

City of Port Phillip

Advocacy Annual Report 2024/25



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City of Port Phillip

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Please consider
the environment
before printing.

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.



South Melbourne Beach

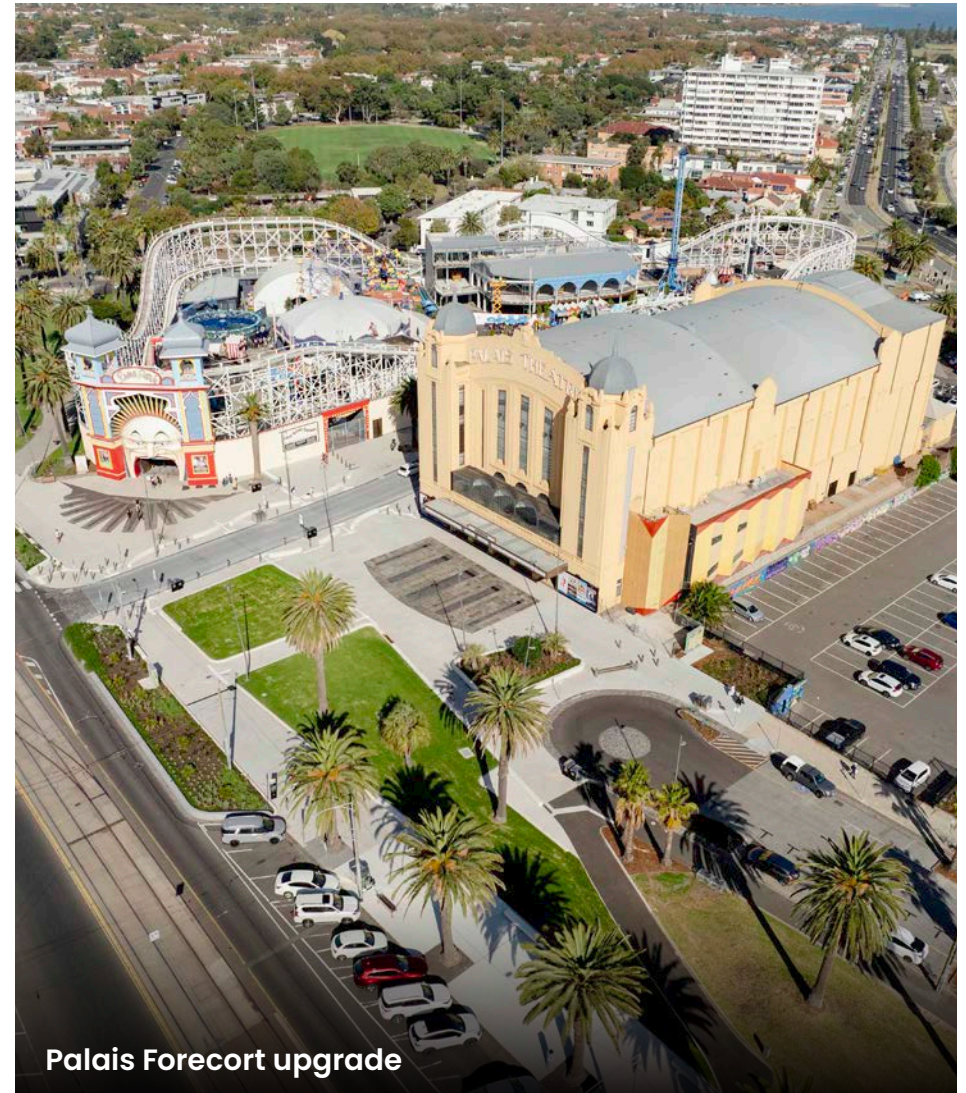
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Introduction

City of Port Phillip's Advocacy and Grants Program is designed to support the community by securing funding and influencing policy changes that benefit residents, businesses, and the local environment.

Through strategic partnerships and targeted advocacy efforts, the program aims to address key issues such as infrastructure development, social services, and environmental sustainability. By leveraging grants and other funding opportunities, Council can enhance its service delivery and achieve its strategic priorities.



The background of the entire page is a photograph of a sunset. In the foreground, there are silhouettes of palm trees and utility poles with power lines. In the distance, a city skyline is visible across a body of water, with the sun setting behind it, creating a warm, orange glow.

Advocacy Strategy 2024-28

The Advocacy Strategy 2024-28 outlines a comprehensive and coordinated approach to advocacy, emphasising evidence-based, community-driven, and realistic priorities. It details how Council identifies and prioritises issues, develops effective advocacy plans, and collaborates with various stakeholders, including government bodies and local organisations.

Serving as a roadmap, the strategy provides a clear framework for action, ensuring all advocacy activities align with Council's strategic priorities and are conducted transparently and effectively. By following this strategy, Council aims to maximise its chances of securing support and funding for critical projects, ultimately achieving its advocacy goals and delivering meaningful outcomes for the community.

By leveraging grants and other funding opportunities, the City of Port Phillip can enhance its service delivery and achieve its strategic priorities.

Key Achievements

Over the past year, City of Port Phillip has made significant strides in its advocacy efforts.



36+ advocacy items

actioned over tiers one, two and three.



52,700+ impressions

on election campaign social media posts 3,300+ unique viewers visited Council's 2025 Federal Election website, showing an engaged community.



13 submissions

to government, influencing policy and sharing learnings.



32 competitive grants

applied for, leading to 23 successful applications.



\$1.5M in funding

for CCTV treatments through the 2025 federal election campaign to address community safety in Port Phillip.



Councillor advocacy briefing and orientation inducting the new Council into City of Port Phillip's advocacy agenda and processes.



\$8M+ in funding

through competitive grants for projects and capital across Council.



9 ministerial visits

to the municipality, building relationships and presenting the City's great assets to the nation's decision makers.



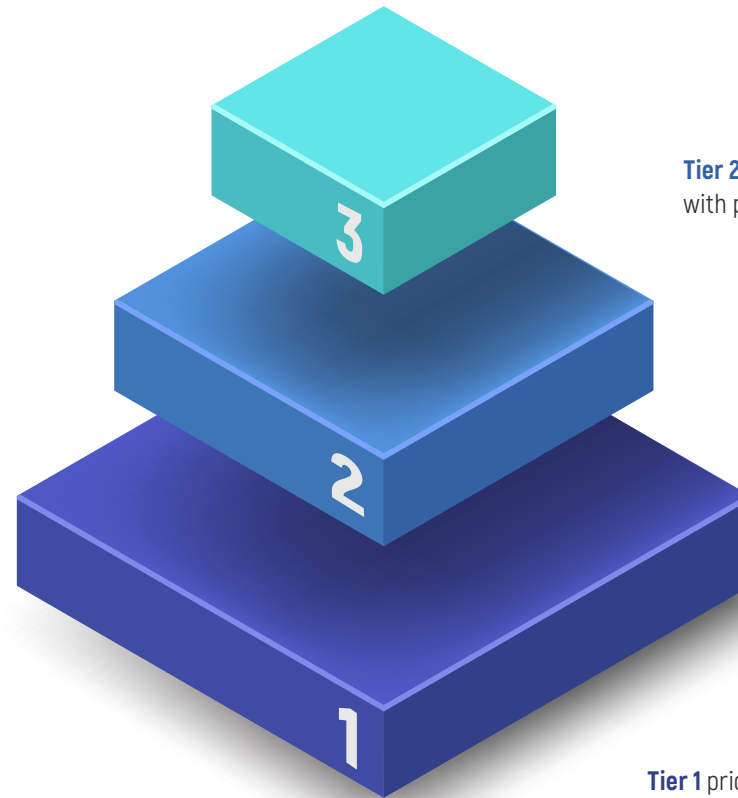
Successful systems uplifts, including a public webpage, internal intranet help page, and processes development for grants and advocacy, resulting in a more efficient operation.

