

DRAFT

Brimbank Activity Centre Strategy

Towards 2050

Acknowledgement of Country

Council respectfully acknowledges and recognises the Wurundjeri and Bunurong peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the land and pays respect to their Elders, past, present and future. For the Traditional Custodians, the lands and waterways in the City of Brimbank have always been a significant trading and meeting place.

We also acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in Brimbank and recognise their ongoing contribution to the cultural life of the community.



The Aunty Joyce and Uncle Boots Mural, St Albans. Featuring local Elders Aunty Joyce and Uncle Boots Muwal, the mural acknowledges their contribution to community, culture and Country. Created by Mike Maka (Makatron) and local Indigenous artists Lee-Anne Clarke and Mandi Barton in 2021.

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Cover image acknowledgement

The cover image features *The Beauty Space and Urban Music Mural* in St Albans, created in 2021 by artists Mike Maka (Makatron), Katherine Gailer (Katira), Conrad Bizjak and Jack Rowland. Inspired by music, movement and cultural diversity, the mural reflects the many communities that call Brimbank home and the connections that shape community life.

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1.0	November 2026	Draft for public consultation	



Keilor Village

Why activity centres matter

Activity centres are, and will continue to be, the heart of everyday community life

Brimbank's activity centres are where everyday life happens. People shop, work, access services, meet friends, spend time and play in them - and increasingly, call them home. They serve residents, workers, businesses, students and visitors from surrounding neighbourhoods, across Brimbank and beyond.

Activity centres are also important to Brimbank's economy. They provide places for businesses to establish and grow, create local jobs, attract investment and visitors and will be increasingly places to live.

They are also places of connection and belonging. Their shops, public spaces, services and activities reflect the identity, culture and diversity of the communities they serve.

What is an activity centre?

A place where shops, businesses, services, community facilities, public spaces and homes come together.

Activity centres range from small groups of local shops to major destinations serving Brimbank and the wider region.



Sun Crescent Pop-Up, Sunshine

Brimbank's activity centre network

Brimbank's activity centres play different roles and serve communities at different scales. They range from the Sunshine CBD and the major centres of St Albans and Sydenham to neighbourhood and local centres that serve everyday needs.

No two activity centres are the same. Some provide everyday goods and services close to home. Larger centres also offer jobs, education, civic facilities and destinations that serve communities across Brimbank and beyond.

Together, these centres form Brimbank's Activity Centre Network. Planning them as an interconnected network helps Council understand their complementary roles, improve access to opportunities, and coordinate growth, development and investment across Brimbank.

Over the next 20 years, Brimbank's communities will continue to grow and change. This Strategy sets the direction for how the network will evolve towards 2050. It will guide Council's decisions and provide greater clarity for communities, businesses and government about the future of these places.

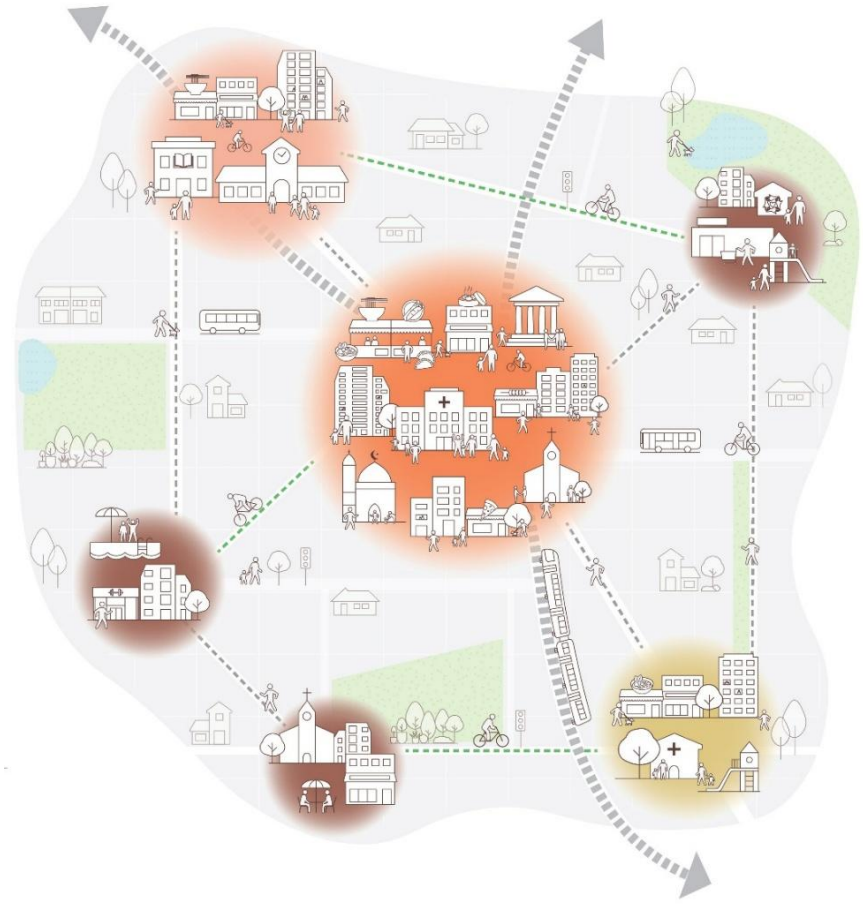


Figure 1: How activity centres work together as a network

Activity centres have different roles, functions and strengths. Considered as a network, they complement one another and collectively support access to homes, jobs, services and opportunities across Brimbank.

Our vision towards 2050

Brimbank's network of activity centres will be the heart of community life, providing access to vibrant, connected places where everyone's everyday needs are met.

From local hubs to larger destinations, they will collectively support more homes, local businesses and jobs, and services. Together, the centres will play complementary roles that support equitable access to opportunities and sustainable long-term growth.

All centres will be welcoming, safe and inclusive places that reflect the diversity of Brimbank's communities.

What we want to achieve



Places for people: welcoming, safe and active centres that reflect local identity and bring people together.



Housing diversity and affordability: more housing choice, including affordable homes, in places where growth can be supported.



Thriving local economies: centres that support businesses, jobs and services and give people reasons to visit.



Movement and access: better connections and more ways to reach jobs, services and community life.

The Place Outcomes later in this document describe these aims in more detail.

Across the activity centre network, Council will:

- **Recognise and care for Country**, respecting Traditional Custodians' continuing connection to land, waters and culture
- **Plan for a changing climate**, creating greener, cooler and more resilient places and supporting environmentally sustainable development
- **Advance equity within and between generations**, recognising that people experience and access places differently, and that decisions made today will shape the homes, services and opportunities available to future communities.



Lunar New Year Celebration, St Albans

About this strategy

This strategy sets a 20-year direction for how Brimbank's activity centres will grow and evolve to meet the needs of current and future communities.

It builds on Brimbank's Community Vision, Council Plan and State policy, and draws on community insights, economic and technical evidence. It identifies each centre's role in the network, where change may be appropriate, and the outcomes Council wants to achieve.

The Strategy will guide Council's planning, investment, services and advocacy. It also gives communities, businesses and partners a clearer picture of the future direction of Brimbank's activity centres.

A clear direction with flexible delivery

Activity centres change over decades, shaped by community needs, government decisions, private investment and other factors beyond Council's direct control.

Delivery will include both interventions that shape long-term change and initiatives that strengthen centres over time. This may include detailed planning, planning scheme changes, infrastructure investment and advocacy, as well as urban design improvements, place management, activations and other local projects that enhance the experience of centres. Council will also use the Strategy to coordinate related plans and investments.

Council will set and review priorities as plans are completed, needs change and new opportunities arise.

