



City of
KINGSTON

Prosperous Kingston

A framework for economic sustainability





The prosperity of the Kingston community and its neighbouring municipalities is intrinsically tied to the ability of local companies to prosper and generate sustainable employment.

The global economic landscape is being rapidly reordered with significant implications for the broader Australian economy and therefore the Kingston economy. Industrial and retail environments are undergoing major structural change. The challenge at the national, state and local level is to seize the new and emerging opportunities that will ultimately shape the economic wellbeing of the community.

Kingston will also dynamically change through substantial planned State Government infrastructure investment that presents significant value adding opportunities for the Kingston economy. Transformative private investment in aviation, education, health, housing, sport and recreation will also reinforce the unique and diverse lifestyle qualities the City of Kingston presents.



Economic Context

Local Economy

The City of Kingston is one of Victoria's major employment centres and its industrial sector is one of the largest and most concentrated in the State. There is also a significant retail and service based economy in Kingston anchored by a regional shopping centre at Southland, several major activity centres and numerous smaller local and neighbourhood shopping precincts.

Kingston is a major employment destination for local residents and workers from neighbouring municipalities. Of the 66,486 jobs within the municipality, local residents hold more than 30 per cent, with a further 37 per cent held by residents from council areas bordering Kingston. Alignment with Plan Melbourne's '20 Minute City' is exceptionally strong given that this 'employment self-containment' reduces travel times, road congestion, carbon emissions and provides a better work / life balance to residents of the region.

The manufacturing sector is the largest employer, with 17,300 jobs (26 per cent), followed by retail trade with 8,400 jobs (12.7 per cent) and wholesale trade with 7,000 jobs (10.5 per cent), making these three sectors vital to the community's economic wellbeing.

However, over the past decade the number of local jobs in the manufacturing and retail sectors has decreased consistent with the structural changes in the broader economy. There are now almost 5,000 fewer manufacturing jobs and 2,500 fewer retail jobs than there were 10 years ago.

Employment in emerging sectors such as construction, accommodation and food services, health care and social assistance, and education and training has replaced many of these lost jobs.

A forecast population growth of around 18.7% will see Kingston's population increase from the current 156,000 residents to around 185,000 in 2036. It is anticipated that most of this growth will occur in and around Kingston's major activity centres. As population drives consumption expenditure, the increasing numbers of residents will provide an on-going boost to the local economy.

Regional Economy

The City of Kingston is fortunate to be in one of Australia's most important economic regions. No other region in Australia can boast the innovation strengths of this precinct. South-east Melbourne has:

- Victoria's premier location for advanced manufacturing;
- Australia's largest university, Monash University with its comprehensive research and teaching, including prestigious medicine, chemistry, engineering and business and economics faculties and well developed international connections.
- CSIRO's largest site in Australia with expertise in materials science and engineering, mineral processing, and medical and health technologies.
- The Australian Synchrotron, which is used in research and industrial development.
- Australia's largest health services network, Southern Health, which includes the prestigious Monash Medical Centre teaching hospital.
- Melbourne Centre for Nanofabrication and its state-of-the-art instrumentation for nano and micro-scale fabrication.
- An educated and skilled workforce and a diverse multicultural population.
- Quality residential, recreational and educational facilities.

Melbourne's south east





Kingston City Council's role in economic development

Factors including population growth through increased urbanisation, rapid technological advances, an ageing workforce, globalisation and a low-carbon future present our municipality with challenges but also tremendous opportunities.

Council's participation in economic development activities will be guided by the following criteria:

Maximise economic outcomes

Strategies and actions will demonstrate value-added benefits through Council's involvement.

Be achievable and realistic

Strategies and actions will be achievable and realistic within a specified period, and within the resource constraints of Council.

Involve active partnerships

Strategies and actions will avoid duplicating services being offered by other organisations. Council will collaborate with industry groups, regional partners, research institutions and other government agencies where appropriate.

Business focused

Strategies and actions will deliver a seamless service to the business community integrating all areas of Council activity.



Priority areas for a prosperous Kingston

Kingston City Council focuses its economic development resources on eight priority areas.

1. Strategic economic planning

2. Regional collaboration
and partnerships

3. Fostering innovation
and technology adoption

4. Vibrant retail and services
precincts

5. Business education
and skill development

6. Business networking

7. Business sustainability

8. An effective voice for the
business community



Priority 1

Strategic economic planning

In a rapidly changing economic landscape, a sustainable local economy must be planned for with careful consideration given to emerging trends and issues.