Advocacy Priorities Summary

To ensure our advocacy efforts are strategic, impactful, and aligned with community needs, City of Port Phillip uses a tiered system to prioritise advocacy initiatives, as per our Advocacy Strategy.

This structured approach allows Council to allocate resources effectively by categorising advocacy items into three tiers based on their urgency, potential impact, and alignment with Council's strategic objectives.

Tier 1 priorities receive the most intensive advocacy efforts, including comprehensive campaigns and high-level engagement, while Tier 2 and Tier 3 priorities are pursued with proportionate levels of support. This system ensures transparency and enables Council to prioritise resources, whilst remaining responsive to emerging opportunities and challenges.



Tier 2 and **Tier 3** priorities are pursued with proportionate levels of support.

Tier 1 priorities receive the most intensive advocacy efforts, including comprehensive campaigns and high-level engagement.

Tier 1 Advocacy Item: Community Safety and Social Cohesion

The community and traders are becoming increasingly concerned about safety and cohesion in the municipality. City of Port Phillip is undertaking an advocacy campaign that supports a collaboration between Victoria Police, local Members of Parliament, community groups, traders, and Council to address ongoing disruptive and antisocial behaviours, antisemitism, and promote social cohesion.

Advocacy Actions and Highlights:

- » Facilitated a Community Safety Roundtable with service providers and police, leading to a report and recommendations.
- » Raised several mitigation and prevention options as a part of Council's Prahran by-election advocacy campaign.
- » Raised several mitigation and prevention options as a part of Council's federal election advocacy campaign.
- » Successfully secured funding commitments from federal election candidates for Macnamara of up to \$1.5 million for CCTV treatments.
- » Working with Environmental Protection Agency on an acoustic camera trial project.
- » Wrote letters to the Minister for Police and to the Chief Commissioner of Police.
- » Frequent and recurring meetings with representatives of Victoria Police and social service providers.
- » Wrote letters to local Members of Parliament.
- » Item raised in meetings with local Members of Parliament at both State and Federal levels of government.
- » Hosted a round table with Victoria Police, local Members of Parliament, trader representatives and Council representatives.
- » Participated in a Mayoral campaign with neighbouring councils.
- » Released statements from the Mayor to give updates on progress in this space.
- » Advocacy to Federal Government for support to rebuild Adass Israel Synagogue and public realm works.

Tier 1 Advocacy Item: Children's Centre infrastructure funding

City of Port Phillip is undertaking a redevelopment of 6 childcare centres between 2026 and 2029. The Victorian Government has committed funding through the Victorian School Building Authority grants process. Council has also committed significant funding for this project, however an additional amount is required and unbudgeted. Council continues to seek a funding contribution from the Federal Government.

Advocacy Actions and Highlights:

- » Inclusion of the item in Council's Prahran by-election advocacy campaign.
- » Inclusion of the item in Council's federal election advocacy campaign.
- » Secured additional funding through the Victorian School Building Association's Building Blocks funding program.
- » Raised item in meetings with State and Federal representatives of Parliament.
- » Assessed the item against grant opportunities as they arose.



Barring Djinang Kindergarten



St Kilda Festival 2025, St Kilda

Live Music and Events

City of Port Phillip is a hub for cultural expression and community engagement.

Tier 1 Advocacy Item: Live Music and Events

From the iconic St Kilda Festival to a variety of microfestivals, City of Port Phillip is a hub for cultural expression and community engagement. There are several unique opportunities for State and Federal Governments to partner with Council to showcase local talent, attract visitors, and foster a thriving arts scene to benefit the local community and visitors alike.

Advocacy Actions and Highlights:

- » Successful grant application through the Federal Government's Revive Live grants program, a first time the Federal Government has contributed to the St Kilda Festival.
- » Successful grant funding through the State Government for First Peoples talent and activations at the St Kilda Festival.
- » Secured letters of endorsement from local Members of Parliament for the St Kilda Festival.
- » Attendance of multiple Members of Parliament at the St Kilda Festival and St Kilda Film Festival, including hosting speaking roles for some.
- » Worked with local Members of Parliament and the offices of relevant Ministers to seek the approval of the Live Music Precinct Planning Amendment.
- » Successful grant application to commission a statue of Louisa Briggs through the McClelland Sculpture Park and Gallery's Victorian Women's Public Art Program.
- » Progressed renaming streets to honour key local musicians within the municipality.



Fishermans Bend

In 2018, a study by PWC highlighted that the delivery of a tram is crucial for the precinct's success. Council has been advocating to State and Federal Governments to address this.

Tier 1 Advocacy Item: Fishermans Bend

The advocacy around Fishermans Bend is extensive and cross-organisational, focusing on community infrastructure and shared spaces (parks, recreation areas, schools, hospital), public transport accessibility and investment (Melbourne Metro 2, bus improvements, pedestrian and bike upgrades), and housing policies to provide for all community members.

A key issue is the lack of high-capacity public transport and poor active transport provision. In 2018, a study by PWC highlighted that the delivery of a tram is crucial for the precinct's success. Council has been advocating to State and Federal Governments to address this.

Advocacy Actions and Highlights:

- » Submitted a response to the Australian Government's Draft National Urban Policy using Fishermans Bend as a prime example.
- » Contribution to the Municipal Association of Victoria's federal election campaign through their Mayoral delegation, using Fishermans Bend as an example of need for contributions to community infrastructure.
- » Frequent meetings with the Department of Transport and Planning's Fishermans Bend Taskforce.
- » Planning initiatives for the Sandridge Recreation Precinct, including advocacy through Council's federal election campaign, as well as meetings with local Members of Parliament.
- » Mayor and CEO met with VSBA to confirm arrangements for the new Primary School.
- » Ongoing issues and items, including for transport solutions, raised with local Members of Parliament.
- » Implemented pedestrian and active transport treatments, including securing funding for a much needed bike link.
- » Contributed to the Metropolitan Transport Forum submission to Infrastructure Victoria's 30 Year Plan.

Tier 1 Advocacy Item: Elwood Foreshore Master Plan

City of Port Phillip is proactively planning for this renewal in a staged process over several years to ensure the foreshore remains a high-quality public and natural place. Through the redevelopment, Council is seeking to replace aged infrastructure, improve compliance and accessibility issues, and address risks of climate change. Council is advocating to the Victorian and Australian Governments to partner with Council on the Elwood Foreshore Redevelopment to co-fund the project.

Advocacy Actions and Highlights:

- » Inclusion of the item in Council's federal election advocacy campaign.
- » Raised item in meetings with State and Federal representatives of Parliament.



Ormond Point, Elwood

Tier 1 Advocacy Item: Future Proofing South Melbourne Market

The South Melbourne Market is a 154-year-old asset built on Crown Land and owned and run by City of Port Phillip. It is a significant community hub and retail centre and is an important attraction for interstate and international visitors. The Market has some significant long-term challenges including capacity, compliance with updated building regulations, and traffic and pedestrian congestion.

