



Merri-bek
City Council

Merri-bek Community News

June 2025

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Merri-bek City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin Nation as the traditional custodians of the lands and waterways in the area now known as Merri-bek, and pays respect to their Elders past, present, as well as to all First Nations communities, who significantly contribute to the life of the area.

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Merri-bek Community News?
Email us at
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Message from the Mayor

Cr Helen Davidson

Hi and welcome to Merri-bek Community News.

In April, Council endorsed the proposed 2025-29 budget, setting out how Council will fund essential services, build infrastructure and deliver projects over the coming years. The proposed budget has been developed concurrently with the Council Plan, which will come to Council in the next few months for consideration.

To everyone who contributed ideas, thank you! Although \$250,000 was originally allocated to the Community Budget Ideas program, because of the huge community interest, Council is proposing to fund more than the allocated amount for the fourth year in a row.

Your feedback helps us build a better Merri-bek. We're also planning and designing a new \$60 million Coburg library and piazza. The library will be a space to learn and connect, with the adjacent piazza being the ideal space to gather and rest. I'm thrilled to see how this project evolves to meet the changing needs of the community.

We've been busy constructing many facilities for Merri-bek, including a new public toilet in Snell Grove, Oak Park, and newly refurbished change rooms at the Fawkner Community Hall Sports Pavilion. Read what we are building near you on page 7.

We know that keeping the city clean is important to you. It's important to us too. That's why we are working around the clock to collect rubbish, sweep the streets and remove general litter around Merri-bek – and you can meet some of the people doing this work on page 6.

Lastly, if you live in Coburg, Fawkner or Brunswick East, you might have noticed some new murals in the area. These artworks are part of Merri-bek's RenuWall project, a program to beautify our public spaces. You can meet some of the artists on page 6.

It's a busy and exciting time for our community, so dive into this edition of Community News to find out what else is happening around Merri-bek!

Speak with us in your language

Per maggiori informazioni nella tua lingua, chiama il numero **9280 1911**

如需了解更多您语言版本的信息, 请致电 **9280 0750**

Για να μάθετε περισσότερα στη γλώσσα σας, καλέστε το **9280 1912**

Para saber más en tu idioma llama al **9280 1916**

لمعرفة المزيد بلغتك، اتصل
بالرقم **9280 1913**

Để tìm hiểu thêm bằng ngôn ngữ của bạn, hãy gọi **9280 1915**

اپنی زبان میں مزید جاننے کے لیے
9280 1917 پر کال کریں۔

अपनी भाषा में अधिक जानने के लिए,
9280 1918 पर कॉल करें

तपाईंको भाषामा थप जानकारी लागि,
9280 1910 मा कल गर्नुहोस्

Kendi dilinizde daha fazla bilgi edinmek için **9280 1914**'ü arayın

To speak with us in a language not listed here, please call **9280 1919**

For more information visit merri-bek.vic.gov.au/your-language



Our Community and Youth Panels met in February to help refresh our Merri-bek Community Vision

What's in the 2025-29 budget?

Our proposed budget will be presented to Council on Monday 23 June for consideration. The budget ensures we are delivering for our community while maintaining the strong financial sustainability of Merri-bek City Council for the long-term.

The 2025-29 budget seeks to continue providing key services to the community and helps us deliver community infrastructure for everyone who lives in Merri-bek now and in the future, as well as maintaining core services to the community.

Some of the highlights of the budget in 2025-29 are:

- Commencing planning and design of the \$60 million Coburg library and piazza project
- Improvement to parks, open space and streetscapes
- Roads and car parks renewal and maintenance
- Footpaths, bicycle paths and transport infrastructure

The 2025-29 budget is an important document as it sets out how we will keep the organisation financially sustainable, and how we will fund the delivery of the upcoming Council Plan, Council's strategies and action plans, and core services. This is a rolling four-year budget that will be reviewed every year, informed by community feedback.