Multi-faceted strategic planning processes are required for the economic viability of both retail and industrial precincts. These planning processes occur at a State level, through documents such as Plan Melbourne and critically at a local level, through Structure Plans for Activity Centres. These plans will provide an integrated response to the expected change in these Activity Centres over the next twenty years.

Transport access is a key component of competitiveness. The City of Kingston has a number of older industrial precincts where access by the new generation of High Productivity Freight Vehicles (HPFV) (B-Double and B-triple vehicles) is difficult. Council is working with VicRoads to understand the most appropriate heavy vehicle routes within Kingston, including consideration of the 'last kilometre' from a major arterial road to the factory door. The outcomes of this work will be used to inform an industrial precincts employment strategy and to guide infrastructure investment, particularly in industrial precincts.

INITIATIVE	ACTIONS	EXPECTED OUTCOMES
Integrated approach to planning	Continuous improvement of Council's internal processes to ensure they focus on the needs of businesses. Manage Council's "open for business" commitment with a "can-do" approach.	Businesses receive a responsive and seamless service from Council. Activity centres and industrial precincts provide attractive investment opportunities.
Activity centre structure plans	Implement structure plans for Moorabbin, Highett, Cheltenham, Mentone and Mordialloc Prioritise urban renewal projects in each centre to give confidence to private investors and the community.	Private sector investment is encouraged and facilitated. Kingston's Activity Centres adapt to meet the needs of changes in the retail and services sectors.
Land use repositioning	Work with key land holders and State Government agencies to realise the optimal economic value and employment outcomes of strategic land parcels. Manage "City Shaping" redevelopment proposals (permits / amendments) with a co-ordinated organisational response	Kingston's economy offers diverse and sustainable employment opportunities. The investment community has increased clarity and direction from Council's strategies.

Investment Attraction

INITIATIVE	ACTIONS	EXPECTED OUTCOMES
Integrated Transport	Identify a network of Council-maintained roads that can support the movement of goods via HPFVs. Work with the State Government to successfully deliver key arterial road investments (eg Westall Road extension). Develop measures and strategies to enable the delivery of a fit-for-purpose road network to support globally competitive businesses.	Efficient transport and traffic safety outcomes are achieved. State Government makes commitments to key arterial road links. Businesses and residents have access to an integrated transport system that meets their needs.
Industrial Precincts Employment Strategy	Develop a strategy to guide the future development of the municipality's industrial areas to meet the needs of industry, generate economic development and strengthen new employment opportunities.	Diversified employment outcomes that expand opportunities for local employment are identified and facilitated.
Economic research and demographic analysis	Maintain up to date knowledge and understanding of emerging economic issues and trends and their potential impact on the Kingston economy.	Strategic planning and economic development decisions are based on relevant research and data analysis. Businesses are proactively assisted with useful information to support their decision making processes.



Priority 2

Regional collaboration and partnerships

A paradox of the global economy is that it reinforces the importance of local “places” where firms cluster, people work, infrastructure and networks are concentrated, and people visit and optimally also live. To be effective, Local Government must adopt innovative and achievable goals in partnership with other tiers of government, business and the community.

International research demonstrates that highly successful regions have a strong collaborative culture between research institutions and the business community. Partnership initiatives will assist this region to become internationally recognised as a leading innovation, business and knowledge region within the Asia Pacific.

Kingston’s participation in these initiatives ensures that local companies are exposed to the latest emerging technologies emanating from research institutions.