Advocacy Actions and Highlights:

- » Raised funding pathways for upgrades as a part of Council's federal election advocacy campaign.
- » Facilitated a Ministerial visit with the Federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and Minister for Small Business on 30 October 2024.



Port Phillip Muscle and Jazz Festival, South Melbourne Market

2025 Federal Election Advocacy Campaign

In the lead-up to the 2025 Federal Election, the Advocacy Team, CEO, and Mayor of City of Port Phillip actively engaged with all candidates for the seat of Macnamara to promote Council’s priorities related to the Federal Government.

Advocacy activities included:

- » Publication and circulation of the Federal Election Priority Projects Opportunity document.
- » Hosting meetings and correspondence with candidates.
- » Providing information to candidates to support commitments that aligned with Council priorities.
- » Producing an advocacy website, election commitment tracker and social media campaign.

Campaign Outcomes

Major parties committed an unprecedented amount of funding to several projects within the City of Port Phillip, for both Council assets and community facilities.

LABOR

Josh Burns

- \$31M for Adass Israel Synagogue (funding already committed in budget)
- \$400,000 to Port Phillip EcoCentre
- \$250,000 for JOY Media
- \$60,000 for the See Yup Temple
- \$12.5M for ANAM at South Melbourne Town Hall
- \$2.6M for Side Street Medic
- \$1.5M for CCTV

Total: \$48.3 MILLION

LIBERAL

Benson Saulo

- \$35M for Adass Israel Synagogue
- \$520,000 for CCTV
- \$1.4M for North Port Oval
- Towards upgrades to Elwood Park Pavilion
- \$150,000 for anti-hooning cameras on Beach Road

Total: \$37 MILLION+

GREENS

Sonya Semmens

- \$10M for St Kilda Primary School
- \$400,000 to Port Phillip EcoCentre
- \$10M for Albert Park Lake
- \$12.5M for ANAM at South Melbourne Town Hall
- 6 new free local healthcare clinics
- Litter Trap at Elwood Canal

Total: \$32.9 MILLION+

Election Communications Campaign

To promote advocacy efforts directly to community, a broad communications campaign was launched. This campaign included regular Social Media posts via Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, and through a series of more detailed advocacy articles to keep the community informed about advocacy efforts and the commitments secured.



4,356 views

of the 2025 Federal Election – City of Port Phillip webpage from 3,376 unique users.



11 posts

across Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn, resulting in:

- » 52,767 total views/impressions
- » 951 interactions (likes, shares, comments)
- » 645 clicks directing users to Council advocacy pages and articles.



9 news articles

across the 9 Advocacy Articles published during the campaign, with the most popular articles being:

- » North Port Oval Funding Commitment
- » Adass Israel funding commitments
- » Federal Election Advocacy summary



Next Steps

Council will continue working with the elected representative to ensure these commitments are delivered as they align to the Council Plan. The Mayor and Advocacy team are actively engaging with the successful candidate on pathways to ensure election commitments are fulfilled.

Tier 2 and 3 Advocacy Items

Advocacy Item	Action	Outcomes
Community and Child Care		
HACC PYP Flexible Service Response	State Government funding changes impacted food relief services for 700+ vulnerable clients. Council launched a campaign for a transition period, engaged MPs, and supported organisations in advocacy efforts via facilitating a letter campaign.	The Mayor met with department representatives, leading to consideration of a transition plan.
Multicultural Seniors Groups Funding	Lack of funding certainty beyond 2024-25 threatened group operations. Council partnered with MAV to advocate for multi-year funding.	Additional funding confirmed for 2025-26 in the State Budget.
St Kilda Primary School Hall	School campaigned for a new Sport and Community Hub. Council supported the initiative, engaged MPs, and supported election advocacy.	Council aligned with community-led advocacy, strengthening its case with State Government.
South African War Memorial Rededication	Memorial reinstated after Metro Tunnel works; Victorian Boer War Memorial Committee sought support for rededication event. Council collaborated with the committee to deliver the event.	Council secured funding, provided preparation, and hosted a successful community event.
Arts, Music and Events		
St Kilda Triangle	Council sought State and Federal co-funding for a feasibility study to transform the space into a live music venue. Advocacy efforts included meetings with ministers, interactions with ministerial advisers, inclusion in budget bids, and incorporation into the Federal Election Campaign.	Council continues to explore advocacy avenues.
Australian Formula 1 Grand Prix	Council engaged the State Government and Grand Prix Association to mitigate local impacts, secure funding for precinct activations, improve transport accessibility, and address egress issues. Trader associations were supported in advocacy efforts.	Secured funding to support local activations in St Kilda and South Melbourne.

Advocacy Item	Action	Outcomes
Captain Cook Statue Vandalism	Council pursued State support for restoration and culturally sensitive signage but encountered funding barriers.	Council raised community concerns with the State.
Louisa Briggs Statue Funding	Council coordinated endorsements from key political and first nations stakeholders to secure funding for a statue honouring Louisa Briggs.	Council received grant funding through the Victorian Women's Public Art Program.
Climate and Environment		
Elster Creek	Council advocated for a coordinated approach to revitalisation of Elster Creek engaged multiple stakeholders, and facilitated a Ministerial site visit.	Finalised \$1.7 million in Federal grant funding, committed in 2022 election.
Container Deposit Scheme Challenges	Council conveyed community concerns about noise pollution from Reverse Vending Machines to State and Federal stakeholders via letters, meetings, and calls.	Raised awareness among key decision-makers.
Coastal Asset Management and Erosion	Council engaged the State Government and regional forums to highlight the risks of foreshore erosion, with formal advocacy from the Mayor.	Increased awareness, and secured State funding for Middle Park Beach renourishment.
Port Phillip EcoCentre	Council backed EcoCentre for additional funding to fit out the new facility.	Secured \$400,000 through federal election commitment
Little Penguins at St Kilda Pier	Council advocated for local group Earthcare to retain management responsibilities, engaging MPs and ministerial advisers.	Conveyed community support to the State Government.
Kerbside Waste Standards	Council led M9 colleagues to request the State Government release the Kerbside Waste Standards which were promised in early 2025, in order for Council to implement the policy successfully and efficiently.	A letter was sent to the State Government and Council awaits an outcome.

Advocacy Item	Action	Outcomes
Planning and Transport		
Station Pier	Council engaged State Government, Ports Victoria, cruise industry representatives, and tourism bodies to advocate for investment and revitalisation of the area.	Prompted further discussions and conveyed community concerns.
State Government's Planning Control Reform	Council worked with M9, DTP, and key officials to address concerns about the lack of consultation on planning and housing reforms.	Conveyed concerns about operational and community impacts.
109 Tram Duplication Works	Council raised the need for track duplication with MPs and DTP, respecting planning considerations in Beach Street.	Conveyed the need for increased tram services to support growth in the area.
Park St Tram Link	Council advocated for project confirmation, engaging MPs and DTP, and incorporated planning works at Park Street.	Conveyed the need for the tram link to support Metro Tunnel connectivity.
Flood Risk Management	Council collaborated with regional alliances, MPs, and water authorities to address development in flood-prone areas.	Integrated flood controls into planning requirements and strengthened government partnerships.
Planning Scheme Amendment Delays	Council raised concerns with M9, MPs, ministerial advisers, and DTP about delays impacting developments.	Conveyed concerns about delays affecting Council operations.
Pedestrian Safety	Council continued to advocate for funding for pedestrian safety and bike upgrades	Council secured grant funding for bike path in Port Melbourne
Communications Assets at Fishermans Bend and Port Melbourne	Council worked with a telecommunications provider and raised issues with MPs and the Fishermans Bend task-force, regarding issues with Telstra infrastructure.	Telstra undertook review of assets in question.
Sandringham Rail Corridor	Council initiated discussions with VicTrack, Metro Trains, and DTP for greening and biodiversity improvements.	Set progress in motion for enhanced public spaces and vegetation outcomes.

