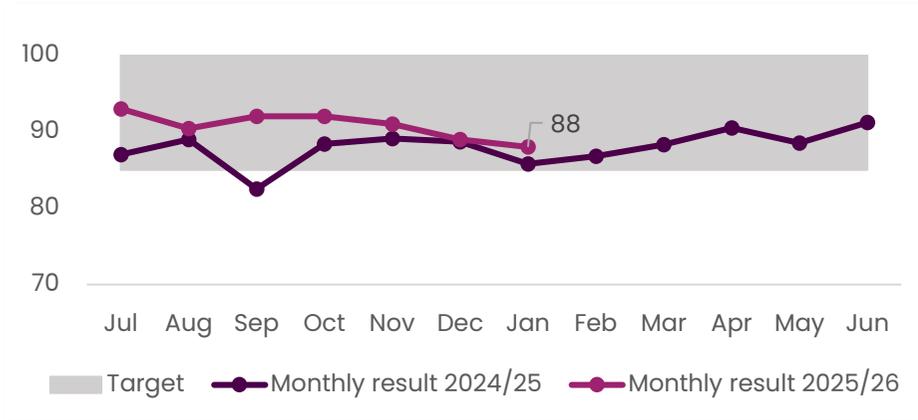
Council delivers multiple projects that contribute to **an engaged and empowered community**. Following are the major initiatives (priority projects) we are starting, continuing or completing in 2025/26.

Major Initiative	Stage	Status	Update	Completion Date	Forecast \$'000	Budget \$'000
Governance Rules Review the Governance Rules and implement its outcomes	Complete		Council also endorsed the updated Governance Rules in September 2025, and councillors have since completed the required training.	Oct 2025	Operating Budget	

Legend  On Track/Complete  At Risk  Off Track

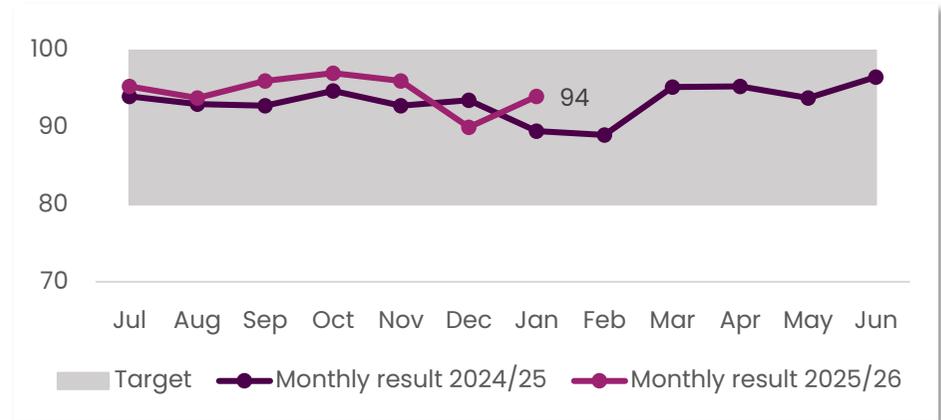
Service performance measures

Community service requests resolved within agreed timeframes



In January 2026, 88 per cent of community service requests were resolved on time, which exceeds our target of 85 per cent.

Complaints resolved within agreed timeframes (includes missed bins)



In January 2026, 94 per cent of community complaints were resolved on time, which exceeds our target of 80 per cent.



Strategic direction 6

A trusted and high-performing organisation

Highlights

Proudly Port Phillip Stall

We took part in the Midsumma Carnival on Sunday 25 January, with staff and members of our Pride Network hosting our *Proudly Port Phillip* stall. The stall featured games, badgemaking and a photobooth, and provided a welcoming space for conversations with community about Port Phillip programs and services -making and a photobooth and provided a welcoming space for conversations with community about Port Phillip programs and services.

We continue to proudly support the Midsumma Festival, which brings together LGBTIQ+ artists, performers, communities and audiences for three weeks of cultural celebration across Melbourne and the City of Port Phillip.