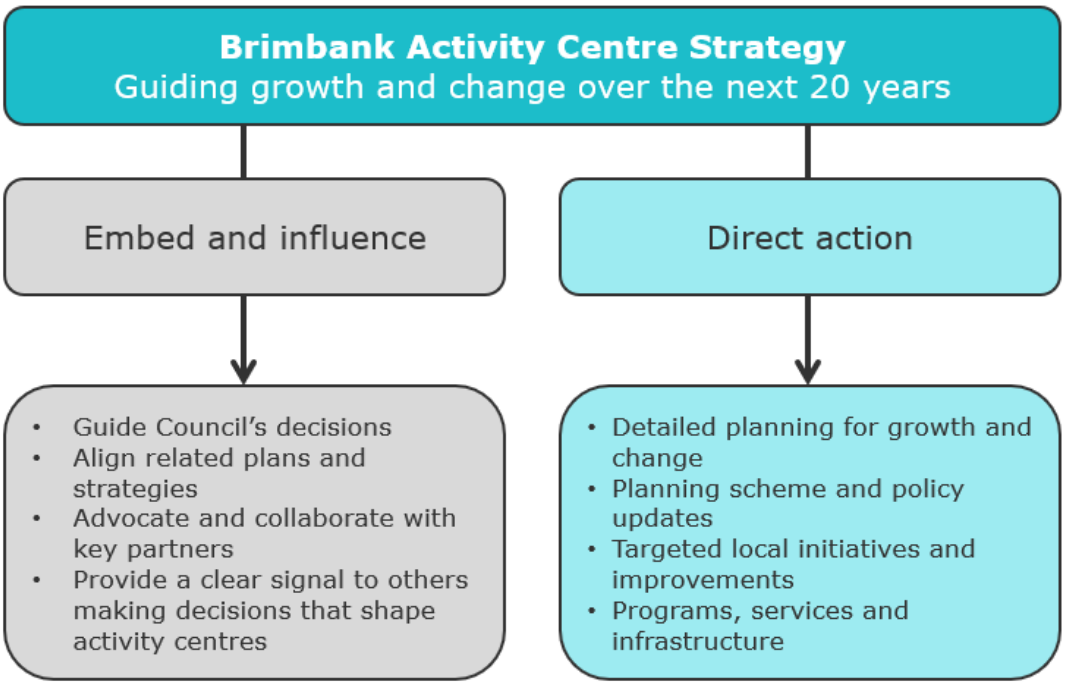


Figure 2: How the Strategy will guide growth and change

Council’s role

Council will take the lead in creating the conditions for Brimbank’s activity centres to thrive.

Council cannot deliver the Strategy’s vision alone. This Strategy is also an invitation to others to contribute their knowledge, ideas and resources, and work with Council to shape the future of Brimbank’s centres.



Figure 3: Council’s key roles in shaping activity centres

The **Delivering the Strategy** section outlines how Council will set priorities and use its delivery toolkit to put the Strategy into action.

Brimbank is changing

Brimbank's activity centres are located on Country with a continuous Aboriginal history spanning thousands of years. Successive periods of settlement, growth, and change have shaped the diverse centres we know today.

Each generation has influenced how our centres feel and function. Understanding that history helps explain why centres have different roles, forms and capacities for change, and why they will need different responses into the future.

How our activity centres have evolved

Country: enduring connection

The Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong Peoples, as Traditional Custodians, have lived on and cared for this Country for thousands of years. Waterways, landscapes and movement routes supported places of gathering, connection and exchange long before today's urban centres developed.

This connection to Country continues and is fundamental to understanding and planning for place.

1830s-1940s: Colonisation, rail and industry

European settlement began reshaping the area from the 1830s. Farming spread across the Keilor Plains and Keilor became an important stopping point on the route to the goldfields during the 1850s.

Rail connections from the 1880s supported a new pattern of growth. The radial plan of St Albans and more standard subdivisions in Sunshine developed around rail connections to Melbourne. By the early 20th century, industry was transforming Melbourne's west. The Sunshine Harvester Works became a major employer and the instigator of early planned suburban estates for employees in Sunshine and Albion, which established Sunshine as an important industrial, commercial and community centre.



Keilor Shire Hall, Keilor (c.1927).

Historic townships such as Keilor formed some of the earliest foundations of Brimbank's activity centre network.

These early patterns of settlement, transport and employment still shape the network today.

1950s-1980s: Post-war growth

Rapid post-war growth transformed Brimbank as new housing, suburbs, roads, shopping areas and community facilities expanded around established centres.

Migration following the Second World War, and later waves of migration from increasingly diverse parts of the world, reshaped Brimbank's communities. Centres such as Sunshine and St Albans became important places for businesses, services, cultural life and social connection.

As suburban expansion continued, many newer neighbourhoods were planned around car travel, with curving streets and cul-de-sacs, while shopping areas increasingly incorporated substantial car parking. Unlike earlier rail-based centres, many newer shopping areas developed away from railway stations, with access more dependent on cars and bus services.

This growth established many of the neighbourhood centres that continue to support everyday community life today.

1980s-early 2000s: Suburban expansion

Growth continued into Brimbank's north and west, including Taylors Lakes and Sydenham, bringing new housing, infrastructure and services. Larger planned shopping destinations, such as Watergardens, emerged to serve growing suburban catchments. These centres were designed around car travel and substantial areas of parking, with shops concentrated in large complexes rather than along local streets.

These centres served large suburban catchments, but surrounding street layouts, major roads and large car parks often made them harder to reach on foot.



Watergardens Shopping Centre

By this time, Brimbank's network included historic townships, rail-based centres, shopping strips and enclosed retail centres: places built for different patterns of movement and activity.

2000s-today: Renewal and transformation

As opportunities for outward expansion reduced, renewal of established areas became more important. New communities such as Cairnlea and River Valley showed how former industrial land could accommodate new housing and services.

Sunshine's role as a regional centre for Melbourne's west continued to strengthen, supported by major rail investments including Regional Rail Link and the Metro Tunnel, which expanded connections to regional Victoria and destinations across Melbourne.

Long-term initiatives such as Transforming Brimbank established a vision for leveraging major infrastructure investment and strengthening Sunshine and the wider municipality. Major redevelopment opportunities such as Albion Quarter show how former industrial and underutilised land can potentially support new neighbourhoods, jobs and services.

Each phase of Brimbank's growth has left a different legacy, creating a diverse network of centres with distinct histories, strengths and opportunities.

Brimbank today

Brimbank's activity centres provide places to shop, work, learn, access services and participate in community life. Many have distinctive local businesses, food and cultural offerings, and established community identities.

Centres vary in their size, physical form and connections to surrounding neighbourhoods. Street layouts, land ownership, public transport access, surrounding uses and environmental conditions influence how each centre functions and its opportunities for change.

Understanding these differences helps identify what growth and investment are appropriate for each place.

Brimbank at a glance

- More than 50 activity centres across Brimbank
- Around 200,000 residents, projected to reach 230,000 by 2046
- Almost half of our residents were born overseas
- More than half our residents speak a language other than English at home
- One in three renting households experience rental stress
- Nearly 490,000 square metres of occupied retail floorspace across Brimbank's activity centres.
- Around 96,000 square metres of office floorspace across Brimbank's activity centres, concentrated mainly in Sunshine.
- A distinctive food and dining centre, with diverse restaurants and speciality food shops across the network

Figures are rounded. Population figures are based on 2024 estimates and projections to 2046. Community characteristics are based on 2021 Census data. Retail and office floorspace figures are based on Charter Check Kramer economic analysis (2024).



St Albans Market

Brimbank's next phase of growth

Brimbank is entering a new phase of growth and change

Much of the municipality developed through outward suburban expansion. As opportunities for large-scale expansion reduce, future growth will increasingly need to be accommodated in established areas.

This creates opportunities for more homes, jobs and services in well-located places. It also makes coordination more important. Growth needs to be supported by transport, infrastructure, community facilities, services, open space and public spaces.

Centres differ in their capacity for change. In some places, existing street and block patterns, land ownership, environmental constraints or surrounding uses make change more complex. Growth will not occur evenly across Brimbank, and each centre will need a response suited to its role and local conditions.

Growth and renewal can provide more housing choices, support local businesses and jobs, and create opportunities to improve services, facilities and public spaces. Realising these benefits requires coordinated planning and investment to ensure infrastructure, services and community facilities keep pace with change.

What is shaping the future of our centres?

As Brimbank continues to grow and change, our activity centres will play an increasingly important role in supporting housing, jobs, services and community life.