Advocacy Item	Action	Outcomes
Cost Shifting		
Cost Shifting for Immunisation Programs	Council joined MAV's advocacy campaign urging full State funding for immunisation services and the CIRV platform. The Mayor wrote to the Minister for Health requesting a reconsideration of the co-funding model.	Conveyed concerns about cost shifting to the State Government.
Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund Levy Changes	Council opposed levy changes, launched an advocacy campaign, engaged MPs, and called for rebates and a simplified funding model.	The issue was raised in Parliament with specific reference to City of Port Phillip and received media coverage.
Electrical Line Clearance Implications	Council raised concerns with the State about cost shifting affecting urban forestry, engaged MAV's campaign, and met with MPs.	Communicated financial implications for councils to State Government.
Sport and Recreation		
Albert Park sports clubs and asset condition	Council engaged sporting clubs, Parks Victoria, and the Australian Grand Prix Association to advocate for investment in sport and recreation assets and environmental remediation. The Mayor raised concerns with State and Federal MPs, and the Minister for Environment.	Conveyed community concerns and the need for facility upgrades.
Port Melbourne Life Saving Club	Council collaborated with the club and Life Saving Victoria to determine the best use of \$250,000 in State Budget funding for accessibility improvements.	Ensured funding was allocated to meet community needs.
Safety at St Kilda Pier	Council worked with Life Saving Victoria to advocate for the implementation of safety measures at St Kilda Pier to address increased popularity and associated safety risks.	Conveyed community safety concerns to the State Government.



Elwood Canal, Elwood

Australia Post Parcel Locker Installation in Acland Court

Following the closure of the St Kilda South Post Office, Council rallied with the local community to ensure continued postal services in St Kilda. Recognising the importance of these services, Council coordinated a considered advocacy campaign.

Advocacy activities included:

- » Writing to Australia Post and the Minister for Communications.
- » Releasing a joint statement with the Acland Street Village Business Association and the Older Persons Advisory Committee.
- » Working with Members of Parliament from the State and Federal levels of Government.
- » Coordinating a media release, that was picked up in print media and TV.
- » Working with Australia Post to find a suitable solution.

These efforts highlighted the significance of the closure and demonstrated strong alignment between Council, State and Federal governments, and the community.

In response to the community's needs, Council successfully negotiated with Australia Post to install new parcel lockers at Acland Court. Following consultations, Council installed a dedicated mail zone parking bay outside Acland Court. The parcel lockers were installed during the week commencing 23 December 2024. On 17 December, the Mayor and Cr Thomann, along with Josh Burns MP and David Fried, owner of Acland Court, officially announced the upcoming installation of the new parcel lockers.

While these lockers do not fully replace the services of the Post Office, they help mitigate some inconveniences by providing a convenient, secure, and flexible option for parcel collection. This campaign achieved alignment across all levels of government and the community, leading to a successful outcome.



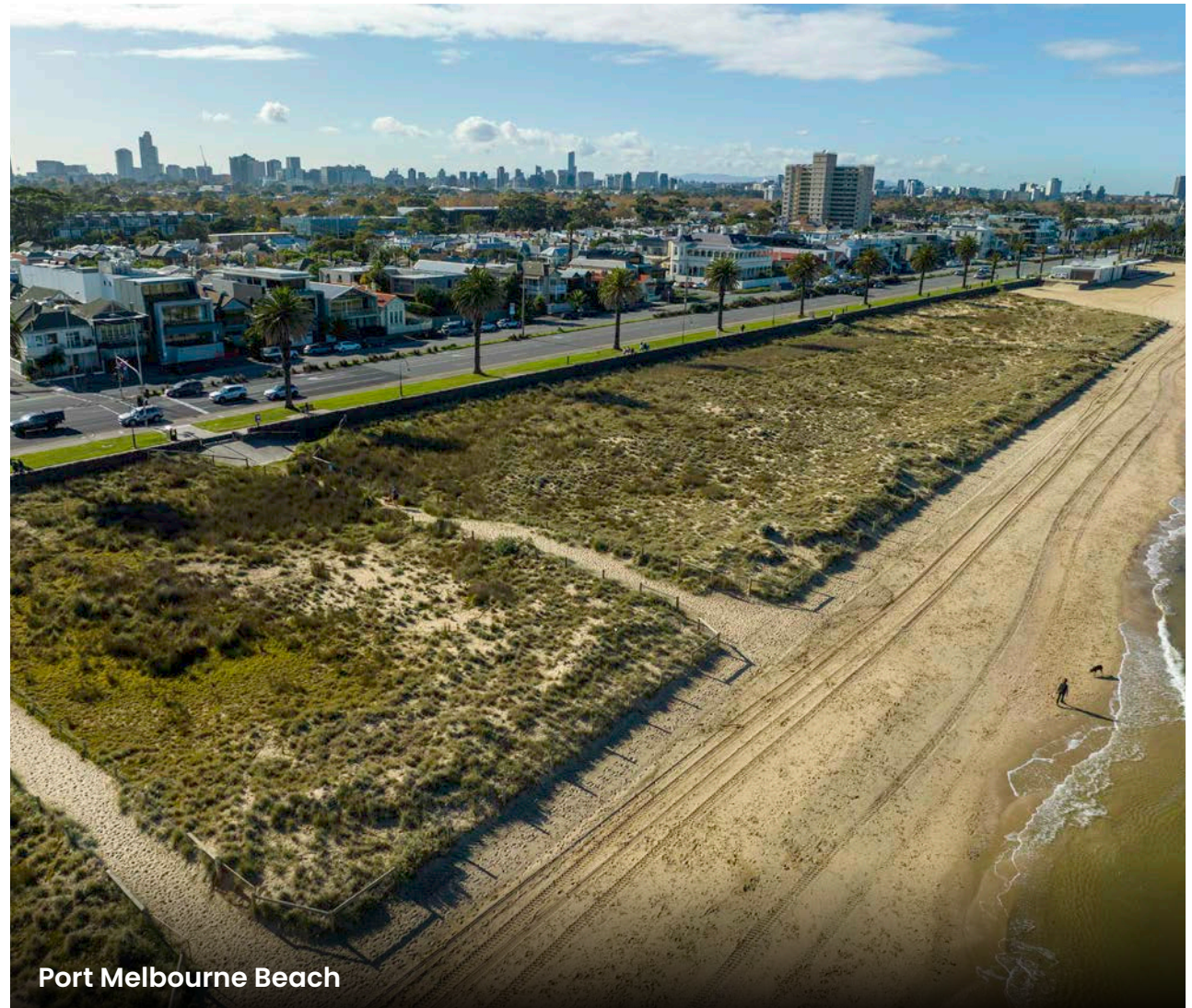
Image of Australia Post Parcel Locker

Grants Awarded

Port Phillip City Council has been awarded \$8,069,573 in competitive grants in the 2024-25 financial year after submitting 32 applications.