City of Port Phillip staff hosting the *Proudly Port Phillip* stall

Health and Safety Progress Updates

We continued progressing initiatives in our annual safety plan throughout January, with a key focus on reviewing traffic management plans and risk controls at sites where we have operational responsibility and traffic management obligations. We also completed a gap analysis of the new psychological health regulations introduced under the OHS Act, which confirmed that our existing safety management system and related processes comply with the updated requirements.

Reporting performance remains strong, with 89 per cent of safety incidents reported within 24 hours.

Major initiatives 2025/26

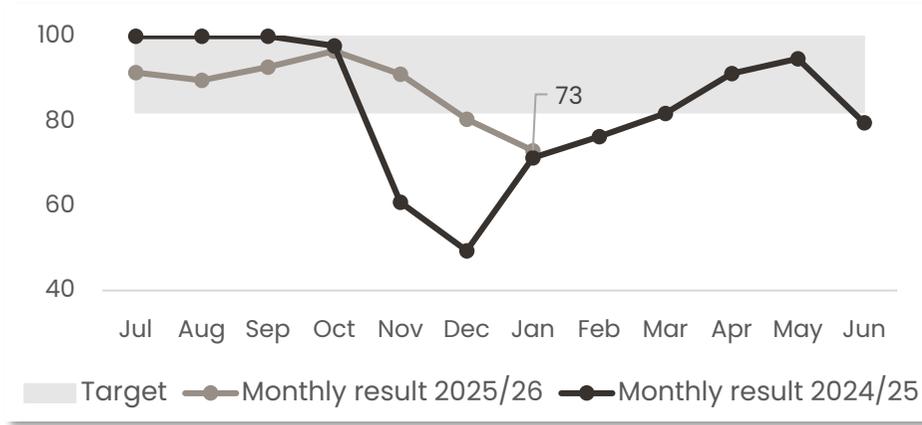
Council delivers multiple projects that contribute to **a trusted and high-performing organisation**. Following are the major initiatives (priority projects) we are starting, continuing or completing in 2025/26.

Major Initiative	Stage	Status	Update	Completion Date	Forecast \$'000	Budget \$'000
Clever Port Phillip Deliver and refine annually our Clever Port Phillip Action Plan to support innovation, improved productivity, customer experience and financial efficiency.	Delivery & Awaiting Closure Reports		This program includes several projects, with eight currently in progress, all on track for delivery on time and within budget. Time savings was achieved with the implementation of the Planning Subdivision process for the Planning team as part of the OneCouncil system optimisation	Jun 2027	619	564
Human resource and payroll system renewal Deliver the human resource and payroll system project to support improved employee experience, productivity and recruitment (the scope of the payroll upgrade is yet to be developed).	Discovery & Concept		Project timelines are currently being re-baselined as the evaluation committee work through the procurement and tender process. New timelines and next steps expected to be finalised in March.	Dec 2026	1,142	1,249
Portfolio Delivery Improvement Plan Enhance project portfolio management, delivery and outcomes by benchmarking our capability and developing and implementing an improvement plan.	Delivery		The plan outlines a series of initiatives aimed at strengthening project portfolio delivery. Key activities, including the resource demand review, development of program structures, and establishment of contractor panels, are underway. Delivery of the plan is 'At Risk' as we continue to coordinate across multiple areas involved in Portfolio Delivery, to progress and implement priority actions.	June 2026	Operating Budget	