Key factors shaping the future of our centres include:

- **Population growth** in Brimbank and across Melbourne's west
- **Demographic change**, including an ageing population
- **Housing needs changing**, including a need for more diverse and affordable housing options
- **Macroeconomic conditions** and government policy
- **Major projects**, including public and private investment in infrastructure
- **Technology** changing how people shop, work and access services
- **Climate change** and associated environmental impacts
- **Employment patterns** and business needs changing

Planning for future generations

What choices do we need to make today so people can find a home, access what they need and stay connected to their communities in the decades ahead?

Planning ahead gives Council a chance to shape that change and realise its benefits, including more housing choices, local jobs and services, and better access to the places people need. It can also help people stay connected to their communities, while ensuring growth is supported by infrastructure and the qualities people value about their centres.

Council cannot predict or control every change over the next 20 years. This Strategy sets a direction across the network and provides a basis for more detailed planning in individual centres as needs and opportunities emerge. That planning will examine local needs and opportunities and guide how individual centres change over time.

How major transport investment shapes our centres

Access to frequent, reliable public transport is an important factor in supporting growth, housing, jobs and services in activity centres. Major transport investment can improve access, attract investment and create opportunities for new homes, jobs and services.

The Metro Tunnel strengthens connections between Sunshine, St Albans and Sydenham, improving access between Brimbank's centres and destinations across Melbourne. Improved connectivity supports access to jobs, education, services and recreation while making Brimbank's centres more attractive and accessible to workers, students, visitors and customers. Regional rail connections through Sunshine extend that reach further into regional Victoria.

Future projects, such as Melbourne Airport Rail and Melton Line electrification, could create further opportunities for growth and change. Their timing and delivery are outside Council's direct control, so the Strategy provides a basis for responding as plans develop.



Watergardens Station. The Metro Tunnel strengthens connections between Sydenham, St Albans and Sunshine, improving access between Brimbank's centres and destinations across Melbourne and regional Victoria.

The Activity Centre Network

Planning for a network of centres

This Strategy establishes Brimbank's Activity Centre Network as a framework for decisions about growth, infrastructure, investment and services.

Centres play different roles, and people use them for different needs. Someone may shop at a local centre, visit Sydenham for major retail and entertainment, and travel to Sunshine for work, education or specialised services. Each centre's role, opportunities and constraints will shape how it changes over time.

Planning centres as a network helps Council consider how different centres work together, guide growth towards suitable locations and improve access to opportunities across Brimbank. People may rely on more than one centre to meet their needs. For nearby centres, detailed planning can explore how their shops, services and facilities could complement one another, alongside improvements to walking, cycling and public transport connections.

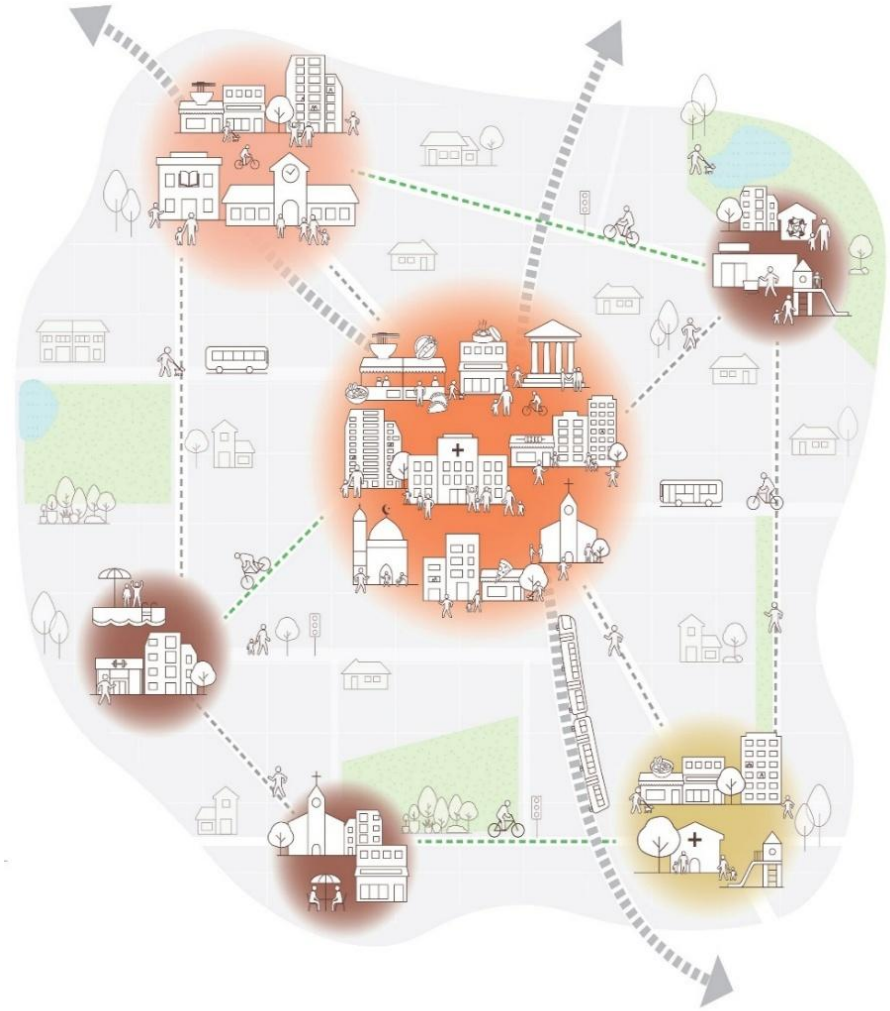


Figure 1: How activity centres work together as a network

A place-based approach to growth and change

State planning policy directs more housing and employment growth to activity centres and surrounding walkable neighbourhoods with good access to jobs, services and public transport. This Strategy considers what that means for Brimbank: where growth is appropriate, how it can strengthen centres, and what infrastructure and services are needed to support liveability.

More detailed place-based planning is needed to help unlock opportunities for housing and employment growth and guide how centres and their surrounding neighbourhoods change over time.

Where detailed planning will focus

Strong public transport connections, significant employment and service roles, and opportunities for housing growth position Sunshine, St Albans and Sydenham as a particular focus for detailed planning.

The Strategy will also inform a program of detailed planning for other centres over time, which will be informed by local needs, opportunities and constraints.

Depending on the place, this work may take the form of a structure plan, neighbourhood plan or another framework for coordinating growth and change.

What will detailed planning do?

Detailed planning will apply the Strategy's broader directions to individual centres and their surrounding neighbourhoods. It will work out how each place can accommodate growth and change – including housing, employment and services - and what is needed to support it.

It will consider public and private land, bringing together:

- Where different uses and development may be appropriate
- How the design and scale of buildings can contribute to the place
- What infrastructure, facilities, services and open space are needed to support future growth and community needs
- How streets, public spaces, movement and access can support a growing community
- How growth can improve liveability, strengthen local character and build on what people value about a place

The area considered will depend on the place. It may include the surrounding walkable neighbourhood, nearby smaller centres and important public transport connections.

Working with key partners, this planning will provide a basis for coordinating development and investment over time. It may inform changes to the Brimbank Planning Scheme, including zoning and building design requirements, and identify priorities for infrastructure, public-space improvements, services and other projects.

Brimbank's role in Melbourne's west

Brimbank occupies a strategic position in Melbourne's rapidly growing western region.

Its centres, employment areas and transport connections provide access to jobs, services and opportunities for communities across Melbourne's west and regional Victoria. As the region grows, Brimbank's Activity Centre Network will play an increasingly important role in supporting housing, employment, services and investment.

Sunshine has a metropolitan role and is a State priority location for jobs, innovation, services, city-shaping investment and growth. Together with major destinations, like St Albans and Sydenham, and a network of smaller centres, it forms part of a broader network that supports communities across Brimbank and beyond. Strengthening Sunshine as the CBD of Melbourne's west creates opportunities beyond the centre itself, including better connections and improved access to jobs and services across Brimbank.