Read more at conversations.merri-bek.vic.gov.au



Dog walking pilot program

We are conducting the Dog Walking in Merri-bek pilot program in nine parks throughout Merri-bek to find better ways to share space, improve dog exercise and make sure everyone feels welcome and safe. Learn more and share your feedback by visiting conversations.merri-bek.vic.gov.au/dog-walking



The future of Merri-bek

Two groups with 64 people, drawn from more than 1000 expressions of interest from people across our city, have helped shape a vision for Merri-bek. Now it's your turn.

Forty adults and 24 young people aged 12 to 16 formed our Community and Youth Panels. These groups were chosen to be demographically diverse and reflective of Merri-bek's population. Over three days in February, both groups thoughtfully explored what matters most for Merri-bek's future, helping to refresh the Merri-bek Community Vision.

Based on these insights from these panels, our 11 Councillors are in the process of preparing our four-year Council Plan. Alongside the Council Plan, Merri-bek's 10-year Asset Management and 10-year Financial Plan are also being reviewed.

How you can get involved

These important, strategic documents will soon be available for community feedback, please keep a look out and you can share your feedback online at conversations.merri-bek.vic.gov.au or by visiting our libraries or customer service centres and filling out a paper form.

Next steps

Following the consultation period, all submissions will be considered while the draft plans are finalised. The draft Council Plan 2025-29, draft 10-year Asset Management and Financial Plans will be considered for endorsement by Council before 31 October.

Accessible to everyone

We are committed to ensuring our communications are accessible to everyone in our community. If you require this magazine in an alternative format please contact us at communications@merri-bek.vic.gov.au or 9240 1111

Got any hard rubbish?

In Merri-bek, about one in three people speak English as their second language. We've translated some information about how to book a hard rubbish collection.



Learn more about hard rubbish collection

English

Do you have large household waste that is too big for your rubbish bin?

Some items, for example, old furniture, TVs or mattresses, cannot go in your regular bin.

If you are unable to donate these items, we can collect them for you.

It is illegal to leave household waste on the street without a booking.

To organise collection of your household waste, please call **9721 1915**

العربية | Arabic

هل لديك نفايات منزلية لا تتسع لها حاوية القمامة؟

العناصر الكبيرة: مثل، الأثاث القديم وأجهزة التلفاز والمراتب التي لا يمكن وضعها في الحاوية العادية. إذا لم تتمكن من التبرع بهذه العناصر، يمكننا جمعها نيابةً عنك.

وضع النفايات المنزلية على الرصيف دون حجز خدمة جمع النفايات الصلبة مخالفًا للقانون.

لتنظيم جمع النفايات المنزلية، يرجى الاتصال بالرقم **9280 1913** للتحدث مع موظف يتحدث لغتك أو بالرقم **9721 1915** للتحدث مع موظف باللغة الإنجليزية.

Italian | Italiano

Hai dei rifiuti domestici ingombranti troppo grandi per essere messi dentro il bidone della spazzatura?

Ci sono degli oggetti, come ad esempio vecchi mobili, televisori o materassi, che non possono essere messi nel normale bidone della spazzatura.

Se non riesci a dar via questi oggetti autonomamente, possiamo portarli via noi per te.

È illegale lasciare rifiuti domestici sulla strada se prima non si è prenotato il ritiro.

Per prenotare il ritiro dei rifiuti domestici chiama il numero **9280 1911** per parlare con qualcuno nella tua lingua, oppure chiama il **9721 1915** per parlare con qualcuno in inglese.

Greek | Ελληνικά

Έχετε οικιακά απορρίμματα μεγάλου μεγέθους που δεν χωρούν στον κάδο σας;

Ορισμένα αντικείμενα, όπως παλιά έπιπλα, τηλεοράσεις ή στρώματα, δεν μπορούν να τοποθετηθούν στον κανονικό κάδο απορριμμάτων.

Εάν δεν μπορείτε να δωρίσετε αυτά τα αντικείμενα, μπορούμε να τα συλλέξουμε για εσάς.

Είναι παράνομο να αφήνετε οικιακά απορρίμματα στον δρόμο χωρίς ραντεβού.

Για να κανονίσετε τη συλλογή των οικιακών σας απορριμμάτων, καλέστε το **9280 1912** για να μιλήσετε με κάποιον στη γλώσσα σας ή το **9721 1915** για να μιλήσετε με κάποιον στα Αγγλικά.

