

AGE FRIENDLY PLAN

2024-2027



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the five traditional owner groups of this land; the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia, and the Jupagulk, people. We recognise the important and ongoing place that all Indigenous people hold in our community. We pay our respects to elders, both past and present, and commit to working together in the spirit of mutual understanding and respect for the benefit of the broader community and future generations.





Members of the Older Persons Advisory Committee: June Liddy, Cherie Ladlow, Wes Hazelden, Beryl Moloney, Shayne Keenan, Elaine Cooper, Rick Walker, Lauren Sherriff. Members not pictured: Kola Kennedy, Janet Hall, Pamela Baker, Faye Smith.

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

The Horsham Rural City Council Age Friendly Plan 2024-2027 demonstrates Council’s commitment to building a community that improves the liveability and access for the Seniors in our community.

This Plan aligns with Horsham Rural City Council’s vision for the community to be a vibrant, liveable hub that thrives on strong economic growth and social connectedness. We want everyone to feel valued and able to participate within the community.

A detailed action plan covering the six themes of accessible outdoor spaces and buildings, transport, housing, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and communication and information, aims to deliver tangible benefits and connectedness for our Seniors.

The Council Executive has overall responsibility for the delivery of the Plan. However, we see access and inclusion as an area all members of our community can contribute to. We appreciate the valuable input and insight of the Older Persons Advisory Committee and thank everyone who participated in the engagement and development of this plan.



Cr Robyn Gulline
Mayor
Horsham Rural City Council

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Development of the Age Friendly Plan (the Plan) took place between August 2023 and February 2024. Horsham Council staff managed the project and developed the plan.

The Older Persons Advisory Committee provided support and advice at various stages of planning and development.

The Plan identifies:

- the priorities for older people living in Horsham Rural City
- how Council will plan and develop a municipality that is age friendly
- what Council can do to improve access, provide social opportunities and provide civic opportunities for older people
- how Council will communicate and engage with older people and promote them as integral members of our community.

Why develop a plan?

The Plan has been developed to improve livability and access for older people in our community. The goal of this plan is to highlight how Horsham Council can continue developing a community that is age friendly.

People may have changing needs and preferences for the way they access the community, and how they socially and economically participate as they age. It is important that Horsham Council understands these diverse needs of older people in our community.

The Plan will help to keep track of priorities and actions that can develop and support an age friendly community.

Context

Horsham Rural City has a total population of approximately 20,500 people. A total of 5,746 people are over the age of 60, which is 28% of the overall population.

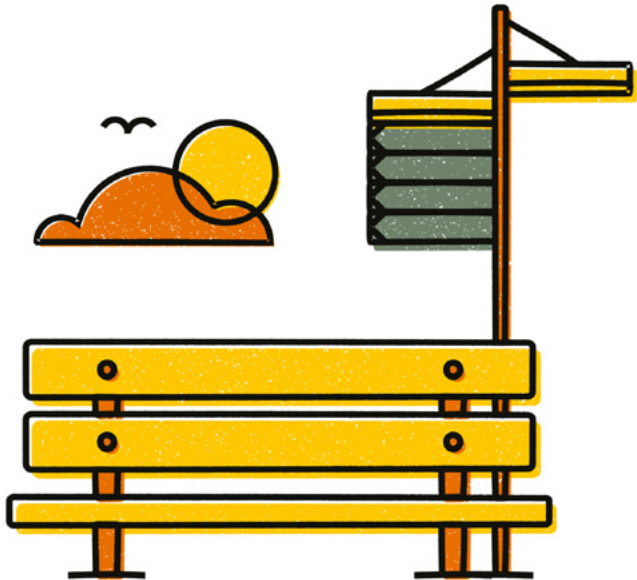
Since 2016 there are 180 more residents between the ages of 60 and 69, there are 297 more residents between the ages of 70 and 84 and there are 43 more residents over the age of 85.