Of these, 23 were successful applications, ten of which were submitted to the Federal Government, ten applications were submitted to the State Government, and three were submitted to Non-Government and Not-for-Profit entities. Council was awarded twelve capital grants, and eleven operational grants.

Highlights of grants awarded includes \$2,606,458 for the St Kilda Foreshore (landside) project, \$1,026,237 for the St Kilda Adventure Playground project; \$1,700,000 for the Elster Creek Water Quality Improvements project; and \$1,728,910 for a variety of road and traffic initiatives.



Port Melbourne Beach



Lagoon Reserve, Port Melbourne

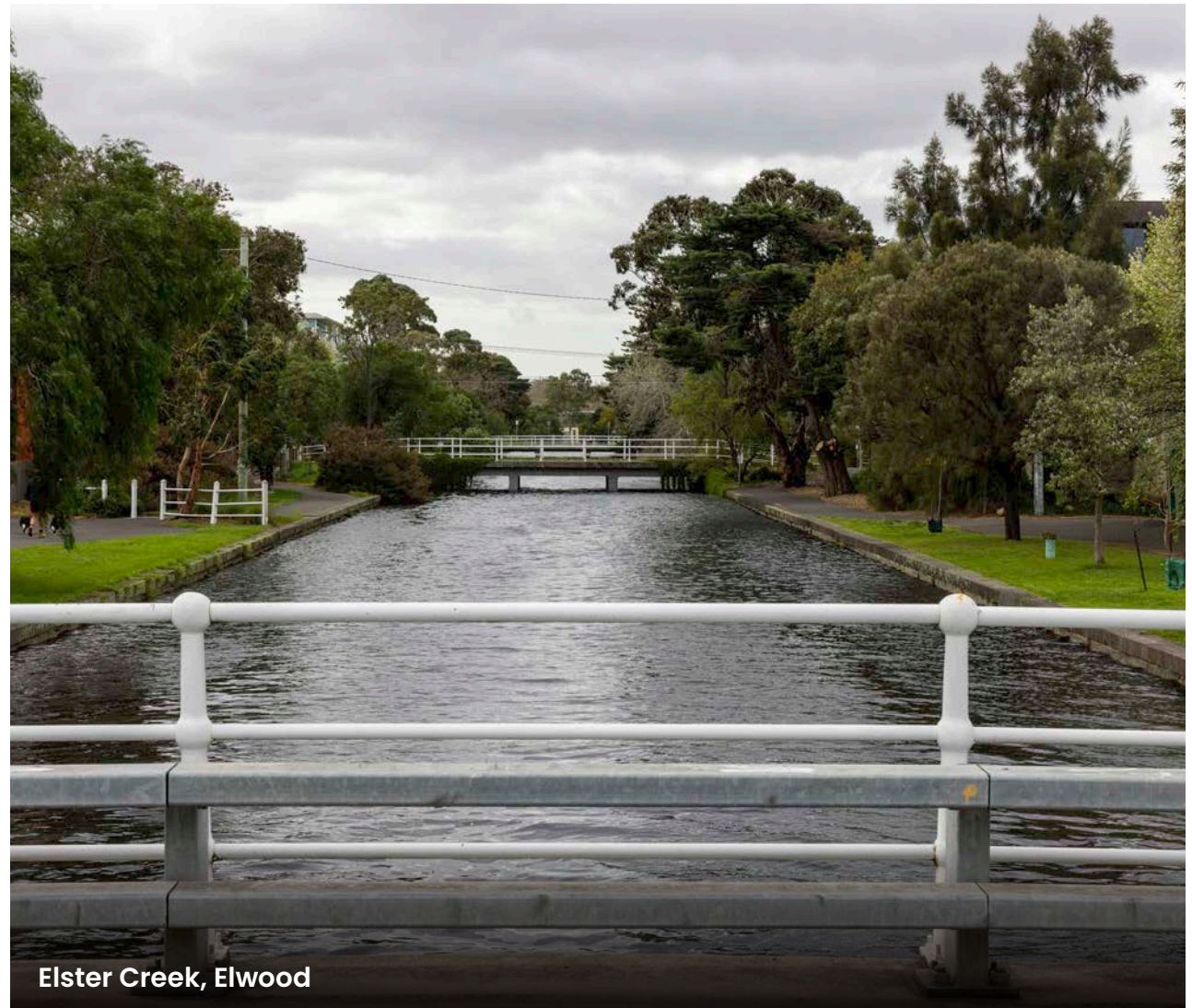
Elster Creek Water Quality Improvements: Urban Rivers and Catchment Grant

Council successfully advocated for funding to support delivery of the Elster Creek Water Quality Improvements Project.

The Urban Rivers and Catchment Program (URCP) focuses on restoring the health of urban waterways for native plants, animals and local communities.

An internal Council team was assembled to produce a strong application that outlined the key aspects of the project, benefits to the community, and how this initiative aligns with the grant assessment criteria. The grant application established that the funding would be used to improve water quality within Elster Creek by reducing flows through stormwater harvesting and plantings to enhance naturalisation.

These efforts were successful resulting in a \$1,700,000 grant to deliver this project.



Elster Creek, Elwood

Successful competitive grant applications

Funder	Grant Program	City of Port Philip Project	Community Benefit
Urban Rivers and Catchment Program	Enhancing Port Phillip's Foreshore Revegetation and Biodiversity Conservation	Elster Creek Project	Improve local biodiversity and natural habitat restoration of Elster Creek. This project will enhance the ecological health of the area and provide a greener environment for the community.
Commonwealth Office for the Arts	Revive Live	St Kilda Festival	Enhance cultural engagement and community entertainment. The free festival brought people together and supported Australian artists.
Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communication and the Arts	Housing Support Program	Housing Support Program	Increase housing stability and support for vulnerable populations. This funding will help provide essential services and secure housing for those in need.
Victorian Department of Transport and Planning	IP43 Safe System Pedestrian Infrastructure Program	Rouse Street and Esplanade East	Improve pedestrian safety and accessibility; the project aims to reduce accidents and make walking routes safer for everyone.
Victorian Department of Transport and Planning	School Safety Improvement Program	Dank Street and Withers Street	Enhance safety for school children and reduced traffic risks. This initiative will create a safer environment for students commuting to and from school.
Safe and Equal	Safe and Equal Grant	16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence Campaign	Raise awareness and prevented gender-based violence.

Funder	Grant Program	City of Port Philip Project	Community Benefit
Australia Day Community Events Fund	Australia Day	Community Event	Foster community spirit and national pride. The event brought residents together to celebrate and strengthened community bonds.
Department of Government Services	Premiers' Reading Challenge Fund	Premiers' Reading Challenge	Promote literacy and a love for reading among children. This program encouraged young readers to develop their skills and enjoy books.
TAC	Local Government Grant	Richardson Street Corridor Road User Analysis	Improve road safety through informed future safety measures and infrastructure improvements.
TAC	Local Government Grant	CoPP Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan	Develop comprehensive strategies to enhance road safety. This plan addressed key issues and implemented effective solutions to reduce accidents.
Department of Justice and Community Safety	Port Melbourne Life Saving Club	Port Melbourne Life Saving Club	Improve amenities at the club facilities. Funding will promote a safer and more inclusive environment.
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	Thriving Suburbs	St Kilda Adventure Playground	Provide a safe and engaging play area for children. This playground will offer recreational opportunities and promote physical activity.
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	Thriving Suburbs	St Kilda Foreshore (land side)	Enhance recreational spaces and community amenities. The project will improve the foreshore area, making it more enjoyable for residents and visitors.
Office for Youth (DFFH)	Engage!	Engage!	Empower youth through engagement and development programs. These initiatives provide young people with skills and opportunities for personal growth.
Screen Vic	Screen Culture	St Kilda Film Festival	Support local film culture and creative industries. The funding will help showcase local talent and promote cultural diversity.

