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CITY COUNCIL

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GLEN EIRA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN 2024-2026





ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

Glen Eira City Council acknowledges the Boonwurrung/ Bunurong and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation as Traditional Owners and Custodians, and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to land and waterways. Council extends its respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Council honours the rich histories and cultures of First Nations peoples and recognises and values the important contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in enriching our community. We support the Uluru Statement from the Heart and are committed to a *Reconciliation Action Plan* which is underpinned by the principles of self-determination. We work towards improved outcomes and long-term generational change, and to consolidate Glen Eira as a culturally safe place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We are committed to achieving equality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to live healthy and prosperous lives and to improve life outcomes for current and future generations.

Glen Eira resides on country that always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land.

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We acknowledge and uphold Traditional Owner's continuing relationship to the land and waterways. Council extends its respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Introduction

Located approximately 10 kilometres southeast of Melbourne's Central Business District, the City of Glen Eira forms part of Melbourne's Inner Southeast region covering an area of 39 square kilometres.

Glen Eira is recognised as a municipality with wonderful amenity, a diverse community with a high number of well-connected neighbourhoods and activity centres.

Activity centres have largely developed along tram and train routes as commercial areas rich with urban character and heritage. They act as both social and economic hubs for the community.

Glen Eira boasts an enviable collection of unique activity centres, within a network of six major activity centres and thirteen neighbourhood activity centres. These range from major health and education precincts such as the cluster around Monash University's Caulfield Campus, to bustling commercial and hospitality centres including Elsternwick, Carnegie and Bentleigh, along with quieter residential neighbourhoods and villages.

Over recent years, we have experienced seven level crossing removals with six new train stations redeveloped, a Melbourne-wide housing boom and a world-wide transition of the local job market, business demands and land uses. These significant, externally driven changes present both challenges and opportunities to be proactively addressed by Council.

Purpose

The promotion of economic sustainability of a municipality is a core principle of Local Government as listed in the *Local Government Act 2020*. In line with Victoria's changing economy, the approach taken by local Councils to support the local economy has also changed over time.

This Plan provides an opportunity to refresh our approach to supporting the growth of the local economy and businesses, responding to new opportunities and challenges, such as the shift to hybrid working and e-commerce.

The two-year timeframe will enable Council to continue to progress and assess the impact of our existing priorities, pilot new initiatives, and consolidate a longer-term strategic approach to achieving our vision for economic development in the City of Glen Eira.

With the current economic landscape continuing to evolve, a focus of the Plan will be directed towards building a greater understanding and evidence base around local needs.

The *Economic Development Action Plan 2024-2026* will replace the *Glen Eira Local Economy and Placemaking Action Plan 2020-2025*.

Vision

Glen Eira has a thriving and sustainable local business economy, working together to support growth, pride and investment, making it a great place to work, shop and visit.

This vision statement has been informed by the *Glen Eira 2040 Community Vision* and key attributes that are considered essential for a successful local economy along with Council's commitment to support centre and home-based business opportunities in Glen Eira, enabling a thriving economy and community.

Current context

Traditionally, Council's economic development offering has involved business support including the delivery of long running programs such as the Business Mentoring Program and BusEd Program, coupled with networking events, webinars and information sharing.

The introduction of a Business Concierge Service in 2019 has seen the permit application process and timeframe for businesses improve and strengthen the level of direct support.

More recently, Council has moved towards a place-based approach to economic development by focusing on improving the amenity and vibrancy of our activity centres and aiming to create experiences and places for people to gather, not just transact. This has been increasingly important during and post-COVID as people seek a stronger connection with their local community.

Glen Eira's workforce

Resident's jobs

Glen Eira has close to 152,000 residents. This is forecast to grow to 176,389 by 2036.

The number of residents who are employed is 86,485 and the areas of employment include:

- Professional, Scientific and Technical Services 11,262 jobs (14.1 per cent)
- Health Care and Social Assistance 11,058 jobs (13.9 per cent)
- Education and Training 8,492 jobs (10.7 per cent)
- Retail Trade 7,431 workers (9.3 per cent)
- Financial and Insurance Services 5,222 workers (6.5 per cent)

Jobs in Glen Eira

There are 45,384 jobs in Glen Eira, significantly less than the number of workers.