Since 2016 there have been 229 people over the age of 65 move to Horsham Rural City, and 300 people over the age of 65 move away from Horsham Rural City. This indicates a net migration loss of 71 people over the age of 65.

These statistics indicate that we have an aging population, highlighted by the 520 more residents over the age of 60, even with a net migration loss of 71 of people over the age of 65.

This data indicates the importance of developing an age friendly community with resources and facilities that improve access and livability for older people.

(profile.id.com.au/horsham)



PLAN DEVELOPMENT

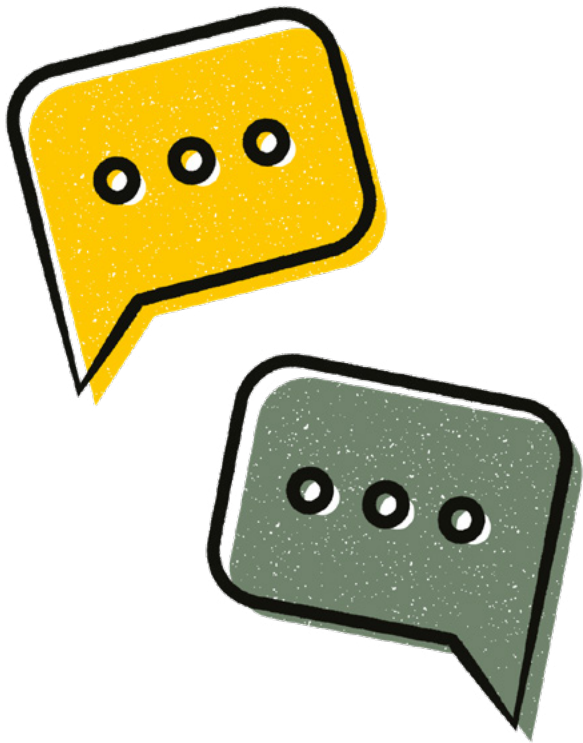
Plan development and engagement was facilitated by Horsham Rural City staff between August 2023 and February 2024.

197 people participated in engagement activities including online surveys, workshops with community groups, discussions with the Older Persons Advisory Committee (OPAC) and staff focus groups.

The OPAC provides expert advice to Horsham Council, and represent needs and priorities of all older people in the municipality.

Throughout the process of developing the Plan, the OPAC helped to identify appropriate engagement activities and community groups to engage with. The OPAC also analysed feedback from the broader community and shared their priorities for what could be included in the Plan.

To gain feedback on the draft plan that was presented to Council, a community consultation period was held after the March Council meeting.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Engagement activities that informed the Plan occurred between August and November 2023.

Questions included in the engagement activities were based on the World Health Organization Age Friendly Checklist (WHO Checklist).

The aim of the engagement activities was to get feedback from community members to better understand how Horsham Rural City Council can develop an Age Friendly Community.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

Activity	Date	Participants
An online survey that community members could complete, asking agree / disagree questions and open-ended questions. Some surveys were completed in person at the Horsham Talks Expo.	21 August – 4 November, 2023	62
Horsham Probus workshop - included group discussion prompted by WHO Checklist.	26 September, 2023	52
Upper Class Horsham workshop - included group discussion prompted by WHO Checklist.	28 September, 2023	33
Horsham and District U3A workshop, included group discussion prompted by WHO Checklist.	6 October, 2023	28
Older Persons Advisory Committee (OPAC) meeting – considered engagement feedback and discussed possible priorities to be included in the Age Friendly Plan.	6 December, 2023	12
HRCC Staff Focus Group – Consideration of suggestions made by OPAC, and additional suggestions for priorities. Some individual meetings with staff that didn't attend the focus group session.	7 December, 2023	10
Total		197





VISION

Horsham Rural City is an age friendly community where older people are respected and included, and their diverse and changing needs and interests are catered for.