INITIATIVE	ACTIONS	EXPECTED OUTCOMES
Innovation Partnerships	<p>Bring together Victoria's best publicly-funded research organisations and knowledge-based businesses to capitalise on the attributes of south-east Melbourne</p> <p>Encourage local business participation in events to build relationships and learn about innovation resources available in their region.</p>	<p>South-east Melbourne is recognised as a leading innovation, business and knowledge region in the Asia Pacific.</p> <p>Businesses have access to cutting-edge research and opportunities to build collaborative business-to-business and business-to-researcher relationships.</p> <p>The precinct attracts high technology-focused companies eager to be based in an innovation cluster.</p> <p>Australia keeps pace with its international peers on collaboration between research institutions and businesses.</p>
South East Melbourne Councils' Forum	Collaborate with neighbouring councils to implement a regional strategy that supports current and emerging industries and advocates for the provision of appropriate infrastructure.	<p>Melbourne's south-east maintains its place as one of Australia's premier economic regions.</p> <p>Councils deliver strong advocacy for the timely provision of economic and community infrastructure to support the region's growth.</p>
Partner with relevant industry associations	Partner with the Australian Industry Group (AiG) and other organisations on initiatives that deliver mutual economic benefits.	<p>Businesses have access to broader business development opportunities.</p> <p>Business values Councils investment in fostering this partnership for their benefit.</p>
Regional Food Initiative	Collaborate with neighbouring municipalities to capitalise on the strength of the food processing and distribution sectors in this region.	<p>Small to medium businesses grow and provide additional jobs.</p> <p>Food related businesses are assisted to leverage export market opportunities particularly those associated with Free Trade Agreements.</p>
Collaborate with the State and Federal Government.	<p>Develop and maintain strong relationships with relevant government agencies and facilitate access to programs they conduct.</p> <p>Leverage off government infrastructure investment to maximise the broadest possible economic opportunities,</p> <p>Actively work with the Metropolitan Planning Authority (MPA) and neighbouring councils to support the Monash National Employment Cluster.</p>	<p>Local businesses are connected directly to the most appropriate agency, and where possible, funding opportunities are maximised.</p> <p>Government infrastructure projects deliver clearly quantified economic benefits to the regional economy (eg travel time efficiencies).</p> <p>MPA will have taken a significant leadership role in making the case for regional infrastructure investment.</p>



Priority 3

Fostering innovation and technology adoption

The manufacturing sector, which is a key component of Kingston's local economy, is being subjected to major pressures. Innovations such as the integration of mechanical engineering with electronics; computer-aided engineering assisting the design, prototyping and manufacture of products and processes; and the emergence of digital printing of components, make it imperative that local companies constantly review their use of technology to drive productivity.

Successful businesses must focus on ways of using new technologies to drive business efficiencies and process change.

INITIATIVE	ACTIONS	EXPECTED OUTCOMES
Technology focused workshops and events.	Deliver business education workshops that support companies to adopt new technologies and new business processes	Businesses achieve cost efficiencies. Competitive with global business processes are enabled. Business-to-business connections are facilitated.
Fast broadband and Wi-Fi access	Advocate strongly for Kingston's industrial areas to have access to high speed broadband. Facilitate direct market access to telecommunications providers to reduce costs to business. Provide public Wi-Fi access at Council facilities where feasible.	Kingston companies maintain international competitiveness and capitalise on 'first-mover advantage'. The business community recognises the significant role Council can play in 'unlocking and aiding' technology adoption.





Priority 4

Vibrant retail and services precincts

The new retail environment is multi-channeled with research clearly showing a rapid increase in on-line consumer activity. As consumer behavior shifts, local retail businesses need to keep pace with these changes and maintain a competitive marketplace.

Consumers now want 'experiences' when they shop, rather than just the ability to purchase goods or services. Successful shopping precincts are destinations that offer a variety of experiences and provide meeting places for the community.

Council works with State Government and private investors to upgrade and enhance the amenity of Kingston's shopping centres through its capital works program. This provides a platform for new business operators to offer a diversified consumer experience that strengthens their competitive edge.