Legend  On Track/Complete  At Risk  Off Track

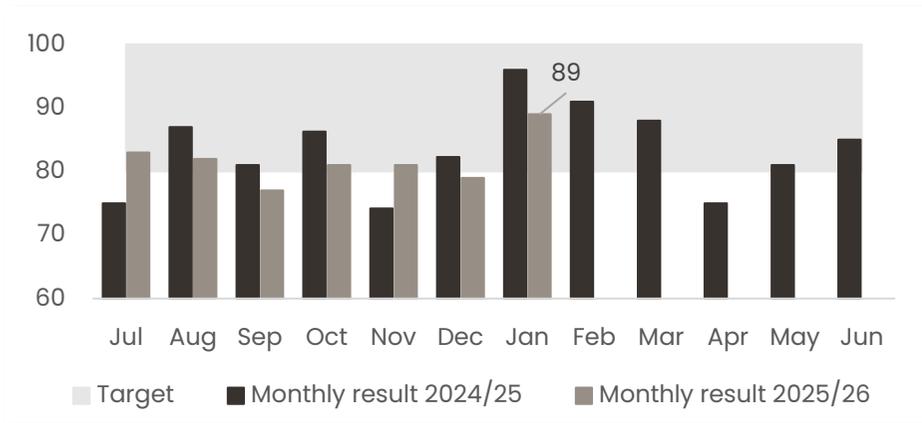
Service performance measures

Building maintenance requests completed on time



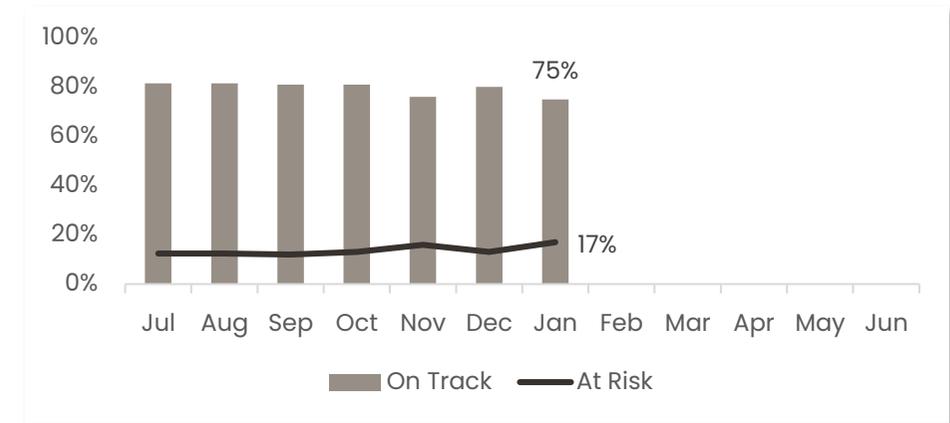
In January 2026, 73 per cent of building maintenance requests were resolved on time, below our target of 82 per cent. The decline was primarily caused by an issue within OneCouncil where work orders were closed on time, but the associated customer requests did not close automatically. These remained open until the problem was identified and required manual closure, which shifted a number of jobs into the overdue category. A reduced workforce during the holiday period also contributed to the lower result.

Occupational health and safety incidents reported within 24 hours



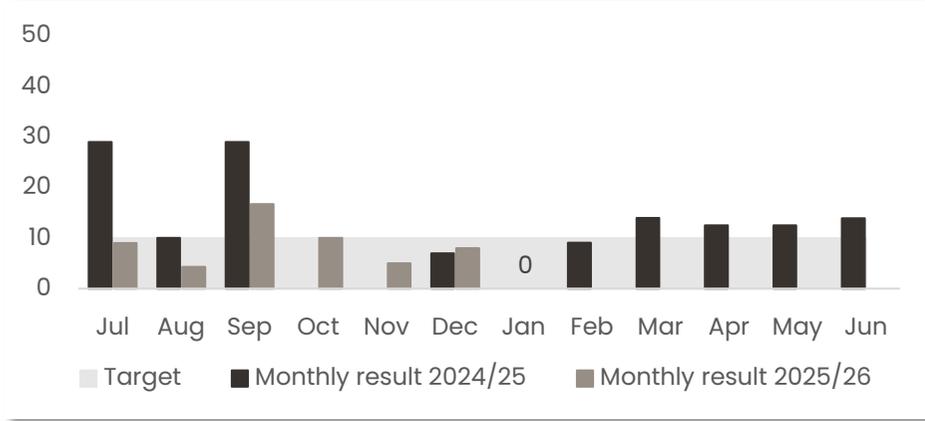
In January 2026, a total of 73 occupational health and safety issues were reported with 65 (89 per cent) being reported within 24 hours. This is above our target of 80 per cent.