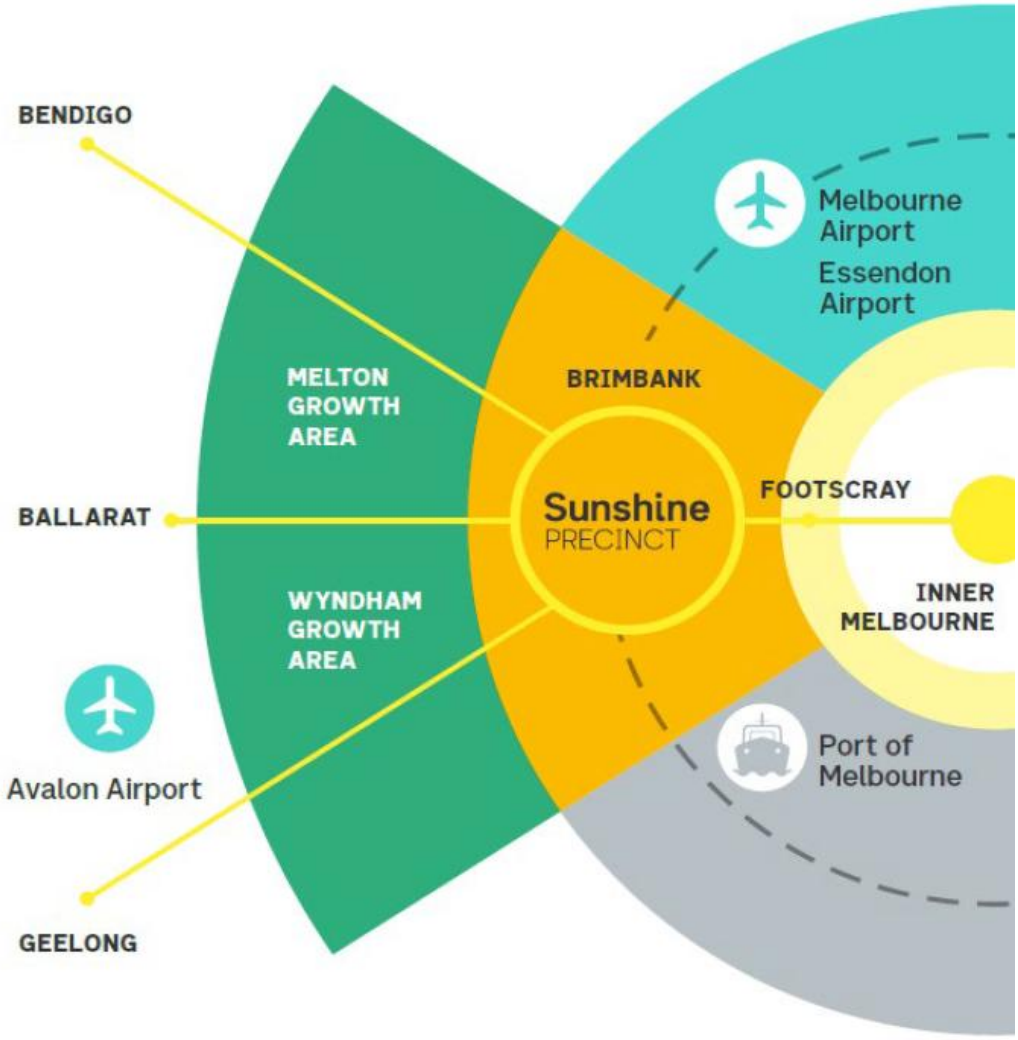


Figure 4: Brimbank's strategic role in Melbourne's west

Sunshine Metropolitan Centre – Melbourne's CBD of the West

Sunshine is one of Melbourne's most significant metropolitan centres and the civic, economic and cultural heart of Melbourne's west.

Major transport investment, together with Sunshine's strengths in jobs, education, health, civic and cultural activity, is creating opportunities that extend beyond Sunshine and benefit communities across Brimbank and Melbourne's west.



Vietnamese Museum Australia and Wominjeka Plaza, Sunshine

Opened in 2026, the precinct combines Australia's first Vietnamese museum, which shares the histories, cultures and experiences of Vietnamese Australians, with a public space that honours Traditional Custodians and celebrates Brimbank's refugee and multicultural communities.

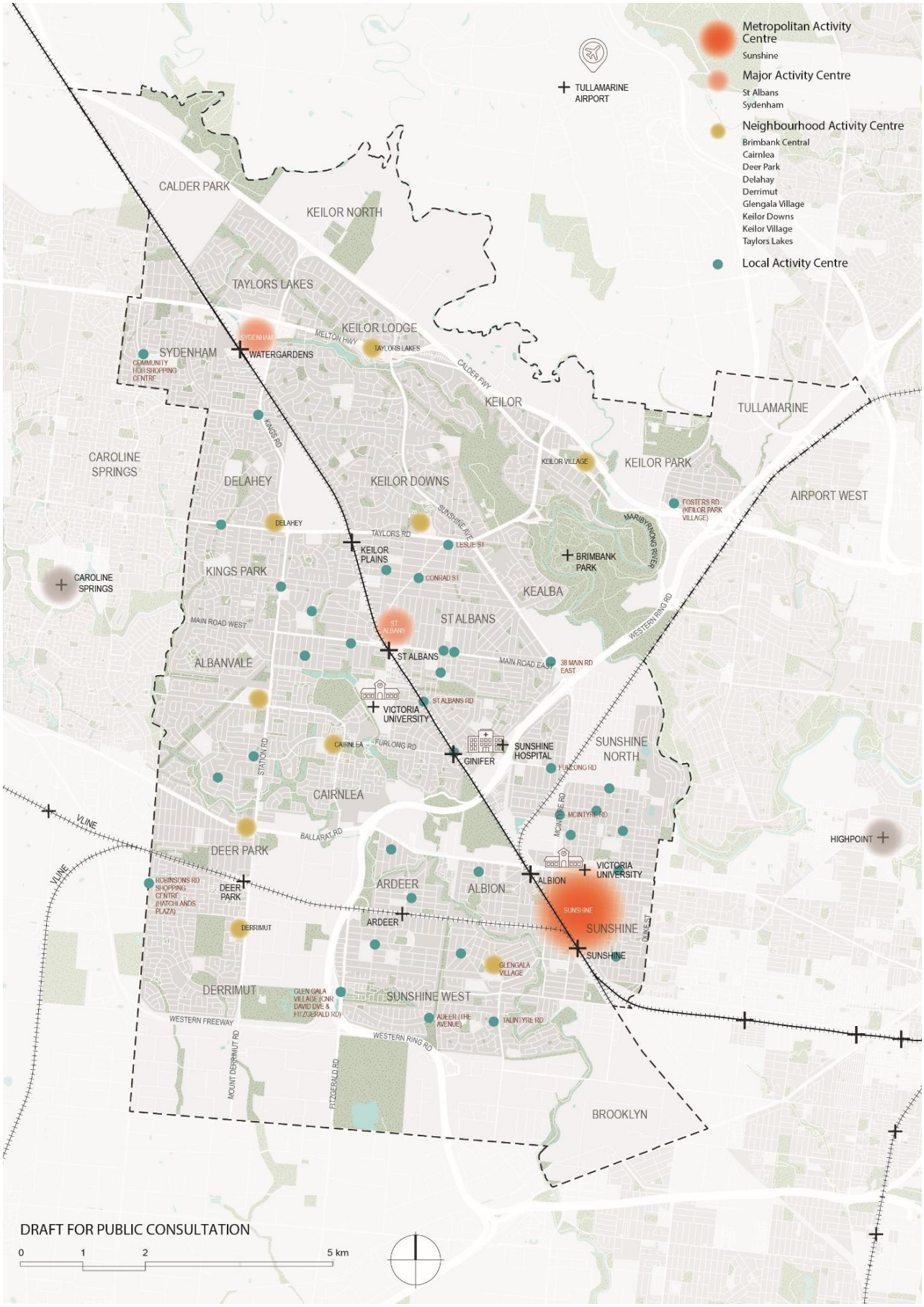
How centres are classified

Activity centres serve different communities and perform different functions. Some provide everyday goods and services close to home; others serve people across Brimbank, Melbourne's west and beyond. A centre's role reflects its transport access, jobs, services, local identity and physical and environmental conditions, as well as its capacity for growth.