The following industries provide the most jobs:

- Healthcare and Social Assistance 9,329 jobs (20.6 per cent)
- Education and Training 7,213 jobs (15.9 per cent)
- Retail Trade 5,519 (12.2 per cent)
- Professional, Scientific and Technical Services 4,373 jobs (9.6 per cent)
- Construction 4,136 jobs (9.6 per cent)

Highly skilled

Residents of Glen Eira have a significantly higher level of educational attainment compared to Greater Melbourne. Almost half (46.4 per cent) of residents aged 15 years+ hold a Bachelor or higher Degree compared to 32.8 per cent in Greater Melbourne. The high education and skill levels of its residents is one of Glen Eira's key economic strengths.

Where the jobs are

Glen Eira's activity centres accommodate just over half of all jobs in the area (52.2 per cent):

- The six major activity centres (Carnegie, Elsternwick, Bentleigh, Glen Huntly, Caulfield and Moorabbin) accommodate 25.25 per cent of jobs.
- The share of jobs in the Neighbourhood Activity Centres ranges quite significantly – from 0.34 per cent in Hughesdale to 6.5 per cent in Caulfield South.
- Around 44 per cent of employment occurs outside of the main activity centre areas.

The types of industries represented in the various centres reflects a healthy and diverse local employment mix with a reasonably strong retail/hospitality and strong business services in many centres.

The focus for retail businesses is responding to population growth and changing community demands. A focus of this Plan will also be on retaining local consumer expenditure and creating centres which contribute to local residential and business amenity.

Outside of activity centres, jobs in employment and residential areas also make an important contribution to the local economy. Whilst not as high intensity as jobs in activity centres, jobs in residential areas constitute 15 per cent of all employment across the city, and include important industry sectors such as home businesses, schools and mobile workers such as tradespeople and healthcare workers.

Impact of COVID-19

COVID-19 has had a significant impact not only on the state of the economy but also on the way that businesses operate, and people work. It has forced businesses to be more agile and flexible in their business model with a greater need for e-commerce options.

The shift to hybrid working

The COVID-19 pandemic saw a drastic shift in work patterns, with almost all workers that did not have to be physically present in a workplace, shifting to online work. This shift, to a significant extent, appears permanent, with large numbers of people introducing at least some remote or home-based work into their routine. As a municipality with one of the highest concentrations of office workers in metropolitan Melbourne, Glen Eira is particularly representative of this change.

More people working from home or in a hybrid format brings with it opportunities around harnessing local workers' spending power in our local centres, but also challenges in understanding how Council can best support this model.

The growth of e-commerce

Also accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic was online retail services, which appears to be accounting for an ever-increasing share of overall retail expenditure. Greater e-commerce has been accompanied by a general decline in patronage of conventional 'bricks and mortar' retail, more home-based businesses making and selling online, a shift toward multi-channel (physical and online) selling for retail and hospitality businesses, and increased freight movements and requirements for freight access.

The changing way people use activity centres

The general decline in conventional place-based retail does not signal the end of physical shops. Rather, it has led to increased emphasis on differentiation and experience in retail centres. With its strong base of attractive, high-profile, and vibrant shopping, dining and recreation areas, Glen Eira is well-placed to meet this need.

Public spaces in activity centres play a vital role in supporting local businesses. Footpaths and public spaces can provide an extension of the shopping experience, outdoor dining spaces and opportunities for people to gather and stay longer in the area.

Residents travelling outside of Glen Eira for work

A large proportion of Glen Eira's highly qualified workforce commutes to the Melbourne CBD for work. This presents a challenge of providing attractive employment centres, which must be accessible, offer a density of complementary businesses and activities, and increasingly, high quality amenities that support a hybrid way of working.

What this means for Glen Eira

For businesses and activity centres to remain strong it is essential that they have the skills and resources to be able to adapt and change to community needs and future challenges.

For residents to work locally local jobs must be aligned with their skills, experience and interests.

For Glen Eira, whose residents overwhelmingly work in professional services and knowledge industries, this generally means office or home-based employment. Continuing to explore opportunities around co-working and flexible workspaces will provide valuable support to locals who are participating in the growing trend towards hybrid and flexible work.

Similarly, Council's efforts to provide liveable, attractive and interesting activity centres will increase the incentive for those who can, to work locally and/or from home, rather than commuting.

These trends have been considered in the development of the strategic objectives, indicators and actions within this Plan.