Turkish | Türkçe

Çöp kutunuza sığmayacak kadar büyük evsel atıklarınız mı var?

Eski mobilyalar, televizyon veya yatak gibi bazı eşyalar normal çöp kutunuza atılamaz.

Bu eşyaları bağışlayamıyorsanız, biz sizin için toplayabiliriz.

Rezervasyon yaptırmadan sokakta evsel atık bırakmak yasaktır.

Evsel atıklarınızın toplanmasını organize etmek için lütfen kendi dilinizde biriyle görüşmek üzere **9280 1914**'ü veya İngilizce konuşan biriyle görüşmek üzere **9721 1915**'i arayın.





Help at home in Merri-bek

Did you know Merri-bek offers a Home Maintenance Service to help our older residents stay safe and independent in their homes? From changing light bulbs to installing handrails, our Home Maintenance Service is designed to make everyday living easier for people over 65.

Marie has been using the service for years, with Gary, a home maintenance worker, helping her with everything from minor repairs to safety modifications. *"Gary gives me good advice and fixes things around the house. It really improves my quality of life,"* Marie says.

Over the years, Gary has installed quarter-turn taps, changed light bulbs, installed safety rails, and carried out shower modifications - small changes that make a big difference. *"It means I can stay in my home and use the things I need. That's really important to me,"* Marie says.

For Gary, the satisfaction comes from helping others. *"It's a rewarding job because I know I'm making a real difference in people's lives,"* he says. *"When I can help someone stay in their home safely, that's what makes it all worthwhile."*

Merri-bek's Home Maintenance Service is just one of the many ways Council supports many older residents, alongside home-delivered meals, transport services, and social groups. For more information, including eligibility, visit merri-bek.vic.gov.au/olderpeople or call My Aged Care for a referral at **1800 200 422**.

News in brief

Want to save on energy bills?

Merri-bek has partnered with Solar Savers, a local government initiative, to help you install efficient, electric products to make your home cosy this winter. We have expanded the range of products and reputable suppliers to: install insulation and seal draughts to stay warm in winter, switch to reverse cycle for heating, replace old gas hot water with an efficient heat pump, upgrade to induction cooking, and install solar and create your own clean energy. For more information, go to zerocarbonmerri-bek.org.au/electrify

A new park!

Council has purchased a site at 568-574 Sydney Road in Brunswick to provide a new Park Close to Home along Sydney Road, and unlock the potential to create an active transport link between Merri Creek and Moonee Ponds Creek. This new park will be in addition to the recent opening of the Michelle Guglielmo Park in Brunswick, another park delivered through Council's Park Close to Home initiative. We'll be seeking community input to understand what you'd like to see here, so keep an eye on our Conversations Merri-bek website for updates!

Coburg is getting a new library and piazza!

The multi-storey library will be a place of connection and cultural expression. A new open space will also be created to provide essential gathering spaces and increased tree canopy coverage. For more information, visit conversations.merri-bek.vic.gov.au



**Join
conversations
on Council
activities that
affect you**



Father Marker's RenuWall mural at 117A Jukes Road, Fawkner

Art for all!

When artistic duo Creature Creature were creating a piece for Merri-bek's RenuWall public art program, they knew they wanted to go bold.

"The concept was to create something with lots of colour and pattern," Creature Creature's Ambrose says. "The circle of cranes reflects togetherness - the power of community. And the peaches represent Sydney Road's strong association with good food."

Creature Creature's mural (which you can see on the cover) at 215 Sydney Road, Coburg, is part of this year's expanded RenuWall program, bringing vibrant artwork to public spaces in Coburg, Brunswick and Fawkner. The murals are the latest additions to the popular public art initiative, which aims to beautify public spaces, engage the community in meaningful arts experiences, and reduce vandalism in graffiti hotspots.

Father Marker's RenuWall mural at 117A Jukes Road, Fawkner, celebrates multiculturalism, focusing on the universal tradition of sharing tea across cultures.