Projects reporting on track or at risk



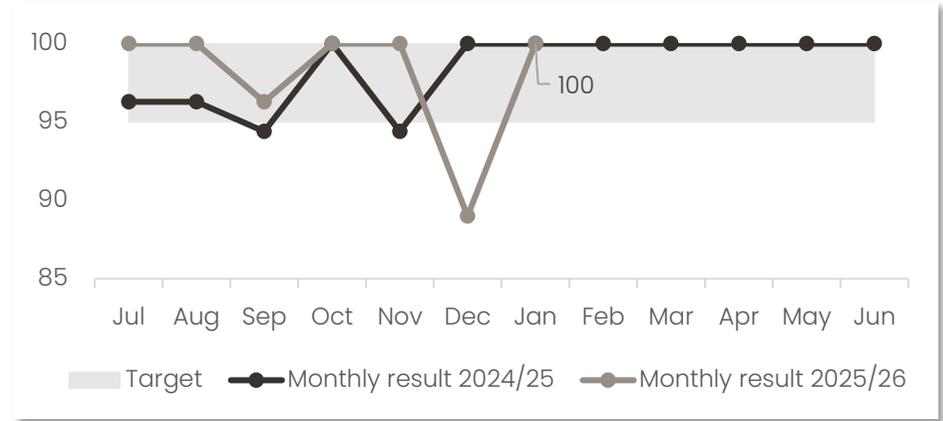
In January 2026, 75 per cent of projects reported on track and 17 per cent at risk. This equates to a combined 92 per cent on track or at risk, exceeding our target of 80 per cent.

Council decisions made at meetings closed to the public (percentage)



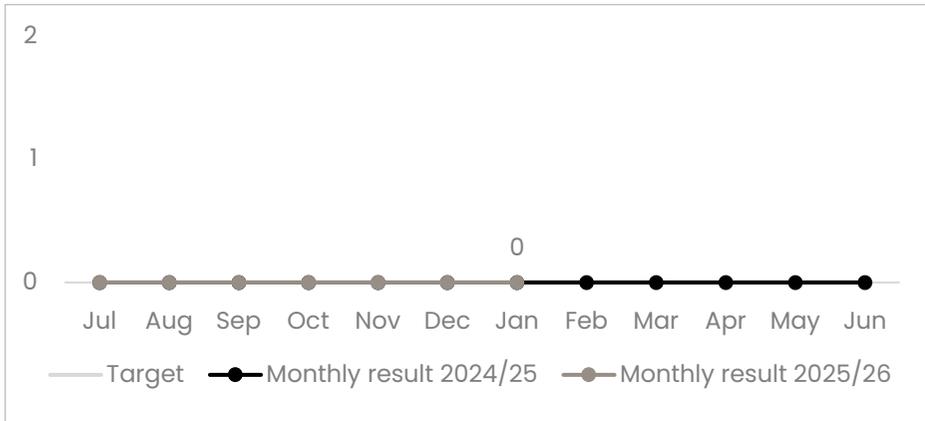
There were no council meetings held in January due to the holiday season

Councillor attendance at Council meetings



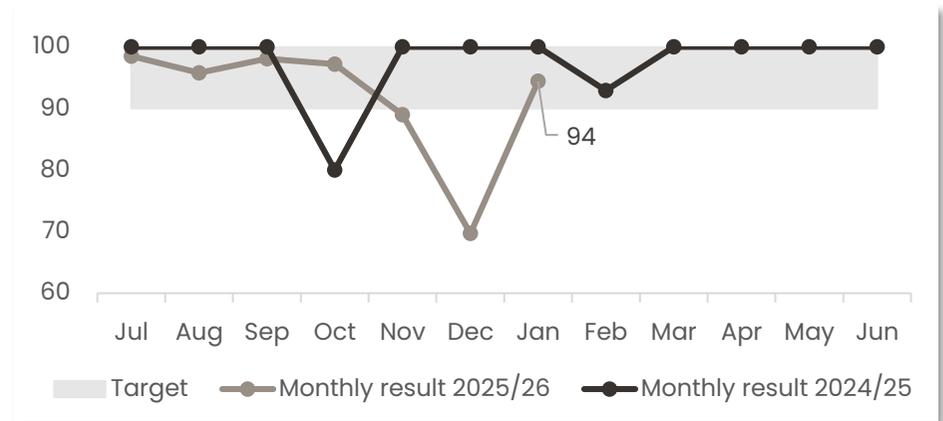
There were no council meetings held in January due to the holiday season

