

Maribyrnong Disability  
Action Plan 2022-2026  
**All Abilities and Access**  
Plain English



## **Acknowledgment**

We acknowledge the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation. We acknowledge the people of the Kulin nation as traditional custodians of the lands on which Maribyrnong City Council is located and where we conduct our business. We are committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their contribution to society.

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# Introduction

People with disability are an integral part of the City of Maribyrnong's proudly diverse community. People with disability are people first, and they live life, work, have families and participate in community life.

The Disability Action Plan 2022-2026 demonstrates Maribyrnong City Council's commitment to creating an inclusive community that is based on fairness and respect for people with disability.

Council aims to ensure that the City of Maribyrnong is an accessible and inclusive community, where everyone has the same opportunity to live a fulfilling and enriching life.

The Disability Action Plan 2022-2026 aims to address and remove the physical, communication, social and attitudinal barriers faced by people with disability. It promotes access and inclusion with the view of ensuring that the voices of people with disability are reflected in Council's decision-making processes, and that access and inclusion principles are embedded into Council's policies, plans, programs, activities, and infrastructure.

Council used the social model of disability as a lens by which to develop the Disability Action Plan 2022-2026.

The social model helps us recognise barriers that make life harder for people with disability. Removing these barriers creates equality and offers people with disability more independence, choice and control.

The social model of disability says that people are disabled by barriers in society, such as buildings not having a ramp or accessible toilets, or people's attitudes, like assuming people with disability can't do certain things<sup>1</sup>.

The Disability Action Plan 2022-2026 will provide the direction, for the next four years, for Council to deliver on creating an accessible and inclusive community and delivering on what our community has asked us.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.afdo.org.au](http://www.afdo.org.au)

# The Policy Context

## **International**

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities  
World Health Organization (WHO)

## **National**

Disability Discrimination Act 1992  
National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Act 2013  
Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031  
Accessibility and Inclusion Strategy 2019 - Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (the Royal Commission)

## **State**

Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006  
Victorian Disability Act 2006  
Inclusive Victoria State Disability Plan 2022-2026  
Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YAC Vic) Code of Ethical Practice (2007)  
The Local Government Act 2020

## **Local Government**

Council Plan 2021-2025

The Council Plan 2021-2025 was adopted in 2021. The Plan outlines the strategic objectives that work towards achieving the vision for Maribyrnong.

The Disability Action Plan 2022-2025 aligns with strategic objective, A Place For All of Council Plan 2021-2025.

# A Snapshot of Disability in Maribyrnong

**93,467 = Population of the City of Maribyrnong as of June 2021.**

Data source: id Community Profile 2022.

**4,523 = People in need of assistance for core activities.**

Data source: ABS Census 2021 Community Profile.

**13,259 = People who have long term health conditions.**

Data source: ABS Census 2021 Community Profile.

**7,849 = People who provide unpaid assistance.**

Data source: ABS Census 2021 Community Profile.

**2,345 = People who receive a disability pension.**

Data source: Service Australia, March 2022.

## Defining Disability

Disability is a broad term that can refer to a wide range of health conditions and impairments. The experience of disability may be temporary or permanent, lifelong, or acquired, visible, or invisible, total, or partial.

According to the World Health Organization<sup>2</sup>, disability has three dimensions:

### **Impairment**

Impairment in a person's body structure or function, or mental functioning; examples of impairments include loss of a limb, loss of vision or memory loss.

### **Activity limitation**

Activity limitation, such as difficulty seeing, hearing, walking, or problem solving.

### **Participation restrictions**

Participation restrictions in daily activities, such as working, engaging in social and recreational activities, and obtaining health care and preventive services.

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<sup>2</sup> World Health Organization, International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) external icon. Geneva: 2001, WHO.

Examples include:

- hearing impairment or deafness
- vision impairment or blindness
- chronic pain or chronic illness
- various mental health issues
- various mobility impairments
- intellectual disability
- acquired brain injury
- communication impairments

## **Intersectionality**

Many people with disability live with other forms of inequality or discrimination (such as sexism, racism, ableism, and classism). How these overlapping and interconnecting forms of oppression (and privilege) link to other aspects of identity is often called 'intersectionality'.

## **Impacts of COVID-19 on people with disability**

As we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important to reflect on the lessons learned from the pandemic for people with disability and consider how it impacts Council's planning.