THEMES

- Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
- Transport
- Housing
- Respect and Social Inclusion
- Civic Participation
- Communications and Information



AGE FRIENDLY ACTION PLAN

Outdoor spaces and buildings

Priorities	Actions	Link to other strategies	Responsible
Older people can confidently and safely access outdoor spaces and buildings.	Staff involved in planning public places attend at least one training each year that enhances their capacity to understand the diverse access needs of community members.		→ People and Culture
	Provide input into the development of Landscape Design Guidelines to support planning and design of accessible outdoor spaces and buildings.	Landscape Design Guidelines will be developed and will provide standards for new developments, accessibility will be one of the considerations.	→ Arts Culture and Recreation → Assets and Engineering
	Develop new crossings and implement other strategies within the Horsham CAD Revitalisation Streetscape Plan to enhance pedestrian safety.	There are a range of improvement strategies within the Horsham CAD Revitalisation Streetscape Plan that will enhance pedestrian safety.	→ Assets and Engineering
	Improve the accessibility of Council owned facilities to ensure user groups can participate in their chosen activities.		→ Assets and Engineering
	Continue to maintain existing outdoor spaces to ensure continued opportunities for meeting, gathering and socialising.		→ Waste and Environment

Older people can confidently and safely move between places, spaces and facilities.	Improve connecting infrastructure between places, spaces and facilities by completing the Bicycle and Shared Path Plan.	The Draft Horsham Bicycle and Shared Path Plan advocates for a network of priority paths for both cyclists and pedestrians which links key public infrastructure.	→ Arts Culture and Recreation → Assets and Engineering
	Upgrade all accessible car parking spaces to ensure they comply with Australian Access Standards.		→ Assets and Engineering → Roads and Facilities
	Continue to upgrade and develop new footpaths around the municipality, as guided by community feedback and access standards.	Whilst upgrades are occurring across the municipality, many of the footpath upgrades are identified in the Horsham North Local Area Plan.	→ Assets and Engineering
Business owners understand the barriers people experience when visiting businesses.	Support four businesses to participate in the Inclusive Business Horsham Project each year.		→ Investment Attraction and Growth → Governance and Information
	Continue to support businesses to understand their responsibilities around the use of displays, signs and outdoor dining.		→ Investment Attraction and Growth → Community Services and Safety

Transport

Priorities	Actions	Link to other strategies	Responsible
Improved transport options to support access to services and community life.	Advocate for the return of passenger rail.	Council has committed to advocate for the return of the passenger rail through the adoption of the Rail Corridor Landscape Plan.	→ Executive Management Team → Investment Attraction and Growth
	Advocate for more regular bus service between Horsham and surrounding towns.		→ Executive Management Team
Older people can choose active transport as a safe mode of transport.	Progress the development of the alternate truck route to reduce heavy vehicles traffic in central Horsham and improve safety for other road users.	Council has committed to advocate for an alternative truck route around Horsham through the adoption of Advocacy Priorities	→ Executive Management Team → Investment Attraction and Growth
	Provide suitable locations to safely park and/or charge mobility devices as part of future works to upgrade the CAD and other public spaces.		→ Arts Culture and Recreation → Assets and Engineering
	Establish riding and walking pathways that are safe and provide connectivity.	Relevant actions within the Horsham Bicycle and Shared Paths Infrastructure Plan.	→ Arts Culture and Recreation → Assets and Engineering
	Complete a feasibility study on the Wimmera Discover Trail Stage Two between Horsham and Dimboola.		→ Investment Attraction and Growth
	Ensure all public bus stops have suitable footpath connection, parking, lighting and seating.		→ Assets and Engineering
Public transport is easy and safe to use.	Consider an alternate location for the V-line bus stop that includes improved parking options and a ticket office.		→ Assets and Engineering

Housing

Priorities	Actions	Link to other strategies	Responsible
Develop suitable housing options for people with changing lifestyle needs, in locations that provide easy access to services and transport.	Ensure the housing needs of Senior residents are identified in the Horsham and Natimuk Housing Diversity and Affordability Strategy.	Development of the Horsham and Natimuk Housing Diversity and Affordability Strategy will be developed in 2024.	➔ Investment Attraction and Growth