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Council's Strategic Planning Context

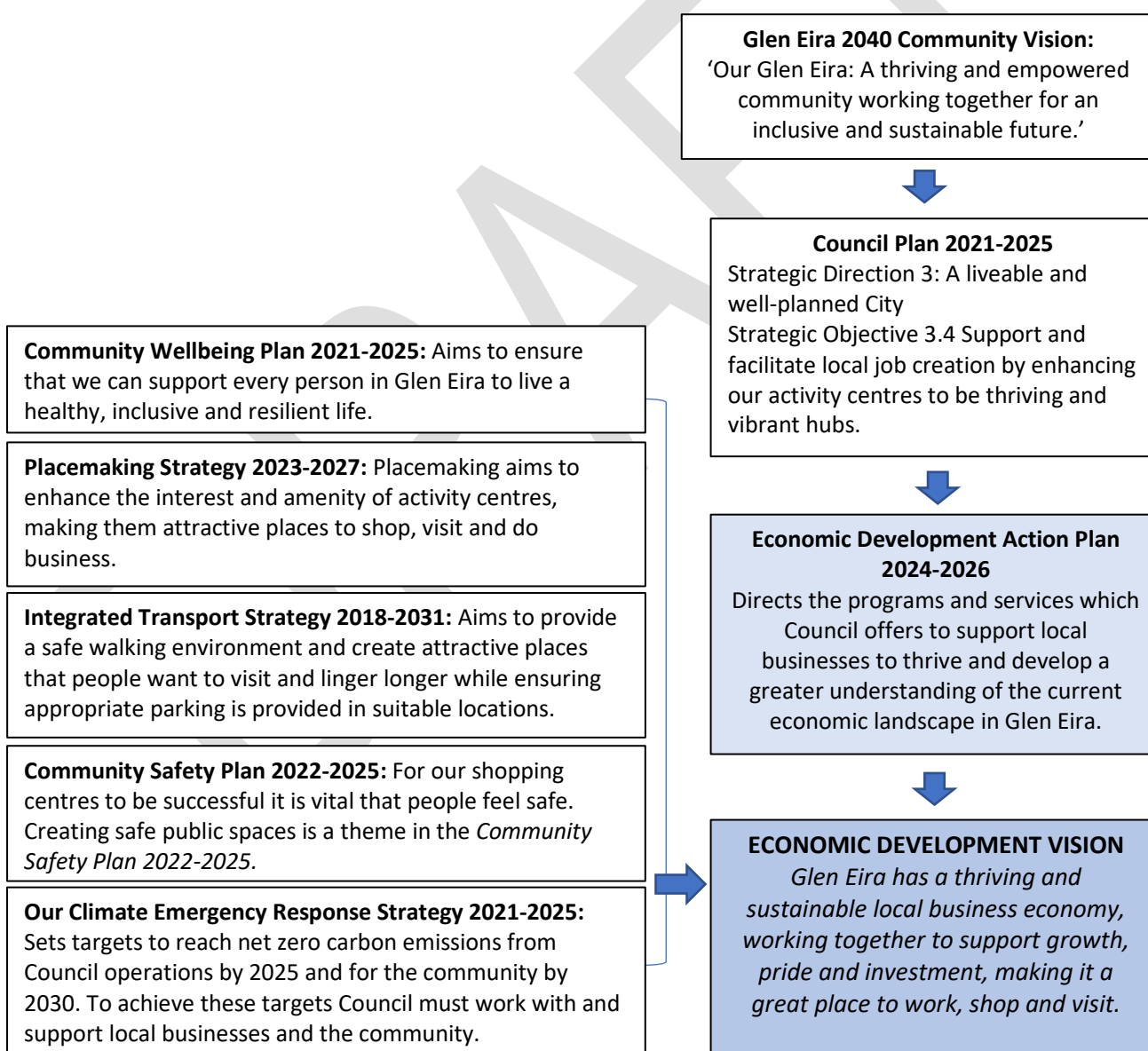
Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

Council's *Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework* outlines our commitment to an outcomes-focused strategic planning and reporting system.

Our strategies reflect how we make positive progress towards the community's aspirations outlined in the *Glen Eira 2040 Community Vision* and the strategic objectives we have set in our four-year *Glen Eira Council Plan*, or for internally focused strategies the strategic objectives set in the *Glen Eira Together Our Organisational Plan 2021-2025*.

There are several plans and strategies which work alongside the *Economic Development Action Plan 2024-2026* to contribute towards Council's economic development vision. The key supporting documents are outlined in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Plans and Strategies which support the economic development vision



Council's role in Economic Development

While Council's direct impact on the local economy is limited, it plays an important strategic and operational role in creating a supportive environment and vibrant places to enable businesses to thrive.