The classifications below identify the roles centres play within the Activity Centre Network. They reflect existing functions, strengths and capacity for growth and change, and provide a consistent basis for planning, investment and advocacy. Opportunities for growth and renewal will depend on each centre's local conditions and further planning.

Activity centre classifications

	**Metropolitan Centre** (Sunshine CBD) **Role:** A metropolitan destination serving Melbourne's west. **Key functions and opportunities:** • Major concentration of jobs, education, health, civic and cultural functions • Major transport interchange • Significant opportunities for mixed-use, housing and renewal • Focus for transformational investment
	**Major Centres** (St Albans, Sydenham) **Role:** Centres serving broad communities across Brimbank and beyond. **Key functions and opportunities:** • Wide range of retail, services and employment • Strong public transport connections • Significant opportunities for housing and centre renewal • Important locations for growth and investment
	**Neighbourhood Centres** **Role:** Centres serving surrounding communities **Key functions and opportunities:** • A broad mix of local shops and services • Opportunities to strengthen walking, cycling and public transport connections to surrounding neighbourhoods • Distinct local identities • May have housing opportunities, depending on local circumstances
	**Local Centres** **Role:** Smaller, walkable centres supporting everyday needs. **Key functions and opportunities:** • Places for everyday interaction and gathering • Local shops and access to everyday services • Small-scale housing opportunities where appropriate • Flexibility to respond to future local needs



Map 1: Brimbank's Activity Centre Network

This map identifies the strategic role of each classified activity centre across the municipality. Together, the network supports access to housing, jobs, services and community destinations while guiding long-term planning and investment across the municipality.

Why some areas have fewer local centres

The location and number of centres reflect how different parts of Brimbank developed. In the north, neighbourhoods with more spread-out housing were planned around car travel, with fewer small local centres and larger shopping centres serving people from a wider area. Some of these areas also have more limited public transport connections. Major roads and freeways can separate neighbourhoods from centres and make walking and cycling less direct.

Improving walking, cycling and public transport connections will be important so people can reach everyday shops and services more easily, particularly those who cannot drive or do not have access to a car.



Fosters Road, Keilor Park

Supporting local nodes

Local nodes are sites or pockets of commercial or mixed-use land in neighbourhoods that support small shops, services and community uses. They support local convenience and neighbourhood walkability but do not perform the broader role of an activity centre. For this reason, local nodes are not classified or mapped as part of Brimbank's Activity Centre Network.

Future planning should seek to retain opportunities for local commercial and community activity. Where residential redevelopment occurs, ground-floor design should support active street frontages and maintain flexibility for future commercial or community spaces where appropriate.

The network will continue to evolve

Brimbank's Activity Centre Network is a long-term framework, but centres and their roles may evolve as communities grow and local conditions change.

New transport connections and opportunities for renewal may support new centres, strengthen existing centres and influence how the network evolves over time. These changes could bring more jobs and services closer to home and create opportunities for housing near public transport.

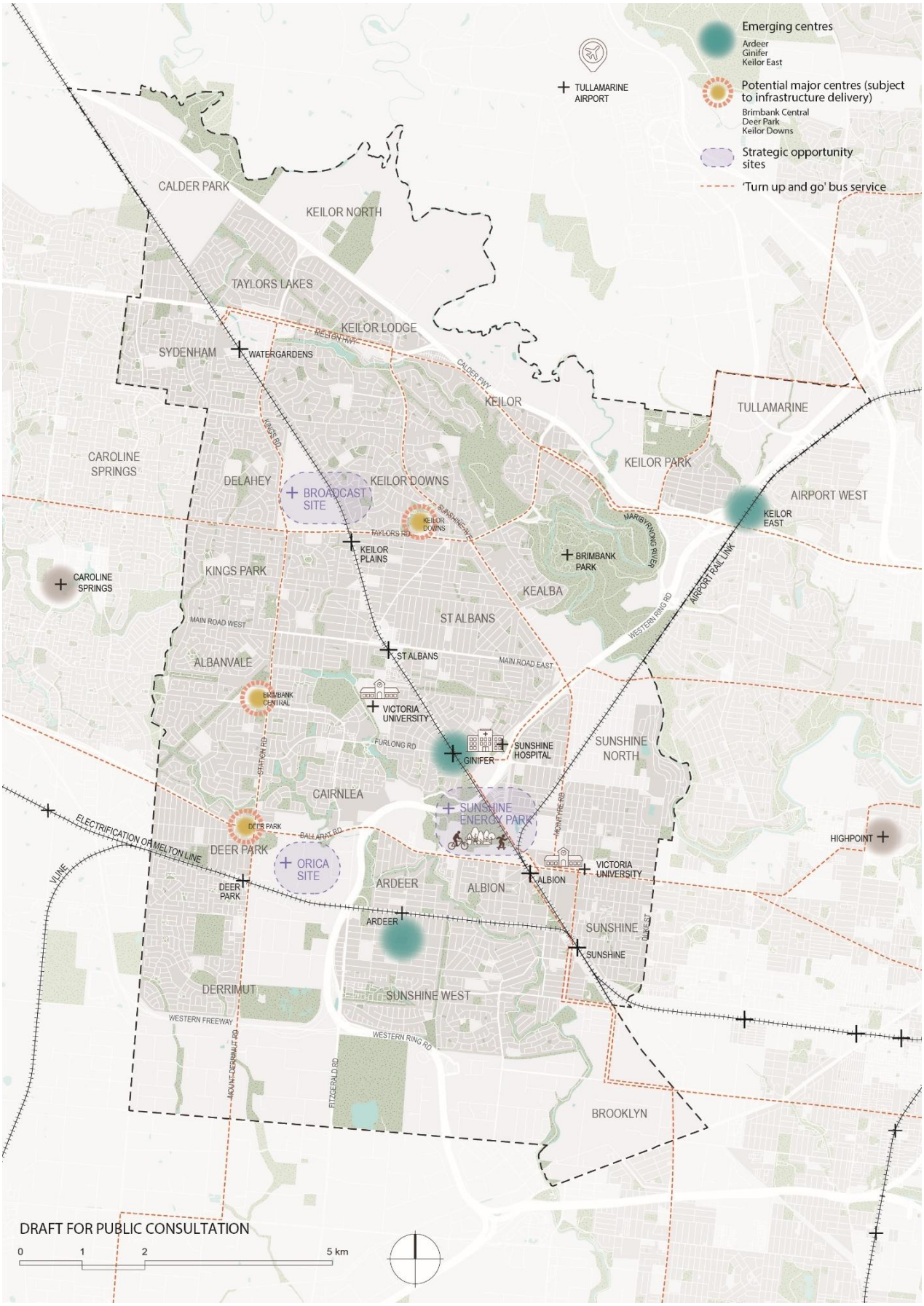
The following map identifies potential areas for change. Further investigation, detailed place-based planning and community engagement will inform future planning, service and investment decisions. Council will review the network over time as circumstances change.

How transport investment could connect communities to jobs and services

Examples include Ginifer and Keilor East, where major transport investment is creating opportunities that may influence the future role and function of centres.

Ginifer could grow its role as a centre, building on Metro Tunnel services and its proximity to Sunshine Hospital and Victoria University. At Keilor East, a future Melbourne Airport Rail station could create an opportunity for a new centre.

Both locations could improve access to jobs, services, health and education. Planning for them could extend these benefits across Brimbank, while creating opportunities for housing, businesses and services. Any future changes would require further planning, and Council will continue to work with partners to explore opportunities as they emerge.



Map 2: Potential future changes to Brimbank's Activity Centre Network

This map highlights locations where future infrastructure investment, urban renewal or strategic planning may support changes to the Activity Centre Network over time. Strategic opportunity sites are shown as context only and do not indicate a preferred future planning outcome. Any future changes would be informed by further place-based planning and community engagement.

Delivering the Strategy

The Strategy will be delivered over time through Council's ongoing work and priority actions. The approach will vary between centres and adapt as needs, evidence and opportunities change.

Council will use the delivery tools below, alongside partnerships and advocacy, to make progress on the Strategy. Some projects will require coordinated work across Council and with other organisations.

