



# YOUTH ACTION PLAN

2023-2024

**INSPIRED, HEARD, VALUED.**



# INSPIRED HEARD VALUED

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The City of Greater Bendigo is on Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Country.

We would like to acknowledge and extend our appreciation to the Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Peoples, the Traditional Owners of the land.

We pay our respects to leaders and Elders past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and the hopes of all Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Peoples.

We express our gratitude in the sharing of this land, our sorrow for the personal, spiritual and cultural costs of that sharing, and our hope that we may walk forward together in harmony and in the spirit of healing.

## VISION

“Young people in Greater Bendigo are empowered to advocate for, engage with, and experience a positive community that allows them to make the most of life’s opportunities.”







## YOUTH MAYOR'S FOREWORD

The City of Greater Bendigo Youth Council is proud to have overseen the development of the Youth Action Plan 2023-2024. As a representative body of 18 young people aged between 14 and 24, we believe it is important that young people not only have a voice but are also active participants in creating their own future.

As young leaders, we know that young people are active in our community and that they are making significant contributions. Whilst it is often said that “young people are the leaders of tomorrow”, we believe that young people are already participating and leading today.

It is within this context that the Youth Action Plan 2023-2024 aims to provide opportunities for young people. These include opportunities to build their capacity, develop support networks and skills; empower them through providing opportunities to have their voice heard; and increase their participation in the social, civic and economic aspects of the Greater Bendigo community.

Greater Bendigo's young people were involved with every stage of developing this Action Plan. They were involved with the Imagine Greater Bendigo engagement process in 2021 that developed the Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 that this action plan is aligned to, with the evaluation of the previous Youth Strategy 2017-2021 in 2022, and with the feedback process on the draft Youth Action Plan in early 2023.

The City of Greater Bendigo Youth Council will now oversee the implementation of the Youth Action Plan 2023-2024. This means that young voices are not only imbedded into the framework of this plan but will be imbedded into the work that the City of Greater Bendigo's youth team does over the next two years to implement this plan.

The City of Greater Bendigo believes in empowering young people and is publicly committed to this in the Council Plan 2021-2025. The City of Greater Bendigo engages with young people, respects our opinions and values our experiences. We are incredibly fortunate to live in a city that not only listens to the voices of young people, but actively encourages them to have a say.

As Youth Councillors, we are grateful to have had the opportunity to oversee the development of this Youth Action Plan and are now looking forward to overseeing its implementation. We appreciate the significance of this opportunity and the responsibility that it involves.



To be young in 2023 is a unique experience. Only those living as a young person today can truly understand its distinctive idiosyncrasies. Everyone was young once, but not everyone is young today.

**Ryan Peterson**  
2023 Youth Mayor

INSPIRED,  
HEARD







## YOUTH OF GREATER BENDIGO

The City of Greater Bendigo is located in the centre of Victoria, covering almost 3,000 square kilometres, with a growing population of more than 120,000, the state's third largest economy, and is surrounded by 40,000 hectares of regional, state and national parkland.

In 2021, there were 19,045 young people aged between 12 and 24 years in Greater Bendigo which was 15.6% of the overall population of 121,466 (Profile ID 2022). By 2026 the population of young people is projected to rise to 22,281 (16.6% of overall population) and 25,786 by 2036 (16.6%) (Profile ID 2017). In particular, the population of young people is expected to rise significantly in the new growth areas of Huntly, Maiden Gully, Marong and Strathfieldsaye. This growing population of young people and the areas of high growth will have a significant impact on the type and level of services and infrastructure required.

The Youth Action Plan 2023-2024 aims to respond to needs and aspirations of young people.

## YOUTH ACTION PLAN 2023-2024

The aim of the Youth Action Plan 2023-2024 is to provide a clear and achievable plan that guides the City's commitment to young people. The Youth Action Plan 2023-2024 commits the City of Greater Bendigo (City) to continuing successful programs like Youth Council, YO Events, YO Media, Ambedo, skills development, training, events and activities that are safe and welcoming. It also commits the City to supporting inclusion and participation for young people, promoting diversity and improving opportunities for rural and disadvantaged young people, as well as promoting the voices of young people, developing young leaders and empowering them to make a difference in their community.

The City will leverage partnerships, engage with the community, and inspire and mobilise young people to achieve positive outcomes.

The Youth Action Plan is directly aligned to the Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 (Healthy Greater Bendigo), in accordance with the City's commitment to integrated planning processes. All 24 actions are aligned to the five outcomes of the Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025:

- Healthy and well
- Safe and secure
- Able to participate
- Connected to community and culture
- Liveable

The Plan is also informed by the community engagement undertaken for the Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 (as part of Imagine Greater Bendigo), the evaluation of the previous Youth Strategy 2017-2021; as well as Youth Council priorities and suggestions, and strategic alignment to City plans and strategies. These strategies and plans include the Council Plan 2021-2025, the Economic Development Strategy 2020-2030, the Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2021-2025, Reconciliation Plan 2021-2025, Social Justice Framework 2022-2032 and the Climate Change and Environment Strategy 2021-2026. It has also been informed by state government funding, specifically Engage! and FReeZa.