Funder	Grant Program	City of Port Philip Project	Community Benefit
Creative Vic		St Kilda Festival First Peoples Outcomes	Celebrate and promoted First Peoples' cultural contributions at the St Kilda Festival. This ensured the event remained free and culturally accessible for the community.
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	Active Transport Fund	Beacon Road Project	Encourage active transport and reduced traffic congestion. The project will create safer and more accessible pathways for cyclists and pedestrians.
Community Support Fund	Women's Public Art Program	Louisa Briggs Statue	Honour a prominent and important First Nations women through a public art piece. The statue will serve as a lasting tribute to Lousia Briggs' achievements and inspire future generations of locals and visitors.
Department of Health and Aged Care	Support At Home and new Aged Care Act Transition Support 2024-2025	Transition Support	Assist elderly residents with transition in support services. This funding will help seniors navigate changes in care and maintain their independence.
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	Blackspots Program	Mary Street St Kilda West	Reduce traffic accidents and improved road safety. The project will address hazardous areas and enhance overall traffic management.
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts	Blackspots Program	Landridge and Patterson Streets	Enhance road safety and reduced accident risks. This initiative will implement critical safety improvements in this high-risk area.
Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions	Change Our Game	Women in Sport Network	Continued implementation of the Fair Access in Sport Policy and Action Plan
Office for Youth (DFFH)	Youth Fest	Next Gen Live: The Espy Showcase	All ages showcase for young bands, aiming to provide young people with the opportunity to showcase their skills and talents in a safe and inclusive environment, provide practical experience and employment pathways for them in the creative industries, as well as recognise and celebrate young people in our community.

St Kilda Adventure Playground Upgrade: Thriving Suburbs Grant

After Council approved the St Kilda Adventure Playground Upgrade project in 2021, the decision was made to apply for a Federal Government grant through the Thriving Suburbs program in 2024.

The Thriving Suburbs program awarded projects that deliver place-based benefits by investing in community-focused infrastructure which creates and enhances amenity, liveability and social cohesion throughout urban, suburban and peri-urban communities in Australia.

An internal Council team was assembled to produce a strong application that outlined the key aspects of the project, benefits to the community, and how this initiative aligns with the grant assessment criteria. The application explained funding will be used to replace end-of-life equipment, buildings, and ground surfaces, ensuring the playground continues to support childhood development for generations to come.

The application was approved resulting in a \$1,026,237 grant for this project.



St Kilda Adventure Playground, St Kilda

Collaboration and Engagement

Collaboration and engagement are central to City of Port Phillip's advocacy efforts, with strategic memberships playing a pivotal role.

By partnering with key regional and state-level organisations, Council can amplify its voice, access broader resources, and present a united front on critical issues. These methods enable Council to more effectively influence policy, secure funding, and achieve its advocacy goals, ultimately delivering meaningful outcomes for the community.



St Kilda Town Hall, St Kilda



St Kilda Road, St Kilda

Strategic Memberships

Organisation	Advocacy Highlights
Association of Bayside Municipalities (ABM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 50th Anniversary Celebration: Hosted an in-person member meeting and anniversary event on 4 September, featuring AGM proceedings, a strategic workshop on ABM’s future, and guest speakers including Zoe Daniel MP and former President Cr Jonathon Marsden.• Leadership Elections: Held an online meeting on 13 February to elect a new President, Vice President, and Executive Committee, supported by a pre-distributed briefing paper.• Governance Review: Engaged an independent consultant to lead a strategic governance review and develop a new four-year strategic plan (process ongoing).• Strategic Planning Engagement: Convened a workshop on 2 May at Bayside City Council to gather member feedback on draft governance proposals.• Member Communication: Shared a summary of insights from the strategic workshop with members to inform ongoing planning and reform efforts.
Committee for Melbourne (Merged with VCCI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Federal election campaign: Advocated for federal investment to boost economic growth and strengthen business support across the region.• Annual business survey: Conducted a yearly survey to capture business sentiment, challenges, and opportunities for local economic development.• Merged with Committee for Melbourne: Successfully merged with the Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry to enhance collaboration and regional advocacy.

Organisation	Advocacy Highlights
M9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead council for the Planning and Housing working group: Hosted meetings with officers from across council to determine advocacy priorities, organise responses to policy changes, and facilitate information sharing. • Secured \$2 million in joint funding: Funding secured from the Disaster Ready Fund and launched collaborative projects like the M9 Circular Economy and FOGO procurement. • Strengthened advocacy and engagement: Held over 20 stakeholder meetings, 5 inquiry submissions, and a high-profile parliamentary event with key political figures. • Held extensive meetings: Held across leadership and focus areas, including 4 Mayors and CEOs meetings, 12 CEO meetings, and 25 working group sessions. • Updated strategic direction: Identifying four key priorities, assigning lead councils, and forming officer-level working groups. • Maintained strong governance and partnerships: Active involvement through joint parliamentary representations and with state agencies and sector bodies.
Metropolitan Transport Forum (MTF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Budget Advocacy: MTF's submission to the State Budget called for an Integrated Transport Plan aligned with housing, improved bus services, better community engagement, enhanced integration, increased active transport funding, and urgent accessibility upgrades—especially relevant for Port Phillip. • Ministerial Engagement: MTF met with Minister Shing to raise concerns, particularly around the need for more meaningful engagement in transport infrastructure planning. • Strategic Planning: A review of the MTF 2025–26 Strategy was initiated to guide future advocacy, with Port Phillip councillors and officers contributing to its development despite a quieter year due to election-related gaps in representation.
South East Council's Climate Change Alliance (SECCCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Advocacy: SECCCA undertook a mix of independent and joint advocacy efforts with the Victorian Greenhouse Alliances (VGA) throughout 2024–25. • Written Submissions (Jul–Dec 2024): Contributed to key consultations on rental standards, national urban policy, net zero transport, public lighting, and climate policy directions. • Written Submissions (Jan–Apr 2025): Provided input on energy upgrades, building electrification, climate strategy, and infrastructure planning through VGA-led submissions. • Government Engagement: Participated in strategic meetings and hearings, including presentations to REMPC and discussions with federal and state climate authorities on net zero planning. • Policy Impact: These efforts reflect SECCCA's commitment to shaping climate policy, enhancing resilience, and securing support for impactful local government climate initiatives.

Organisation	Advocacy Highlights
Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leadership and Engagement: Launched the first Citizen to Councillor and Active Citizen guides, and ran the Make Good Happen federal election campaign to promote local leadership.• Professional Development: Established The Mayors Institute and expanded councillor training with new courses, coaching programs, and a reimagined development convention.• Advocacy and Influence: Led key submissions on planning, housing, and financial sustainability, and influenced state policy including the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund.• Innovation and Support: Introduced MAVlab to help councils tackle complex challenges and supported officer communities of practice across various service areas.• Partnership with Port Phillip: Collaborated closely with Mayor Cr Louise Crawford on advocacy campaigns, while Port Phillip staff actively engaged in MAV-led professional development and gender equality initiatives. The CEO also participated in the MAV 'Future of Local Government CEO Taskforce'.
Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professional development opportunities: Delivered targeted training and learning programs to support councillor skills and leadership growth.• Victorian Councillor Census: Conducted the first-ever statewide census capturing detailed insights into councillor demographics and experiences.• Development of a model policy for councillor development: Created a standardised policy framework to guide consistent and effective councillor development across councils.