This includes:

- Funding and delivering a broad range of services and infrastructure.
- Developing strategic policy and directions for each activity centre.
- Developing policy and performing legislative roles, such as being the local planning authority.
- Creation of accessible, green and inviting streetscapes that connect people with their local shopping strips.
- Enhance interest and amenity of activity centres, making them attractive places to shop, visit and do business.
- Attracting new businesses that add value to the community.
- Providing business support, advice and training to business owners/managers.
- Providing simple and consistent processes to support new businesses to establish and grow.
- Partnership with local businesses, industry sectors and the broader community to address contributing factors that are outside of Council's direct control.
- Assisting businesses to work with each other and with Council.
- Providing opportunities for businesses to network and come together to share knowledge and experience.
- Creating effective links to encourage business growth and development.
- Advocating on behalf of the community to the Victorian and Federal Governments for funding and delivery of services or infrastructure, such as funding for transport and community infrastructure or economic stimulus to support economic recovery.
- Developing and maintaining physical infrastructure and cleaning schedules.
- Graffiti removal.

The role of this Plan

This Plan focuses primarily on the programs and services that Council offers to support local businesses and on developing a greater understanding of the current economic landscape in Glen Eira.

Three key themes will direct Council's focus on economic development and business support over the next two years:

- **Theme one:** Supported and connected places to work and do business.
- **Theme two:** Investment in vibrant and thriving places for our community.
- **Theme three:** Build our understanding and inform evidence-based practice.

Strategic Objectives

This strategy contains eight strategic objectives across three themes. We will measure our performance in achieving these strategic objectives through strategic indicators.

Theme 1: Connected and supported places to work and do business.

Glen Eira is uniquely placed to embrace the skills and experience of a highly educated and civic-minded community, to network and share their skills and knowledge and bring like-minded people together. Connecting businesses provides a supportive environment for sharing information and ideas, allowing small businesses to stay up to date with new trends, overcome common issues and potentially share resources.

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly changed the way people work with an emerging focus on hybrid models. This brings with it opportunities around harnessing people's spending power in our local centres and understanding what infrastructure is required to support and enable hybrid work and help keep our residents working and participating in the local economy.

This theme centres around how we support the people that make up our business community.

Strategic Objective	Strategic Indicators	Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility
Objective 1.1 It is easy and inviting to do business in Glen Eira.	Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey Score for business, community development and tourism.	Provide a Business Concierge service to support new businesses in establishing.	Ongoing	City Economy
	Number of local businesses receiving assistance through Council's Business Concierge service.	Improve processes for businesses interacting with Council.	Ongoing	City Economy Public Health Civic Compliance
Objective 1.2 Council supports local businesses to thrive.	Greater local spend remains within Glen Eira.	Support Traders Associations to facilitate the best value from existing Special Rate Schemes.	Ongoing	City Economy
		Explore the introduction of Special Rate Schemes in additional activity centres such as Glen Huntly.	Year 1	City Economy

Strategic Objective	Strategic Indicators	Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility
	Number of local businesses equipped to promote, market and sell their products across multiple channels.	Encourage Council's procurement approach to increase the use of local services and suppliers.	Ongoing	City Economy Communications Procurement and Contracts
	Number of local businesses receiving assistance through Council's business support programs.	Share targeted and relevant business information and insights including training, resources and grants provided by Council and other organisations such as Business Victoria.	Ongoing	City Economy
		Support businesses to develop their digital literacy and online presence.	Ongoing	City Economy
	Businesses are invited to participate in a range of community consultations.	Utilise experienced local businesspeople to provide support to new and existing businesses through the Business Mentor Program.	Years 1 and 2	City Economy
		Work with tertiary education organisations to support local businesses through the BusEd Program.	Years 1 and 2	City Economy
		Advocate to State and Federal Governments on important economic issues in consultation with local businesses.	Ongoing	City Economy Advocacy
		Listen to businesses about important issues affecting them.	Ongoing	City Economy Community Engagement
Objective 1.3 Home-based businesses and hybrid models of working within Glen Eira are enabled.	Number of home-based businesses engaging with Council.	Audit Council facilities to identify further opportunities to support hybrid/home-based workers (e.g. workspaces, meeting rooms, rentable hardware).	Year 2	City Economy Libraries, Arts & Culture
		Continue exploring site(s) and model for new co-working spaces.	Ongoing	City Economy
		Promote and support existing co-working spaces and other resources within Glen Eira.	Ongoing	City Economy Communications

Strategic Objective	Strategic Indicators	Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility
Objective 1.4 Businesses are connected with one another and with Council.	Business to business connections are facilitated.	Develop a calendar of small business networking events, based on areas of interest as well as broad topics to meet identified business needs.	Years 1 and 2	City Economy
		Explore a model for community-led economic development projects that support the implementation of the Economic Development Action Plan.	Year 2	City Economy
		Support and connect local women in business and employment.	Ongoing	City Economy
		Celebrate our local businesses through Business Excellence Awards.	Years 1 and 2	City Economy

Theme 2: Investment in vibrant and thriving places for our community

Our community comes together in shopping strip areas that not only provide for the shopping needs of surrounding residential areas but also provide spaces, activities, and enjoyment for the community.