"It's about celebrating connection and community through shared experiences," Father Marker says. "In fact, while I was painting, many people from different cultural backgrounds stopped to chat with me about their tea culture. It was so great to have that face-to-face experience."

For more information on the RenuWall program and public art in Merri-bek, visit merri-bek.vic.gov.au/public-art

Ever wondered how we keep our streets clean?

Our team sweeps main roads in the early hours of every morning. Residential street sweeping then starts each day around 7am to 7:30am with all residential streets visited every four to six weeks. Shopping parade pavements are cleaned by a regular footpath sweeper service each week.

Amelia, General Operator Street Cleansing at Hadfield Operations Centre, operates street sweepers, compacters, and tippers. Her day sometimes starts at 3.30am and finishes up 12 hours later. *"I prefer the earlier starts, it's nice to avoid some of the traffic,"* she says.

Amelia encourages other women to join Merri-bek's outdoor services workforce and shouts out her colleagues – who range between their mid-twenties and mid-sixties - for being so encouraging.



Joe starts his day at 4.30am to keep Sydney Road looking its best

Meet Joe

Every morning at 4.30am Joe starts his rounds cleaning the Sydney Road retail precinct from Brunswick Road in Brunswick to Bell Street in Coburg. Joe cleans the footpaths, street furniture and bins, and removes graffiti from public buildings. He's proud of his work, which helps to keep this iconic part of Merri-bek looking good. *"It keeps me busy. It feels pretty satisfying to know that at the end of each day, I've made Sydney Road look a little better for everyone,"* Joe says.

Joe's great work is part of a range of actions Council is delivering thanks to Love Sydney Road, Council's initiative to clean up and beautify the Sydney Road retail precinct. To find out more, visit merri-bek.vic.gov.au/love-sydney-road

Subscribe to My Merri-bek eNewsletter

Want to receive news and updates straight to your inbox?



Watch Joe talk about his job at Merri-bek City Council

Scan the QR to watch





Completed

New zebra crossings across Merri-bek

Eight new zebra crossings have been installed across Merri-bek in high-traffic areas. Designed to improve pedestrian safety, the crossings are located at the corners of Frith and Victoria Streets, Piera and Lygon Streets, Evans and Lygon Streets, and Ewing Street and Glenlyon Road in Brunswick. Additional crossings have also been installed at Sedgman and Albert Streets and Lygon and Queen Streets in Brunswick East, as well as at the intersections of Derby Street and both Lyking Street and Oakbank Grove in Pascoe Vale.



Completed

Oak Park Kinder, Oak Park

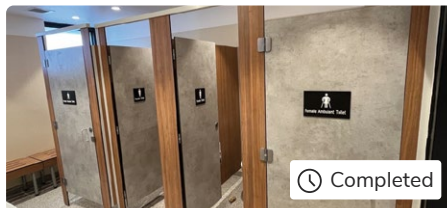
The improved Oak Park Kinder is now open! Recent upgrades to the facility include a new 33-place kindergarten room - to help meet increasing enrolments - as well as a new staff office, a new staff room, a new planning/meeting room and accessible toilet.



In Progress

South Street, Hadfield

Road reconstruction and major drainage upgrades are underway on South Street in Hadfield, between West Street and Dickinson Street. Upgrades will also take place on sections of Everitt Street and Halsbury Street, with work set to be completed by June 2025. This \$2.9 million project will improve local road infrastructure, delivering new stormwater drainage, kerbing, vehicle crossings, footpaths, and bus shelters for the community.



Completed

Fawkner Community Hall Sports Pavilion Amenities, Fawkner

The newly refurbished change rooms at the Fawkner Community Hall Sports Pavilion are now open, making the pavilion safer and more accessible for all users. The upgrades include new cubicles, showers, and a dedicated female change room, as well as a new accessible, all-gender toilet.



Completed

Parker Reserve Pavilion, Coburg North

Two newly refurbished pavilions are now open in Parker Reserve, Coburg North. As part of our ongoing commitment to improving facilities and open spaces for the community, the Baseball and South Pavilions now feature upgraded changing rooms and amenities, improved umpires' facilities, upgraded all-gender toilets and new accessible toilets.