The development of the Youth Action Plan 2023-2024 was overseen and co-designed by the City of Greater Bendigo Youth Council and is aligned to this two-year Youth Council term. Implementation of the Plan will be overseen by the City of Greater Bendigo Youth Council.



INSPIRED  
HEARD  
VALUED



### OUR YOUNG PEOPLE ARE HEALTHY AND WELL

1. Review, install and manage contraception access projects (such as condom vending machines and free condoms at YO Bendigo).
2. Provide young people with educational information on consent laws.

### OUR YOUNG PEOPLE ARE SAFE AND SECURE

3. Provide young people of all backgrounds and identities with safe and welcoming experiences at the YO Bendigo Facility and at events and activities.
4. Support advocacy activities aimed at improving young people's sense of safety in public places.

### OUR YOUNG PEOPLE ARE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE

5. Provide micro-credential training and skill development workshops through YO Bendigo that are inclusive and accessible to young people.
6. Provide opportunities for young people to develop skills in the events and creative arts industries through the FReeZa program (YO Events).
7. Provide opportunities for young people to develop skills in the media and creative industries through the YO Media Team and Ambedo Magazine.

8. Link young people to opportunities that provide career planning and pathways to employment such as volunteering and mentoring; and provide opportunities for work experience, student placements and internships for young people within the Engaged Communities team (YO Bendigo).

9. Support the implementation of youth-related actions in the City's Economic Development Strategy 2020-2030.

10. Support young people to feel safe about their gender identity and promote gender equity through events such as IDAHOBIT and Wear it Purple Day.

11. Support the Youth Council to be a voice of young people and provide strategic advice on City plans, strategies, policies and projects so that they better align to the needs of young people in our community.

12. Develop and implement a Youth Awards program to highlight the contributions and achievements of young people.

13. Support young people's voices by encouraging diverse contributions to regular editions of Ambedo Magazine and through other activities like youth forums and listening posts.

14. Support the development of empowered and engaged young leaders through training, events, and other activities such as public speaking training, leadership training and Youth Parliament.



## OUR YOUNG PEOPLE ARE CONNECTED TO CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

15. Support and provide a diverse range of workshops, activities and events that are accessible and inclusive for all young people regardless of background, identity, and access needs.
16. Support the celebration of the diversity of young people in our community in all areas of Greater Bendigo, regardless of background, identity, and access needs.
17. Provide skill development and social connection opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.
18. Support the celebration of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and the promotion of their culture.
19. Activate the YO Bendigo facility to be welcoming and meet the needs of young people of all backgrounds, identities and abilities and promote it to young people, youth services and stakeholders.
20. Provide young artists and creatives with performance or exhibition opportunities across the municipality.
21. Provide opportunities for young people to develop life skills to allow them to better participate in the community and improve their sense of belonging.

## OUR YOUNG PEOPLE WANT A LIVEABLE FUTURE

22. Support young people to voice their concerns regarding climate change and global warming – such as the School Strike for Climate and Greater Bendigo Climate Collaboration.
23. Support young people to have a say about all aspects of liveability in Greater Bendigo.
24. Support young people to connect with youth service providers.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The City of Greater Bendigo would like to acknowledge and thank the following for their contribution to the development of the Youth Action Plan 2023-2024 over 2022 and 2023.

### City of Greater Bendigo Youth Councillors:

- Abby Patten (2022 and 2023)
- Augustine Leung (2023)
- Ben Reid (2023)
- Brandon Trickey (2022)
- Charlotte Brook (2022)
- EJ Clayton (2022 and 2023)
- Emily Pennington (2022 and 2023)
- Freya Nicoletti (2023)
- Ildi Clemens (2022)
- Jack Smith (2022)
- Jemima Kreutzer (2023)
- Jonah Zoch (2023)
- Julia Hunt (2022)
- Lexi Rasmussen (2023)
- Lilly Correll (2022 and 2023)
- Max McKellar (2022 and 2023, member of the Youth Action Plan Project Control Group)
- Mia Thomas (2022 and 2023, member of the Youth Action Plan Project Control Group)
- Remus Brasier (2022 and 2023)
- Ryan Peterson (2022 and 2023, member of the Youth Action Plan Project Control Group)
- Sharlee Dunolly-Lee (2023)
- Sean Cox (2022 and 2023)
- Victoria Tangey (2022 and 2023, member of the Youth Action Plan Project Control Group)
- Zahra Chowdhury (2022)
- Zoe Di Camillo (2023)

### Community Stakeholders:

The City of Greater Bendigo would also like to thank the young people, youth service providers, education institutions and members of the community who participated in the evaluation of the City of Greater Bendigo Youth Strategy 2017-2021 and/or provided feedback on the draft Youth Action Plan 2023-2024.