Mayor Crawford's appointment to the Local Government Mayoral Advisory Panel

In April 2025, the Victorian Minister for Local Government, Nick Staikos announced the Local Government Mayoral Advisory Panel for 2025, an initiative aimed at strengthening governance and addressing pressing issues within Victorian councils.

Among the nine mayors selected from across the state, City of Port Phillip's Mayor Crawford was included in this esteemed panel, a testament to her leadership and dedication to community development.

Council's Advocacy team played a crucial role in Mayor Crawford's position on this panel. Through a considered and well-drafted application, the Advocacy team highlighted Mayor Crawford's strength in her experiences as Mayor and Councillor for the Port Phillip community.

Mayor Crawford's appointment to the panel is a significant milestone for the City of Port Phillip. Her presence ensures that the community's concerns are heard at the Ministerial level, representing the community and the sector more broadly. She can advocate for resources and initiatives that benefit the community, exchange best practices, and implement innovative solutions to improve local governance. The diverse panel fosters comprehensive solutions, promoting a thriving and inclusive community.

The appointment of Mayor Crawford to the Local Government Mayoral Advisory Panel highlights the power of strategic advocacy and dedicated leadership. It reaffirms Council's commitment to building a vibrant, inclusive community and demonstrates the impact of effective advocacy in shaping the future of local governance.



Ministerial visits to City of Port Phillip

Throughout the year, City of Port Phillip has welcomed several ministers to the municipality, fostering important discussions on key local priorities and strengthening partnerships with government representatives to support community needs.



Middle Park Library Announcement with Minister Horne

In July 2024, Victorian Local Government Minister Melissa Horne attended a special storytime at Middle Park Library to unveil the latest Living Libraries Infrastructure Program (LLIP) recipients.

Council will provide \$200,000 to complement the Victorian Government's \$200,000 LLIP grant for the Middle Park Library. The \$400,000 will be used to redesign the library space in collaboration with our community, focusing on meeting the needs of young people during the day.

Maternal Child Health Inform Session with Minister Blandthorn

In August 2024, the Advocacy team facilitated a conversation between the Minister for Children, the Local Member of Parliament, a nurse practitioner, and Council's Maternal Child Health Team Leader to understand the current challenges and opportunities for the sector. This was held at the Middle Park Maternal Child Health Centre.

Community Roundtable with LGBTIQ+ Parents for Minister Blandthorn

The roundtable discussion, led by Minister Blandthorn and the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing in August 2024, provided a valuable platform for addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by families in Victoria. The meeting included input from the Departments of Education and Health and brought together parents, carers,

and family service providers to delve into issues surrounding the support of diverse family structures.



St Kilda West Beach Boardwalk Accessibility Connection Opening

In August 2024, Josh Burns represented federal Ministers King and McBain at the opening of the St Kilda West Beach Boardwalk Accessibility Connection, which received funding through the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure (LRCI) program supported by the Federal Government.



Elster Creek funding announcement with Minister Plibersek.

Federal Minister for Environment and Water, Tanya Plibersek, and Local Member of Parliament Josh Burns attended a site visit of Elster Creek in October 2024 with Council representatives to announce the successful grant funding of \$1.7 million for Elster Creek through the Urban Rivers and Catchments Program.



South Melbourne Market Visit from Minister Collins

In October 2024, the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and Minister for Small Business, along with local member Josh Burns, visited the South Melbourne Market to meet and greet stallholders and tour the facility. Officers shared Council's aspirations for renovations, compliance works, public realm expansion, and funding for community engagement programs at the Market.



Launch of NABERS for schools rating tool at Elwood Primary School with Minister Wilson

In December 2024, Federal Assistant Minister for Climate Change and Energy Josh Wilson joined Josh Burns, Nina Taylor and Mayor Crawford at Elwood Primary School to launch the

new National Australian Built Environment Rating System (NABERS) for schools program, a system that rates the energy and water efficiency of buildings. The Minister also celebrated the sustainability achievements of Elwood Primary School.



St Kilda Pier Foreshore Upgrade grant announcement with Minister King

In December 2024, Federal Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government Catherine King and Josh Burns MP joined Mayor Louise Crawford to announce the Thriving Suburbs successful grant recipients, including Council's grant to upgrade St Kilda Pier Foreshore.



Beacon Road Active Transport announcement with Minister King

In February 2025, Federal Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government Catherine King and Josh Burns MP joined Mayor Louise Crawford and ward councillor Heather Cunsolo to announce the successful grant funding secured for Beacon Rd Active transport Safety Upgrades through the Active Transport Program.



Carlisle St, Balaclava

Submissions

Making submissions allow Council to formally present its positions on key issues to influence government decisions and policy development. Notably, there have been several changes to the Victorian Government's housing and planning policy within this financial year. Council has used this opportunity to ensure our priorities in this space are heard.

Victorian State Budget 2025/26

Council's Advocacy team worked with the local Members of Parliament with electoral boundaries in the City of Port Phillip on a range of items for consideration for submission to the 2025/26 State Budget process. The local Member of Parliament for Albert Park progressed with submitting budget requests for financial support for the St Kilda Festival; for Electric Vehicle chargers at the South Melbourne Market; and for an Acoustic Camera trial. The Victorian State Budget announced funding for an expansion to South Melbourne Primary School, upgrades to Luna Park, \$407 million for increased housing support programs, \$1.6 billion to enhance justice and community safety, prevent crime, and reduce repeat offending.

Commonwealth Federal budget 2025/26

City of Port Phillip's Advocacy team worked with the local Member of Parliament for Macnamara and with Senators with regional responsibility for Victoria on a range of items to be presented for consideration as part of the 2025/26 Federal Budget Process. Advocacy items included Sandridge Precinct redevelopment, Elwood Foreshore redevelopment; various sport and recreation upgrades; and for community safety treatments. City of Port Phillip community received \$31.4 million for the restoration of the Adass Israel Synagogue and community Centre in Ripponlea.

Further outcomes for the local government sector include:

- Roads to Recovery Program will receive \$821 million in 2025-26, rising to \$1 billion per year by 2033-34.
- Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program will continue with at least \$200 million available in 2025-26.
- \$15 million will be available in 2025-26 for the Active Transport Fund.
- Black Spots Program will receive \$150 million in funding in 2025-26.
- \$50 million will be spent on the Urban Precincts and Partnerships Program.

Australian Local Government Association 2025 National General Assembly motion

In collaboration with Glen Eira City Council, City of Port Phillip submitted a motion to the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) 2025 National General Assembly calling on the Australian Government to strengthen and invest in community services that address community safety and social cohesion. This motion was deliberated upon and subsequently approved by the National General Assembly in June 2025. The submission of motions to the ALGA National General Assembly aligns with Council's established practice of advocacy through formalised partnerships and memberships.