In Progress

Snell Grove Semi-automatic Toilet, Oak Park

Works on the new Snell Grove public toilet have now commenced. Located at the corner of Waterloo Road and Snell Grove in Oak Park, near the busy Snell Grove shopping strip and train station, the semi-automatic toilet will be all-gender and accessible. The toilet is being delivered as part of Council's Public Toilet plan, which focuses on providing clean, safe, and accessible toilets in areas where they're most needed.



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**Your local
Councillors**

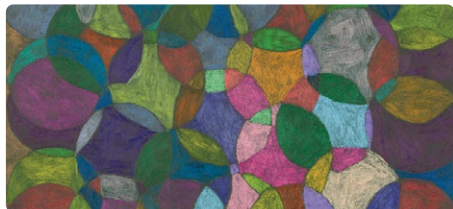


Image credit: Caroline Alcalde. *Untitled*, 2024.
Image courtesy of the artist.

Beacon

Created by artists from Arts Access Victoria's Artstop Studio, Beacon explores disability, identity, safety, and communication through light and colour. The work is a response to the idea of a beacon: creating new ways of relating to the way light acts as a warning, signal, or celebration. Artstop is a visual arts studio based in Brunswick where 17 artists meet weekly to connect and develop their art practices.

When: August 6 to October 26

Where: Counihan Gallery,
233 Sydney Rd, Brunswick



Environment Day for Multicultural Communities

Join us in a special Environment Day celebration as we come together to honour our local environment and engage in panel discussions featuring local community leaders and climate and environment advocates. The event will also feature community stalls for local sustainable organisations, showcasing eco-friendly products, services and initiatives. Find out more at

➔ zerocarbonmerri-bek.org.au

When: June 14, 1pm

Where: Fawkner Senior Citizens' Centre, 77 Jukes Rd Fawkner

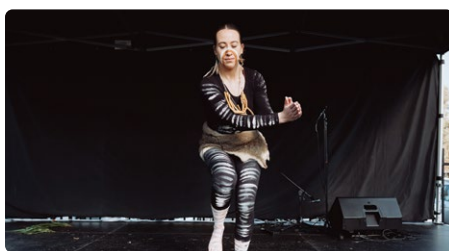


Merri-bek Meltdown for Pride Week

Amped Up, Merri-bek's Amplify crew (formally FReeZA) are staging a free all-ages live music event on Saturday 7 June. The event will be held at Triple R who have been strong allies of Amped Up. This show is aligned to Pride Month and will be celebrated with LGBTIQ+ performers. This will be the second event of Amped Up's Merri-bek Meltdown Series for 2025.

When: Saturday 7 June

Where: 221 Nicholson St,
Brunswick East



NAIDOC Week

During NAIDOC Week, we celebrate the history, culture, and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, providing an opportunity for all Australians to learn about, engage with First Nations cultures and participate in local events and celebrations. Council celebrates the achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and their ongoing contribution. The National theme for NAIDOC is 'The Next Generation: Strength, Vision, Legacy', a tribute to the resilience of our communities, the vision of our leaders, and the strength of the next generation.

When: July 6 to 13

Where: Find events at ➔ naidoc.org.au/local-events/local-naidoc-week-events



Council meeting

Did you know that we livestream and record our Council meetings? Council holds meetings to conduct the business of Merri-bek. Councillors represent the local community in making important decisions that affect how Merri-bek is run. Community members can also submit questions and statements online to be read at the meetings.

When: July 9 and August 13,
6.30pm

Where: Online at merri-bek.

➔ vic.gov.au/my-council/council-and-committee-meetings/live-streaming



Youth Take Over Nights

Join us on select Fridays for Youth Take Over at the Glenroy Community Hub. This is a time where young people have the whole library to themselves. Come along and enjoy fun activities and heaps of yummy food in a safe environment. These events are fully supervised by Merri-bek City Council staff. (Keep an eye on our Merri-bek Libraries channels for upcoming Youth Take Overs at Brunswick and Coburg Library!)

When: July 4 and August 1

Where: Glenroy Library,
50 Wheatsheaf Road, Glenroy

Who: Young people aged
12 to 18 years