Respect and Social Inclusion

Priorities	Actions	Link to other strategies	Responsible
Events and activities that encourage social participation and celebrate the contribution seniors make to our community.	Deliver the annual Seniors Festival across the municipality.		➔ Governance and Information ➔ Investment Attraction and Growth
	Support event organisers to deliver a diverse range of community events by offering the Community Events Grants Program.	The new Community Events Grants Program is beginning in 2024 and will be offered twice a year.	➔ Investment Attraction and Growth ➔ Governance and Information
The diversity of our ageing community is acknowledged and barriers to social participation are addressed.	Encourage the delivery of events and activities in locations that can be attended via public transport.	The HRCC Accessible Events Guide identifies changes that event organisers can make to improve the accessibility of their event.	➔ Investment Attraction and Growth
	Deliver Council events at locations that are accessible for attendees.		➔ Investment Attraction and Growth
	Promote accessible features of all Council events.		➔ Investment Attraction and Growth ➔ Governance and Information
	Encourage the diverse promotion of activities and events that accommodates for the different ways in which Seniors access information.		➔ Investment Attraction and Growth ➔ Governance and Information

Planning for the specific needs people may have as they age is a focus.	Community emergency planning considers the needs of older people, and the capabilities of some people as they age	➔ Community Services and Safety
	Refer to the World Health Organisation Age Friendly Checklist to support inclusive project planning.	The World Health Organisation Age Friendly Checklist is an external document, but can assist with planning well for an aging community.

Civic Participation

Priorities	Actions	Link to other strategies	Responsible
Volunteering opportunities that align with interests and provide adequate training for volunteering roles.	Introduce a 'Friends of the Library' program and promote associated volunteering opportunities.		➔ Community Services and Safety
	Continue to offer existing volunteering opportunities and regularly seek feedback from volunteers to understand if programs can be enhanced.		➔ Arts Culture and Recreation ➔ Community Services and Safety
	Recognise and acknowledge the efforts of volunteers via recognition events such as National Volunteers Week.		➔ Governance and Information
	Develop partnerships with external agencies such as Centre for Participation to support the further development of Council's volunteering program and volunteer training.		➔ Arts Culture and Recreation ➔ Community Services and Safety
There are diverse opportunities for community members to engage with Council.	Continue to deliver the annual engagement Expo / or other appropriate forms of direct engagement for people to provide feedback on Council projects.		➔ Governance and Information

	Ensure there is an ongoing staff presence at community group meetings to share information and build relationships.		→ Governance and Information
	Facilitate four community conversations each year between community members, Councillors and staff.		→ Governance and Information
	Facilitate four Older Persons Advisory Committee meetings each year.		→ Governance and Information
Seniors can participate in lifelong learning and employment opportunities.	Promote learning programs at the Horsham Neighbourhood House, Centre for Participation and U3A.		→ Governance and Information
	Continue to develop our understanding of the barriers older adults experience when seeking employment and promote the benefits of a diverse workforce.	The HRCC Workforce Plan 2021 outlines a commitment to workforce diversity and inclusive employment.	→ People and Culture

Communication and Information

Priorities	Actions	Link to other strategies	Responsible
People can access information and communicate with Council in their preferred way.	Continue to promote Council information via the public notices in the Weekly Advertiser and the weekly e-newsletter.		→ Governance and Information
	Promote the weekly e-newsletter when conducting engagement or communicating with the community to increase subscription.		→ Governance and Information
	Continue to develop our understanding of the different and preferred ways in which older people communicate and access information.	Actions within the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan highlight alternate ways of providing information.	→ Governance and Information
	Staff involved in planning events, promotion of services or communications participate in at least one professional development activity each year to enhance their understanding of how people access information in different ways.		→ Governance and Information
	Seniors can easily access information about the local community that is easy to find and understand.	Ensure the Seniors webpage on the Council website remains up to date and has relevant information.	→ Governance and Information

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