The creation of place is a key economic driver. To maintain strong centres, we need to ensure that they are vibrant and active places where our community feel connected and where businesses want to locate and invest. A focus of this Plan will be on retaining local consumer expenditure and creating centres which contribute to local residential and business amenity.

While Council has limited control of what is in a centre, it plays a pivotal role in communicating the vision and strengths of each centre and supporting vibrancy and in-person experience.

This theme centres around strengthening places.

Strategic Objective	Strategic Indicators	Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility
Objective 2.1 Our community feels connected to their local activity centres.	Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey Score for business and community development and tourism.	Promote established destinations and events, including multicultural holidays and food festivals.	Ongoing	City Economy Communications
		Explore ways to celebrate the history, local uniqueness and stories of each place and its local businesses.	Ongoing	City Economy Communications History & Heritage
		Support Neighbourhood Activity Centres with developing and marketing their brand.	Year 1	City Economy
		Implement a pilot project in one Neighbourhood Activity Centre which partners with traders to improve the amenity of the centre.	Year 1	City Economy
		Develop Glen Eira-wide and centre-based economic profiles which can be used to promote business attraction and investment.	Years 1 and 2	City Economy Communications
		Develop a communications plan to promote shopping locally and support local businesses.	Years 1 and 2	City Economy Communications
Objective 2.2 Our local activity centres are vibrant and thriving.	Traders Associations report increased satisfaction with the amenity of their local centre.	Work with traders to identify and implement minor public realm improvements.	Years 1 and 2	City Economy Depot
		Promote and support Trader's Associations to run events in activity centres.	Ongoing	City Economy
	Reduction in vacancy rates in targeted areas.	Work with Trader's Associations and property owners to fill or activate vacant shops.	Ongoing	City Economy
		Monitor vacancy rates in each centre.	Years 1 and 2	City Economy
		Explore a model for Council to take on the lease of vacant building/s, offering them for discounted rent to niche, creative or short-term uses.	Year 2	City Economy

Theme 3: Build our understanding and inform evidence-based practice.

With changing trends in the way we work and shop, Council needs to understand the current economic drivers in our communities to continue to evolve our programs and services to meet local needs and be effective. We need to engage with businesses to understand the support that they need and also with the community to understand what they are looking for from local businesses and activity centres.

The COVID-19 pandemic and rapid increase in technology have had a significant impact on local businesses and the type of support they may be seeking from Council.

Council must maintain up-to-date knowledge and understanding of emerging economic issues and their potential impact on the Glen Eira economy.

This theme centres around engaging with our business and local community.

Strategic Objective	Strategic Indicators	Actions	Timeframe	Responsibility
Objective 3.1 Council has a strong understanding of key drivers of local economic development.	Increased understanding of key drivers.	Deliver an annual business survey.	Years 1 and 2	City Economy Engagement
		Investigate emerging trends at a local level (Year 1) and identify pilot programs in response (Year 2).	Years 1 and 2	City Economy
		Facilitate a network that brings together business representatives across a range of sectors to provide insights to Council.	Ongoing	City Economy
Objective 3.2 Business support programs and initiatives are data and research driven.	Increased understanding of effective and impactful programs.	Evaluate and review the effectiveness and impact of existing programs and services.	Year 1	City Economy
		Monitor and evaluate the impact of this Plan and use findings to provide recommendations for its next iteration.	Year 2	City Economy

Monitoring and Evaluation

We will report on our progress in achieving the objectives of this Plan through the results of our strategic indicators and provide updates on the delivery of planned actions annually.

We will document and share our progress, our achievements and our learnings with the community and provide accountability on whether we have met our stated commitments.

The evaluation of actions and data collected throughout the implementation of this Plan will inform the development of the next Plan.

External References

Glen Eira Economic Development Background Research Report SGS Economics and Planning 2023

City of Glen Eira Community and Economic Profiles [accessed at <https://profile.id.com.au/glen-eira/>]



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Glen Eira arts, gallery and events:

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www.instagram.com/gleneiraarts

Glen Eira Leisure:

www.facebook.com/GESACOnline

<https://www.instagram.com/gleneiraleisure>

www.twitter.com/GESACOnline

Glen Eira Libraries and Learning Centres:

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