Municipal Association of Victoria 2025 State Conference motion

City of Port Phillip, in collaboration with the City of Stonnington, Bayside City Council, and Glen Eira City Council, submitted a motion to the Municipal Association of Victoria's (MAV) 2025 State Conference on Fostering safety and social cohesion, calling on MAV to assume a more prominent role in advocating for community safety measures to support local communities. This motion was approved by the State Conference on 16 May 2025. The submission of motions to the MAV State Council aligns with Council's established practice of advocacy through formalised memberships. This initiative exemplifies effective cross-council collaboration and strategic partnerships aimed at achieving shared community outcomes.

Australian Government's Draft National Urban Policy

City of Port Phillip's submission to the Draft National Urban Policy calls for stronger collaboration across all levels of government to address urban growth challenges. It highlights the urgent need for infrastructure investment in areas like Fishermans Bend and identifies a \$600 million local funding gap, urging evidence-based investment to support sustainable, liveable development. The submission calls for strengthened partnerships to support place-based outcomes.

Infrastructure Victoria's Draft 30-Year Plan

City of Port Phillip's submission to Victoria's Draft 30-Year Infrastructure Strategy requests a targeted investment to support growth in areas like Fishermans Bend. The submission prioritises the enhancement of transport systems, including new tram routes and the Melbourne Metro 2 project, the expansion of social and affordable housing, and the improvement of climate resilience through flood prevention and energy efficiency initiatives. It calls for a streamlined infrastructure contribution framework and underscores the importance of integrated water management, increased green spaces, and advanced traffic control technologies. The submission stresses the need for cross-government collaboration to deliver sustainable outcomes.

Prahran by-election submission to candidates

In preparation for the Prahran By-Election on 8 February, Council's Advocacy team make a submission of funding requests to candidates. A Priority Project Opportunities booklet was developed, highlighting key projects such as Children's Centre Infrastructure, St Kilda Primary School Hall/Community Hub, Community Safety, Active Transport and Pedestrian Safety, St Kilda Library Redevelopment, and Sustainability and Climate Action.

Multicultural Framework Review

City of Port Phillip's submission to the Victorian State Government's Multicultural Framework Review emphasises the importance of a state-level multicultural framework to guide local councils in promoting cultural diversity and social cohesion. Key issues highlighted include rising antisemitism, the need for infrastructure support for places of worship, funding for interfaith networks, and support for skilled and family visa migrants. The submission recommends making local governments eligible for funding to complement these initiatives, and to implement place-based, community-led initiatives.

Parliamentary Inquiry into the Redevelopment of Melbourne's Public Housing Towers

City of Port Phillip's submission to the Inquiry into the Redevelopment of Melbourne's Public Housing Towers advocates for a collaborative, community-led approach that preserves or increases social housing. It calls for design excellence, sustainability, and integration with local infrastructure, while warning against displacement without proper planning. The submission also urges stronger local government involvement and equitable housing standards.

Plan for Victoria

City of Port Phillip's submission to the Plan for Victoria included strong calls for integrated planning across housing, transport, infrastructure, and employment; mandatory affordable housing provisions; protection and enhancement of employment land and creative industries; and climate resilience through updated flood mapping, urban greening, and elevated environmentally sustainable development (ESD) standards. The submission emphasised the need for local government involvement in setting housing targets, investment in public transport and open space, and policy reforms to address the unique challenges of inner-city municipalities like Port Phillip. Council reaffirms its commitment to partnering with the Victorian Government to shape a Plan that delivers equitable growth and improved quality of life for all Victorians.

Parliamentary Enquiry into VC Planning Provision Amendments

City of Port Phillip's submission to the Inquiry into Victoria Planning Provisions Amendments VC257, VC267, and VC274 expressed significant concerns about the impact of recent planning reforms on local planning outcomes, liveability, and sustainability. While supporting increased housing supply, Council criticised the lack of consultation, removal of third-party appeal rights, and weakening of local policy influence, especially regarding neighbourhood character, environmental sustainability, and affordable housing. The submission also highlighted risks of poor design outcomes, legal uncertainty, and reduced community trust, and called for reinstating local ESD policies, strengthening affordable housing provisions, and integrating flood risk and infrastructure planning into strategic decision-making.

Victorian Government's Household Waste and Recycling Standard 2024

City of Port Phillip's submission emphasises a collaborative approach to enforcement, calls for clear guidelines and public education of the Proposed Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Regulations 2024, and highlights financial and operational challenges for councils. The submission supports most service arrangements outlined in the Household Waste and Recycling Standard policy, but raises concerns about opt-out provisions for FOGO, the exclusion of compostable liners, and the need for accessibility and innovation in recycling standards. Council favoured a 2027 start with kerbside services where practicable, especially given spatial constraints in urban areas like Port Phillip.

Port of Melbourne's 2055 Port Development Strategy officer submission

City of Port Phillip's submission to the Draft 2055 Port Development Strategy emphasises the need for integrated planning between the Port of Melbourne and surrounding urban areas, particularly Fishermans Bend. The document supports the Port's growth but stresses minimising environmental, traffic, and amenity impacts on local communities. Key recommendations include enhancing rail freight infrastructure, protecting public and active transport routes, safeguarding biodiversity and open spaces, and ensuring transparent engagement with local councils, local stakeholders, and the local community. The submission advocates for strategic alignment with urban renewal plans, environmental resilience, and community access to waterfronts, aiming for sustainable and inclusive development.



Beach Street, Port Melbourne

Strategic enhancements

City of Port Phillip has implemented several enhancements to strengthen its support mechanisms for advocacy and grants. These include new processes, tools, and resources to better support grant applications and advocacy efforts.

With the endorsement of the Advocacy Strategy 2024-28, Council now has a structured approach to its advocacy initiatives, ensuring alignment with its strategic objectives. Key personnel appointments, such as the Grants and Partnerships Advisor and the Coordinator Advocacy and Partnerships, have refined and strengthened these processes, contributing to a more efficient system for managing grants and advocacy.

External Grants Uplifts

A new Grants Advisor role has been created to develop leading-practice grants processes throughout the grant lifecycle. The two-stage uplift program aims to build awareness of the grant lifecycle, enhance efficiency, reduce risk, and build Council's skills and capability to plan, deliver, and acquit grants effectively.

- » **Stage 1: Building:** Establishing governance, process mapping, and tracking. Includes a Grants Steering Committee, intranet webpage, grants tracker, and newsletter.
- » **Stage 2: Consolidating and Strengthening:** Embedding grant systems and processes, driving continuous improvement, and leveraging technology.

100 per cent of Stage 1 uplift actions are complete and ongoing, and 100% of Stage 2 uplift actions are in progress, completed, or ongoing.

Advocacy Uplifts

To support the Advocacy Framework and Strategy, an intranet resource hub has been developed, providing tools and tips for officers. The toolkit covers key areas such as advocacy priorities, strategic memberships, engaging elected officials, submissions, and supporting the Mayor and CEO in meetings and at formal events.

In addition, officers have built a community-facing advocacy webpage on Council's website to raise awareness of the City of Port Phillip's advocacy strategy and campaigns. This includes a page on what advocacy means at the City of Port Phillip; pages on Council's existing advocacy priorities; a page on Council's 2025 Federal Election campaign; and a series of advocacy news articles and updates.

Impact

These system and process enhancements have significantly improved operations and outcomes, leading to increased efficiency and effectiveness in grant applications and advocacy efforts. Improved systems and strategies will strengthen Council's ability to secure funding and support for critical projects. The structured approach ensures alignment with strategic objectives, promoting transparency and community involvement. Overall, these uplifts are expected to deliver lasting benefits to the City of Port Phillip and its residents.



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