A clear message has been that emergencies and crisis very often disproportionately affect people with disability, whose pre-existing disadvantages are compounded by crises.

The messages we have heard to some extent confirm existing feedback that lived experience of disability needs to be heard and considered in all our planning; which includes emergency planning and responses and that communication formats need to be accessible, and maintaining the infrastructure that enables people to connect is essential.

# How the final Disability Action Plan was developed

Council is committed to in-depth community engagement processes in line with its Engagement Policy. In 2021 we asked our community to share their ideas to help Maribyrnong more accessible and inclusive for people with disabilities, their carers, and families.

## Community consultation to develop the final plan

Community consultation was undertaken to help inform the development of the Plan. Eight workshops were facilitated in 2021.

The purpose of the workshops were to help develop the key themes that would help Council understand and prioritise its approach to disability accessibility and inclusion.

In 2022-2023 further community consultation was undertaken seeking feedback on the draft DAP 2022-2026 that was developed. Seven group sessions, two pop-up sessions and 24 individual engagement sessions were held.

## What the community told us

Key themes that emerged from the community consultation workshops were:

### **Voice and influence**

People with disability have their voice heard and are actively involved in informing and influencing Council decisions and actions.

### **Intersectionality**

Intersectionality is an additional lens that is considered within the scope of disability.

### **Embedded**

All Council programs and services embed disability accessible principles into their design.



**Young people**

Young people with disability are supported to live independently and pursue their passions and interests.

**Social and cultural connection**

People with disability have access to recreational and social opportunities.

**Spaces and transportation**

Public spaces and public transport are accessible and safe for people with disability.

**Local businesses**

All local businesses operate in an inclusive and accessible manner.

**Education and employment**

Council activity connects with people with disability involving and supporting them to access community services.

**Attitudes and awareness**

People with disability are treated with respect, empathy and understanding by everyone in the community.

# Key outcome areas

The key outcome areas that emerged from the consultation were to create Accessible, Inclusive and Participatory communities. Creating these communities will ensure that people living with disability have access to services and information, feel valued and are provided with the opportunity to contribute to decision making and participating in community life.

## Key Outcome 1:

### Accessible communities

Accessibility to built environment, information and services ensures that people living with disability have the opportunity to equally participate in community life.

### Objectives

- 1.1 Ensure public spaces and public transport are accessible and safe for people with disability.
- 1.2 Audit Council facilities to ensure they are fit for purpose.
- 1.3 Embed disability accessibility principles into the design and delivery of all Council programs and services.
- 1.4 Promote access and inclusion principles to local businesses to ensure they operate in an inclusive and accessible manner.

## Key Outcome 2:

### Inclusive communities

People living with disability feel valued and understood and that their rights are promoted and protected.

### Objectives

- 2.1 Ensure people with disability have access to recreational, accessible festivals, events and social opportunities.

- 2.2 Ensure Council is actively connecting with people with disability. Involve and support them to access and connect with community services.
- 2.3 Partner with business and education providers to ensure people with disability have access to education, employment and career development opportunities.
- 2.4 Recognise the complexities of intersectionality (the multiple forms of disadvantage or inequity that compound challenges and barriers for people with disability) when addressing accessibility and inclusion.

## **Key Outcome 3:**

### **Participatory communities**

People living with disability are supported to participate in community life and to contribute to community decision making.

### **Objectives**

- 3.1 Ensure people with disability have their voices heard and listen to their insights to inform and influence decisions and actions within local government.
- 3.2 Ensure people with disabilities are included in relevant advisory committees so as to actively participate in decision-making processes.
- 3.3 Ensure people with disability are treated with respect, empathy and understanding by Council staff and community members.

# ACTION PLAN

## Key Outcome 1:

### Accessible communities

Accessibility to built environment, information and services ensures that people living with disability have the opportunity to equally participate in community life.