Material legislative breaches



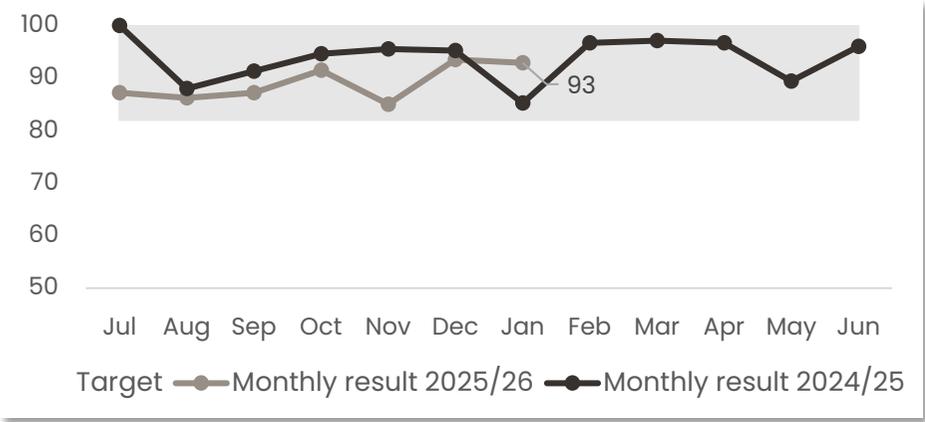
There were no material legislative breaches in January 2026

Land information certificates submitted on time



In January 2026, 94 per cent of land information certificates were submitted on time, exceeding our target of 90 per cent.

Rates related service requests completed on time

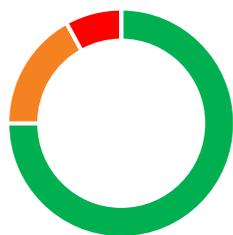


In January 2026, 93 per cent of rates related service requests were completed on time, exceeding our target of 80 per cent.

Project portfolio report

The project portfolio is the projects, including major initiatives, set out in the Plan for Port Phillip 2025-35.

Overall status



On track **75%**

Latest result has achieved target. On track across all elements.

At risk **17%**

Latest result experienced a minor miss in relation to target measure.

Off track **8%**

A significant variation from the target measure. Off track for one or more elements.

Portfolio status trend

	12-month average	Oct 2025	Nov 2025	Dec 2025	Jan 2026
On track	76%	81%	76%	80%	75%
At risk	15%	13%	16%	13%	17%
Off track	9%	6%	8%	7%	8%

Portfolio financial performance

	Number of projects	Annual budget (\$ million)	Annual forecast (\$ million)	FYTD forecast (\$ million)	FYTD budget (\$ million)	FYTD variance (\$ million)
Capital	198	80.9	82.9	35.6	50.0	1.3
Operating	107	12.6	11.3	4.9	8.4	(0.2)
Total	305	93.5	94.2	40.5	58.4	1.1

Financial Update

As at 31 January 2026, the full-year forecast 2025/26 cash surplus stands at \$0.29 million, \$0.24 million below the adopted budget. There have been several key movements that have influenced the cash surplus this year:

- \$1.54 million in permanent net efficiency savings achieved primarily through rationalisation of department budget without impact to services, management of insurance premiums, higher grant income, favourable tender outcomes, and net positive impact of service delivery changes to parking infringements.
- \$0.26 million in additional rental income provided back to Council for the short-term lease of the Australia Post site which was extended to December 2025.
- \$0.15 million net additional fees and user charges from changes in demand for Council services.
- (\$0.17) million due to audited financial result for 2024/25 marginally below forecast, resulting in a lower opening cash surplus carried into 2025/26.
- (\$0.70) million from Long Day Care operations including lower utilisation and higher use of agency staff to backfill permanent positions. (\$0.18) million Council entered into the Early Childhood Education and Care Worker Retention Scheme to maintain safe, high-quality childcare services while responding to sector-wide workforce shortages.
- (\$0.20) million transitions to the Positive Ageing service model including a larger Linking Neighbours program and continued ongoing Community Connector support and operations of Hop on Hop Off bus.
- (\$0.30) million from lower paid parking fees than forecast due to flat volumes against budgeted volume increase of 6% (cool & rainy weather between Jul- Dec).
- (\$0.57) million for transition costs relating to the award of the Tree Maintenance & Management and Open Space Maintenance Contracts
- (\$0.68) million net increases in project expenditure primarily due to capital works for the Elwood Foreshore Facilities development.

Several other movements were recorded this year that did not affect the cash surplus, including:

- Amendments to AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement (applied as at 30 June 2025):
- \$4.00 million increase in depreciation
- \$2.84 million reclassification from operating to capital expenditure
- \$194 million uplift in Council's asset base following asset revaluation
- (\$0.6) million for the extension of the Kerbside Collection Waste Contract including a one-off payment for the contractor for a series of service-optimisations to improve reliability and efficiency, reduce underlying costs, and support Council's service transformation objectives. This will be funded by a drawdown on the Waste Charge Reserve

Key financial updates and indicators

- A forecast cumulative cash deficit balance of \$0.29 million noting ongoing risk of changing economic conditions and inflationary pressures.
- A forecast overall low risk rating using the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO) financial sustainability indicators.
- Forecasted net operating result of \$18.9 million (6.4 per cent of total revenue), a funding source for capital works.
- A forecasted working capital ratio of 253 per cent.
- A forecasted cash and investment balance of \$81 million. Majority of this is held in reserves and tied to specific delivery of projects and services (e.g. open space developer contributions, project deferrals and specific grants)
- Currently ahead of target of \$1.3 million efficiency savings for Budget 2026/27 with \$1.54m of efficiency savings achieved year to date. Permanent efficiency savings achieved primarily through rationalisation of department budget without impact to services, management of insurance premiums, higher grant and user fee income, tender outcomes and net positive impact of service delivery changes to parking infringements. Noting efficiency savings are becoming increasingly hard to achieve.
- Council offers support for ratepayers who are suffering extreme financial hardship. This year, rates waivers totalling \$6,268.90 (10 waivers) have been issued. In 2024/25 rates waivers totalling \$9,283 (17 waivers) were issued

Summarised Income Statement Converted to Cash

	Year to Date				Full Year			
	Actual	Forecast	Variance		Forecast	Budget	Variance	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	%	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	%
Total Income	167,861	164,516	3,345	2%	294,893	288,828	6,066	2%
Total Expenses	23,475	19,210	4,265	22%	18,938	14,985	3,953	26%
Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	23,475	19,210	4,265	22%	18,938	14,985	3,953	26%
Income Statement Converted to Cash:								
Capital Expenditure	(34,891)	(34,474)	(418)	(1%)	(78,708)	(74,079)	(4,629)	(6%)
Non-cash operating items	19,117	18,857	260	1%	35,802	31,802	4,000	13%
Financing Items	(930)	(888)	(42)	(5%)	(1,522)	(1,522)	0	0%
Net Reserves Drawdown (Replenish)	0	25	(25)	(100%)	22,638	26,033	(3,395)	(13%)
Current Year Cash Surplus/(Deficit)	6,771	2,730	4,040	148%	(3,152)	(2,781)	(370)	(13%)
Opening cash surplus balance	3,143	3,143	0	0%	3,143	3,317	(174)	(5%)
Accumulated Cash Surplus	9,914	5,873	4,040	69%	291	536	(244)	(46%)

Detailed financial statements and notes will be published on a quarterly basis as part of the quarterly financial updates and mid-year review.



proudly port phillip