Council's delivery toolkit

Strategic planning and policy	Council can guide land use, development and coordinated investment through: • Detailed planning for individual centres and precincts (such as Structure Plans and Neighbourhood Plans) • Targeted investigations and guidance • Planning Scheme Amendments and other planning controls • Infrastructure, asset and service planning
Infrastructure and capital works investment	Council can plan, coordinate and invest in: • Streets, public spaces and civic spaces • Walking, cycling, local road and accessibility improvements • Community, cultural, leisure and recreation facilities • Council land, property and other assets
Programs and services	Council can support activity centres through: • Community, cultural, leisure and recreation programs • Place management • Events, programming and activation • Business and trader support • Community development and local initiatives

Embedding the Strategy into planning decisions

A Planning Scheme Amendment will be needed to embed the Strategy in the Brimbank Planning Scheme to guide future planning decisions.

Detailed planning for individual centres and precincts may identify further changes to planning controls.

Working with partners

Activity centres are dynamic places shaped by many people and organisations. Council will help coordinate partners around shared priorities and work with them to support planning, investment and delivery.

Delivering the Strategy will require coordinated action between Council and its partners. Council will provide local leadership, bring partners together and use tools available to it to pursue shared outcomes.

Key partners include:

- **Traditional Custodians and First Nations**, who provide cultural authority and knowledge of Country and guide outcomes that respect cultural heritage, values and ongoing connection to place.

- **State and Federal Government, infrastructure agencies and service providers**, which set policy and investment directions and plan, fund and deliver major infrastructure and services.

- **Neighbouring councils,** which are responsible for activity centres that also serve some Brimbank residents and work with Council to coordinate planning, transport, infrastructure and services across municipal boundaries.

- **Landowners, developers, investors and housing providers**, which invest in and deliver housing, employment, commercial development and the renewal of land and buildings.

- **Local businesses, traders and business associations**, which provide services, create jobs and contribute to the activity and identity of centres.

- **Institutions, community organisations and the not-for-profit sector**, which provide education, health, housing, community services and local initiatives.

- **The broader community**, whose lived experience, priorities and participation help shape local places, services, events and community life.

Partnerships will take different forms across the network. They may involve joint planning and delivery, coordinated investment, community- or business-led initiatives, or advocacy for infrastructure, services, funding and policy change.

Council will collaborate with partners to deliver this Strategy

Setting priorities

Council will identify priority work across its delivery toolkit. This may involve new projects, continuing existing work or coordinating activities already underway.

Priorities will be informed by the approach outlined in the next section, **How Council will make decisions**, as well as local need, evidence, opportunities, project readiness and available resources. Projects requiring additional resources will be considered through Council's planning and annual budget processes.

Implementation planning will establish actions, responsibilities and timing. Priorities will be reviewed over time as needs, evidence and opportunities change.



How Council will make decisions

This Strategy provides a decision-making framework to guide Council's priorities and ongoing decisions across the Activity Centre Network. It recognises that centres have different roles, needs, opportunities and constraints.

Council will take a place-led approach, starting with each centre's role, context and needs. The Strategic Directions and Place Outcomes set out below will guide this approach. When setting priorities and making decisions, Council will:

- **Consider the centre's role in the network** and its relationship with other centres.
- **Apply the Strategic Directions** to identify the work needed and guide Council's decisions and actions.
- **Consider the Place Outcomes** to clarify what Council is working towards and what evidence it could look for to assess progress.
- **Use evidence**, including monitoring and community insights, to identify gaps and direct effort where it can bring the greatest overall community benefit.

A monitoring approach will be developed through implementation.

Strategic directions

These directions guide change across Brimbank's Activity Centre Network. The **"Council will"** statements outline how Council intends to put each direction into practice. Implementation planning and Council's ongoing processes will determine specific projects and timing.

The Strategy is guided by six Strategic Directions:

- **Strengthen the Activity Centre Network**
- **Advance equitable access and outcomes**
- **Focus housing and employment growth where it can be supported**
- **Coordinate infrastructure and services to support growth**
- **Create distinctive, welcoming and resilient places**
- **Partner to deliver change**

Strategic Direction 1
Strengthen the Activity Centre Network

What this means
Brimbank's centres have different roles and work together as a network to meet people's everyday needs. Council will consider how centres relate to one another when planning for growth, services and investment, including opportunities for nearby centres to complement each other. Smaller centres provide local places to meet and access everyday goods and services, even where substantial growth is not expected.

Council will:
- **Use** the Activity Centre Network to guide planning, investment and advocacy.
- **Investigate** opportunities for nearby centres to complement one another, including through better walking, cycling and public transport connections and coordinated planning across clusters of centres and surrounding neighbourhoods.
- **Leverage** major investment in Sunshine to strengthen its role as the CBD of Melbourne's west and other appropriate opportunities across Brimbank.
- **Consider** opportunities for coordinated planning, investment and activation within corridors and clusters where this can deliver greater benefit across multiple centres and surrounding communities.
- **Review** the Activity Centre Network as communities, infrastructure and opportunities change. Where warranted, investigate changes to existing centres' roles or develop a vision and planning principles for locations with potential to become centres.

Strategic Direction 2
Advance equitable access and outcomes

What this means
People access and experience activity centres differently. Gender, age, ability, culture, income and household circumstances can combine to create different needs and barriers. Council will apply a gender and intersectional equity lens to its decisions to address these barriers and help ensure the benefits of growth and investment are shared across Brimbank's current and future communities.

Change will happen over many years. When making decisions today, Council will consider how people's needs change across different life stages, as well as the needs of future generations who cannot participate in today's decisions.

Council will:
- **Apply** a gender and intersectional equity lens to planning, investment and decision-making.
- **Use** evidence and community engagement to identify barriers and guide planning and investment priorities.
- **Use** population forecasts, housing targets and other evidence to anticipate the needs of future communities and inform planning and investment.
- **Plan** for places that are welcoming, safe and accessible for people with different needs and circumstances.
- **Investigate** opportunities to increase social, affordable and key worker housing through significant redevelopment, urban renewal and government-led projects.

Strategic Direction 3
Focus housing and employment growth where it can be supported

What this means

Housing and employment growth is supported in and near activity centres where it can contribute to liveable, well-serviced places. The appropriate location and scale of growth will depend on access to transport, jobs, services and infrastructure, as well as environmental constraints, local characteristics and compatibility with surrounding uses.

Growth should strengthen centres while respecting the qualities people value about them. Where infrastructure or services need to improve, Council will work with relevant providers to support their delivery in step with growth.

Improved public transport or major redevelopment opportunities may create new potential for growth. Detailed place-based planning may be needed to guide land use and development, integrate change with surrounding neighbourhoods and identify the infrastructure and services needed to support it.

While the State Government sets the broader planning framework, Council has an important role as a planning authority in keeping local planning policy and controls up to date. Detailed planning and Planning Scheme Amendments help Council guide growth and renewal and provide a clear basis for planning decisions.

Council will:

- **Guide** the location, scale and type of housing and employment growth according to each centre's role, transport access, local context and capacity for change.
- **Undertake** detailed planning for Metropolitan, Major and Neighbourhood Centres and their surrounding neighbourhoods, including nearby Local Centres where relevant. Priorities, scope and timing will consider each centre's role, readiness for change, public transport access and community needs.
- **Review and update** planning controls and built form guidance where needed to support each centre's role and manage growth.
- **Encourage** a greater diversity of housing, including affordable and key worker housing, where opportunities arise.
- **Consider** whether existing infrastructure and services can support growth, and what additional investment is needed to maintain liveability as communities grow.
- **Consider** opportunities for housing and mixed-use development in and near appropriate centres where growth can be supported by public transport access, infrastructure and local conditions.
- **Consider** environmental risks when planning for centres to ensure the health and safety of current and future communities.
- **Support** the renewal of existing centres in ways suited to their form and role, including the reuse of vacant premises in street-based centres and a broader mix of uses, including housing, in enclosed centres.

Strategic Direction 4
Coordinate infrastructure and services to support growth

What this means
Housing and employment growth needs to be matched by timely investment in transport, community facilities, services, open space and public spaces. Council will identify existing gaps and future needs, coordinate its own planning and investment, and advocate for other levels of government and service providers to deliver what growing communities need.