Action	How will we do it?	Year
1.1 Ensure public spaces and public transport are accessible and safe for people with disability.	1.1.1 Support advocacy efforts for better and more accessible public transport and public spaces.	Ongoing
1.2 Audit Council facilities to ensure they are fit for purpose.	1.2.1 Ensure that universal design principles are embedded in all new Council facilities and sites (buildings, footpaths etc).	2025
1.3 Embed disability accessibility principles into the design and delivery of all Council programs and services.	1.3.1 Audit a number of nominated Dept programs/services and develop a template of best practice.	2023-24
	1.3.2 Ensure communications are provided in accessible formats (multi-modal deliver, audio descriptors etc).	2023/ Ongoing
1.4 Promote access and inclusion principles to local businesses to ensure they operate in an inclusive and accessible manner.	1.4.1 Raise awareness of the benefits for local businesses of becoming more accessible and inclusive.	2024

## Key Outcome 2:

### Inclusive communities

Inclusive communities - People living with disability feel valued and understood and that their rights are promoted and protected.

Action	How will we do it?	Year
2.1 Ensure people with disability have access to recreational, accessible festivals, events and social opportunities.	2.1.1 Ensure audience engagement is inclusive (i.e. Auslan interpreters).	2023/ Ongoing
	2.1.2 Develop relationships with Service Providers and people with disability that will help promote and connect opportunities to the recreation and social opportunities they are seeking.	2023
	2.1.3 Review how Council works with sport and recreation community groups and providers to enhance accessibility.	2024
	2.1.4 Work with external providers/organisers to ensure their events and festivals are accessible and inclusive.	2023
	2.1.5 Support the development of a Disability Inclusion and Access Plan for Arts and Culture.	2023

2.2 Ensure Council is actively connecting with people with disability. Involve and support them to access and connect with community services.	2.2.1 Develop a referral network to enable people with disability to access the services they need.	2024
	2.2.2 Identify and promote the best disability inclusion practice from individuals, community, businesses, and Council.	2024-25
2.3 Partner with business and education providers to ensure people with disability have access to education, employment and career development opportunities.	2.3.1 Evaluate disability statistics for the City of Maribyrnong to assist in informing decision making and assisting other organisations working in the disability space.	2023/ Ongoing
	2.3.2 Continue the Western Futures Work Placement Program (in partnership with VU giving paid work experience opportunities to people with disability).	2023
2.4 Recognise the complexities of intersectionality (the multiple forms of disadvantage or inequity that compound challenges and barriers for people with disability) when addressing accessibility and inclusion.	2.4.1 Develop an intersectionality statement and how it applies to disability.	2024

<p>2.5 Support young people with disability to live independently and participate in community life.</p>	<p>2.5.1 Youth Services will support the development of a Youth Disability Advisory Committee (YDAC). Members will be young people (aged 16-25) with disability who have a connection to our municipality. YDAC will provide a forum where young people with disability are considered, consulted and included in issues concerning them.</p>	<p>2023</p>
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## Key Outcome 3:

### Participatory communities

People living with disability are supported to participate in community life and contributing to community decision making.

Action	How will we do it?	Year
3.1 Support people with disability to have their voices heard to inform and influence Council decisions and actions.	3.1.1 As part of an ongoing review of how Council engages with community, include people with disability.	2023
	3.1.2 Develop new and enhance existing processes to encourage participation including engaging with people with disability.	2023
	3.1.3 Continue to develop partnerships with disability organisations and provide spaces, forums and resources to amplify the voices of people with disability.	Ongoing
3.2 Ensure people with disabilities are included in relevant advisory committees so as to actively participate in decision-making processes.	3.2.1 Re-establish the Disability Advisory Committee and other Advisory Committee's ensuring that they are supported by Council staff through regular dissemination of information on relevant issues and meetings organised.	2022



<p>3.3 Ensure people with disability are treated with respect, empathy and understanding by Council staff and community members.</p>	<p>3.3.1 Provide training to Council staff to ensure that they are trained in inclusion and accessibility principles, language etc.</p>	<p>2024</p>
	<p>3.3.2 Facilitate emergency management planning that includes issues of disability (access and inclusion).</p>	<p>2024</p>

# Implementation

Council is committed to delivering the actions outlined in the Disability Action Plan 2022-2026. This will be achieved by:

- Actions integrated into annual business plans and department budgets<sup>3</sup>.
- Integration of actions will be assigned to the relevant department and assigned to an officer who will be responsible for the delivery of outcomes.
- The responsible staff member will work with strategic partners to engage relevant networks to implement the Disability Action Plan.
- A monitoring and reporting mechanism will be developed.
- The progress of the Disability Action Plan 2022-2026 will be reported annually to Council.

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<sup>3</sup> Some actions will be subject to budget allocation.