Council will:
- **Integrate** land use planning with transport, infrastructure, asset and service planning.
- **Identify** existing gaps and future needs for transport, infrastructure, services, community, leisure and recreation facilities, open space and public spaces through place-based planning and other evidence. Use these findings to inform Council's capital works, service planning and advocacy.
- **Consider** centre roles, future growth and community needs when planning and managing Council's land, buildings and other assets, including opportunities to use them to meet changing needs.
- **Advocate** to the State Government and other responsible agencies for infrastructure and services to be planned, funded and delivered in step with growth.
- **Seek** opportunities to coordinate public and private investment for wider community benefit.

Strategic Direction 5
Create distinctive, welcoming and resilient places

What this means
Activity centres are distinctive places that reflect their history, identity, character and communities. Council's planning, investment, services and programs can strengthen these qualities and support public life, local businesses, cultural expression and visitation. Together, these activities can help create welcoming, greener and more resilient centres.

Council will:
- **Undertake** initiatives that recognise and celebrate local identity, heritage, culture and Aboriginal connection to Country in centres.
- **Seek** opportunities to support arts, cultural activities and public art that reflect local communities, add to the vibrancy and identity of centres and attract visitors.
- **Plan** for and support welcoming public spaces, activities and programs that encourage community life and social connection.
- **Continue** existing place management programs in Sunshine and St Albans and consider other centres where they evolve to play a major role in the network, have an incorporated business association and have worked with Council to establish a funding mechanism such as a special rate for marketing and business development.
- **Identify** opportunities for public realm, walking, cycling and accessibility improvements through planning for individual centres, and use these findings to inform future projects.
- **Seek** opportunities to better integrate enclosed and privately owned centres with surrounding streets, public spaces and neighbourhoods.
- **Identify and address** safety and accessibility barriers through place-based planning, community input and site assessments.
- **Consider** opportunities to make centres greener, cooler and more climate-resilient.
- **Encourage** development that supports a mix of uses, active streets and safe, welcoming places throughout the day and evening.

Strategic Direction 6
Partner to deliver change

What this means
Council cannot deliver the Strategy's vision alone. It will work with Traditional Custodians, government, neighbouring councils, communities, businesses, landowners, institutions and service providers to align priorities, coordinate investment and advocate for the resources and decisions needed to support long-term change.

Council will:
- **Engage** with Traditional Custodians and communities to shape local planning and place outcomes.
- **Engage** with government, infrastructure agencies and service providers to coordinate **and** support planning and investment.
- Work with businesses, landowners, developers, housing providers and institutions to support investment and redevelopment that delivers community benefit.
- **Work** with neighbouring councils to coordinate planning and improve access to centres that serve communities across municipal boundaries.
- **Advocate** for the infrastructure, services, funding and policy changes needed to deliver the Strategy.
- **Consider** ways to make it easier for businesses to establish, renew and grow in activity centres.
- **Consider** opportunities to support community and business-led initiatives that encourage visitation and activation across centres, subject to available resources.

Planning as infrastructure improves

Rail electrification could strengthen public transport connections to Deer Park, potentially supporting a larger role for the centre in the Activity Centre Network.

Improved transport access and better connections between the station, centre and surrounding areas could create new opportunities for the area. If rail electrification proceeds, detailed planning could help shape the centre's future role, guide growth where appropriate and identify improvements needed to support the centre's future role and the needs of residents, workers and visitors.



Ballarat Road, Deer Park Activity Centre

Place outcomes

The Strategic Directions describe how Council will guide change. The four Place Outcomes describe how successful centres should feel and function over time, drawing on the Vision.

The outcomes apply across the Activity Centre Network, but how they are applied will vary according to each centre's role, community needs, local context and capacity for change.

For each Place Outcome, the examples below show the types of information Council could use to understand change, track progress and guide decisions. Not all information will be relevant to every centre. Council will develop a practical monitoring approach as it implements the Strategy.

Successful activity centres are more than shopping destinations or locations for housing growth.

They are mixed-use places where homes, jobs, businesses, services, community facilities and public spaces come together to support community life throughout the day and evening.

The Strategy is working towards four Place Outcomes:

- **Places for People**
- **Housing diversity and affordability**
- **Thriving local economies**
- **Movement and access**

Place Outcome 1
Places for People

What we're seeking to achieve

Activity centres are welcoming, active and safe places that support community life. Reflecting their role and context, they provide streets, public spaces and community, cultural, recreation and leisure destinations where people can meet, participate and spend time. They reflect local identity, culture and stories.

In practice, this means:

- Public spaces invite people to meet, spend time and participate in community life.
- Streets, public spaces and buildings are welcoming, accessible and safe, with space for walking, gathering and other activities that support community life.
- A mix of uses, active street frontages and buildings that overlook public spaces support activity and help people feel safer.
- Centres foster social connection and a sense of belonging.
- Local identity, culture and stories are reflected through buildings, public spaces, activities and events.
- New development and renewal contribute to each centre's character and public life.
- Enclosed and privately owned centres have better connections to surrounding streets, public spaces and neighbourhoods.
- Greener, cooler places help communities connect with nature and adapt to a changing climate.

Evidence that could help track progress:

- **Activity in centres:** patterns of activity at different times of day, including who uses centres, where data is available.
- **Public realm quality:** improvements to public spaces, active frontages and changes in safety and accessibility barriers.
- **Belonging and local culture:** community feedback on belonging, alongside spaces, events and cultural features that reflect local identities, cultures and stories.



Place Outcome 2
Housing diversity and affordability

What we're seeking to achieve

Well-connected and serviced activity centres and their walkable catchments offer more diverse and affordable housing choices. People with different needs, incomes, household types and stages of life have more opportunities to find a suitable home and remain connected to their community as their needs change.

In practice, this means:

- More housing in suitable locations where growth can be supported.
- A range of housing types, sizes and tenures for different households, incomes and stages of life.
- More opportunities for social, affordable and key worker housing where appropriate.
- Homes with good access to public transport, jobs, services, community facilities and public spaces.
- Growth is supported by the transport, infrastructure and services that existing and future communities need.
- New housing that contributes to walkable, active and well-serviced neighbourhoods.

Evidence that could help track progress:

- **Housing options:** changes in the mix of housing types, sizes and tenures in and near centres.
- **Affordable housing:** the number and proportion of social and affordable homes in and near centres, where data is available.
- **Growth near centres:** the number of new homes built in and near activity centres.



Place Outcome 3
Thriving local economies

What we're seeking to achieve

Across the network, activity centres provide jobs, services and destinations that attract residents, workers and visitors. They support local businesses, and a mix of activities suited to each centre’s role, while adapting to changing community needs and economic opportunities.

In practice, this means:

- A mix of businesses, jobs, shops, services, community facilities, recreation, leisure and other activities suited to each centre.
- Complementary uses that give people reasons to visit and spend time in centres, including evenings where appropriate.
- Opportunities for local businesses and traders to establish, grow and adapt.
- Jobs, services and destinations that Brimbank’s communities can access.
- Investment and the reuse of underused land and buildings that can support centre renewal.
- Centres that can adapt to changing economic conditions and ways of working and shopping.

Evidence that could help track progress:
- **Jobs and businesses:** changes in the number and mix of jobs and businesses.
- **Mix of uses:** the range of activities within centres.
- **Commercial activity:** changes in occupied and vacant commercial premises.
- **Investment and renewal:** investment in centres and the reuse of vacant or underused land and buildings.



Place Outcome 4
Movement and access

What we're seeking to achieve
Activity centres and transport are planned together to improve access to jobs, shops, services and community facilities. Centres are easy to reach and move around, connect with surrounding neighbourhoods and other destinations, and offer choice in how people travel.

In practice, this means:
- Land use and transport work together to improve access to everyday needs and opportunities.
- Clear, direct, safe and accessible routes connect shops, services, public spaces, transport and surrounding neighbourhoods.
- Large sites and enclosed centres provide better connections through and around them where opportunities arise.
- Walking, cycling, public transport and vehicle access are planned together to support different travel needs and minimise conflicts between users.
- Walking, cycling and public transport become more convenient and attractive choices for trips to centres.
- Public transport provides convenient connections to and between centres.
- Nearby centres serving complementary roles are connected by comfortable walking and cycling routes.

Evidence that could help track progress:
- **Access to opportunities:** the number of people who can reach jobs, shops, services and community facilities within a defined travel time.
- **Sustainable travel:** changes in the proportion of trips to centres made by walking, cycling and public transport.
- **Public transport:** availability and frequency of services to centres.
- **Accessibility improvements:** identified barriers addressed in streets, crossings, paths and public spaces.

Monitoring and review

Council will track its work and how centres are changing to understand progress towards the Vision and guide future decisions.

What progress looks like

Across the Activity Centre Network, progress will be reflected in:

- **Better access:** people can more easily reach jobs, shops, services and community facilities by walking, cycling and public transport.
- **More housing choice:** a wider range of housing, including affordable options, is available in places suited to housing growth.
- **Stronger centres:** centres support local jobs and businesses and are welcoming places where people shop, spend time and connect.

The changes expected in each centre will depend on its role, local needs and opportunities.

Council cannot achieve these outcomes alone. Progress also depends on other levels of government, businesses, developers and the community, as well as economic conditions. For example, Council can plan for more housing, but whether and when it is built depends on others' investment and development decisions.

Tracking progress will help Council understand how centres are changing, including where change is different from what was anticipated and why. Council can then consider whether to adjust its approach, work differently with partners or advocate for greater support from other levels of government. These findings will help inform future inputs to Council Plan actions, service planning and reporting.

How Council will track progress

Council will develop a practical monitoring approach, drawing on the types of evidence indicated under each Place Outcome. This will set out what information Council will collect, how it will track changes over time and how often it will report progress.

Council will use existing information where possible and consider the time and resources required. Not all information will be relevant to every centre; what Council collects will depend on each centre's role and local conditions.

Council will also consider differences by gender and other relevant characteristics to understand who is benefiting from change and who may be missing out.

Council will review the Strategy every five years, considering progress and changes in community needs, the economy, infrastructure investment and government policy. The review will help Council update its priorities, plans, spending, programs and advocacy.

How the Strategy was developed

This Strategy has been developed using a range of evidence, technical analysis and engagement undertaken over several years. This has helped Council understand how Brimbank's centres are changing, the opportunities and challenges they face, and the different roles they can play in supporting Brimbank's future.

The Strategy also responds to changes in State and local policy, including expectations for housing growth and changes to Victoria's planning system.

Together, these inputs have informed the Activity Centre Network and centre roles, Vision, Strategic Directions, Place Outcomes and approach to delivery.

Key evidence and technical inputs

- **Activity centre and economic analysis**
  Analysis of Brimbank's activity centres, including their economic roles, retail and commercial floorspace, employment and future demand.
- **Housing and development capacity**
  Analysis of housing and development capacity existing planning controls could support.
- **Urban design and place analysis**
  Analysis of buildings, streets, public spaces, connections and surrounding areas to understand opportunities and constraints for change.
- **Population and community needs**
  Demographic data, population forecasts and information about community needs to understand how Brimbank is changing and differences in access to services and opportunities.
- **Transport, infrastructure and environmental considerations**
  Available information about transport, infrastructure, services and environmental constraints to understand where growth and change can be supported. This includes major transport investment and opportunities associated with Brimbank's changing role within Melbourne's west.
- **Gender and equity**
  A Gender Impact Assessment and consideration of how gender, age, disability, cultural background and other factors affect people's access to housing, jobs, services, transport and public spaces.

Policy and planning context

The Strategy considers:

- Council's Community Vision, Council Plan and other relevant strategies, plans and policies.
- Plan for Victoria, including Brimbank's housing target and the designation of Housing Choice and Station Centres.
- State planning reforms affecting housing and activity centres.
- Planning for the Sunshine Priority Precinct and major transport investments, including Melbourne Airport Rail and electrification of the Melton Line
- the Brimbank Planning Scheme

The Strategy sets an overall direction for Brimbank's centres and will guide more detailed planning and delivery over time.

Community and stakeholder engagement

The Draft Strategy draws on:

- Preliminary engagement in 2025 with Brimbank Community Voice involving a targeted women's workshop and the Brimbank Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee (BATSIC) which helped identify key themes.
- Relevant community feedback from other Council strategies, plans and projects, including what people value about their local centres and their priorities for housing, transport, public spaces, services and other aspects of place.



Faces of Diversity, Sunshine. Created by street artist Adnate in 2021, the mural celebrates Brimbank's cultural diversity and reflects the many communities that contribute to the identity of the municipality.

Glossary

Activity centre	A place where shops, businesses, services, community facilities, public spaces, homes and other activities come together. Activity centres range from small groups of local shops to major destinations serving Brimbank and the wider region.
Activity Centre Network	The network of activity centres across Brimbank and the different roles they play in supporting communities, housing, jobs, services and investment.
Advocacy	Council working with other levels of government and organisations to influence decisions, secure funding or support outcomes that benefit Brimbank's communities.
Affordable Housing	Housing that is appropriate for the needs of very low, low and moderate-income households, allowing them to meet their housing needs without experiencing financial stress. This may include a range of housing types and tenures that support housing affordability and access.
Centre classification	The category assigned to an activity centre based on the role it performs within Brimbank's Activity Centre Network.
Decision-making framework	The approach in this Strategy for considering centre roles, Strategic Directions, Place Outcomes and evidence when making decisions.
Detailed planning	Planning for an individual centre and its surrounding neighbourhood that applies the Strategy's broader directions to the place. It considers land use, development, infrastructure, services, public spaces and movement together to guide growth and change. It may take the form of a structure plan, neighbourhood plan or another coordinating framework.
Housing diversity	A range of housing types and tenures that meet the needs of different households, incomes and stages of life.
Infrastructure	The transport, utilities, community facilities, open spaces and other physical and social infrastructure that supports communities and enable growth.
Local Centre	A smaller, walkable centre providing shops, services and places for everyday community interaction.
Local node	A site or pocket of commercial or mixed use land within a residential neighbourhood that supports, or has the potential to support, small shops, services and community uses. Local nodes provide a more limited range of activities than Local Centres and contribute to walkability and everyday convenience. They are not individually classified or mapped in this Strategy.
Major Centre	A centre serving broad communities across Brimbank and beyond, with a wide range of shops, services and employment and significant opportunities for housing and renewal.
Metropolitan Centre	A centre with major employment, education, health, civic and transport functions serving a wider metropolitan area. Sunshine CBD is Brimbank's Metropolitan Centre.
Mixed-use development	Development that combines different uses within the same building or area, such as housing, shops, offices, community facilities or employment.

Neighbourhood Centre	A centre serving surrounding communities through local businesses, services and community facilities, with opportunities for growth where appropriate.
Place-based planning	Planning that responds to the unique role, characteristics, opportunities and constraints of a place, coordinating land use, built form, transport, infrastructure, public spaces and investment to achieve integrated long-term outcomes.
Place Outcomes	The long-term qualities the Strategy seeks for activity centres. They describe how centres should feel and function and guide future planning and investment.
Private realm	Land and buildings in private ownership, including homes, shops and other commercial premises. Planning can guide their use and development and how they relate to surrounding streets and public spaces.
Public realm	Publicly accessible spaces such as streets, footpaths, parks, plazas and civic spaces that support community life.
Role	The function a centre performs within the network, including who it serves and the jobs, services and activities it provides.
Strategic Directions	The long-term directions guiding Council's planning, investment, partnerships and advocacy across the Activity Centre Network.
Strategic Planning	Long-term planning that guides how places grow and change, including land use, development, infrastructure and environmental outcomes.
Traditional Custodians	The Aboriginal peoples who have continuing cultural authority, connection and responsibilities for Country. In Brimbank, this includes the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong peoples.
Walkable catchment	The area that people can comfortably reach on foot from an activity centre. Walkable catchments help inform place-based planning but may be considered alongside public transport connections and other factors.
Walkable neighbourhood	The surrounding residential area that is closely connected to an activity centre through walking and cycling on local streets. It includes the homes, parks, community facilities and other destinations that support everyday life.

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