INITIATIVE	ACTIONS	EXPECTED OUTCOMES
Capital investment	In partnership with the State Government and private investors improve the amenity of major activity centres and smaller neighbourhood centres.	New investment is facilitated through the creation of vibrant and dynamic shopping strips. Residents and visitors connect and enjoy a range of positive experiences.
Vibrant and accessible public spaces	Implement the updated Kingston Footpath Activities Policy and the Commercial Use of Council Land Policy to support Kingston's emerging café / entertainment culture and strengthen the attraction of our shopping precincts.	There is greater investment in food and hospitality initiatives in Kingston's retail centres. Local \$ spend is more likely to stay in our municipality. The community feels safer because of visible activity. Footpath access is inclusive and allows for easy pedestrian movement. Arts and culture programs are integrated into shopping precincts enhancing existing activities.
Urban design / place making	Incorporate and strengthen 'meeting spaces' in retail centres. Explore, with the Level Crossing Removal Authority, opportunities to enhance the design of retail centres through its planned investment.	People enjoy, linger, communicate and feel connected to the local community in Kingston's shopping centres. Unique new urban spaces, anchored around state of the art transport interchanges, are created.
Parking management	Survey parking usage in Activity Centres to ensure available parking produces an optimal economic outcome for businesses and convenience for the public.	There is better utilisation of parking spaces for both businesses and shoppers. The impact of parking on neighbouring residential areas is minimised.
Retail education and training programs	Provide retail specific information and training opportunities with a particular focus on the use of e-commerce and social media.	Small businesses are equipped to promote, market and trade their goods and services across multiple channels.
"Think Local First"	Promote the benefits of purchasing goods and services locally. Encourage activities and events in local shopping strips to create interest and attract local residents.	Small businesses prosper and increase the number of local jobs. Cross marketing activities develop to strengthen strip shopping centres. Residents develop a strong connection with their local centre \$ spend is retained locally to support a vibrant economy.
Encourage tourism	Promote Kingston in the 'Discover Your Own Backyard' initiative and other State Government tourism marketing campaigns. Broaden Kingston's public relations activity through multi-channel marketing to highlight unique experiences. Promote Kingston's natural and recreational assets including its golf courses and iconic foreshore.	Visitation by residents' family and friends is increased. Kingston businesses cross promote their unique customer experiences more effectively. Patronage of Kingston's leisure and recreation activities such as golf, water sports, arts and shopping precincts, is increased.

A photograph of two women smiling and looking at each other in what appears to be a craft or retail shop. The woman on the left is older with blonde hair, and the woman on the right is younger with dark hair. They are both wearing dark jackets. The background shows shelves with various items, including flowers and decorative objects.

Priority 5

Business education and skill development

To remain viable, business operators need to understand the implications of emerging trends and regulatory compliance changes. It is vital that business operators can access affordable and timely advice and relevant business development opportunities. Small business operators are often disadvantaged when it comes to improving their skills, due to a lack of time and resources.

Council plays a role in delivering a broad range of business education workshops and seminars to meet identified business needs.

With a diverse mix of education facilities within the municipality and broader region, Council can also play a role in providing connections between the business community and education institutions to generate potential career pathways.

INITIATIVE	ACTIONS	EXPECTED OUTCOMES
Mentor Partners Program	Match experienced volunteer business mentors with small businesses.	<p>Small businesses are supported to grow and expand.</p> <p>Council's business support services and networks are linked with business mentorees.</p> <p>The skills of experienced business mentors are retained through active engagement with a broad business network.</p>
Business education	<p>Deliver business workshops, seminars and education programs to meet a broad range of business needs.</p> <p>Encourage partnerships with industry associations, TAFEs and other training providers to deliver relevant accredited training.</p>	<p>Small businesses have access to low cost skill development that they otherwise may not pursue.</p> <p>Residents have access to appropriate training and skill development to meet the needs of the changing economy.</p>
Create career pathways	<p>In partnership with other agencies, focus on the needs of young people and those from diverse backgrounds to assist transition into skill development and employment.</p> <p>Work with local employers and educational institutions in the City and the broader region to support career pathways.</p>	<p>The resources of specialised agencies are used more efficiently for the benefit of the community.</p> <p>Greater social inclusion and community well-being is achieved.</p> <p>The skills of local residents better match local employment needs.</p> <p>Company productivity is enhanced through access to a skilled labour force.</p>

A photograph of a person from behind, sitting at a desk and working on a laptop. The laptop screen displays a green arrow pointing to the right. The person is wearing a dark blue shirt. To the right of the person, another person's arm and hand holding a black folder are visible. The background is slightly blurred, showing a typical office or workshop environment.

Priority 6

Networking – making connections

Business networks provide opportunities to connect with others and exchange business information and ideas. Networks also provide opportunities to develop mutually beneficial relationships in a supportive environment.

For small businesses, networking is one of the most powerful and cost-effective marketing tactics to accelerate and sustain success. Because business operators have different needs, Council provides a variety of network opportunities.

Through networking, smaller businesses have the opportunity to engage with larger corporations to keep up-to-date with the latest developments in their industry. Networks can also foster collaboration and innovation.

With the substantial range of large scale public and private investments planned in our City, networking provides an opportunity to introduce local companies to a range of significant investors.

INITIATIVE	ACTIONS	EXPECTED OUTCOMES
Advisory committees and roundtables	Conduct a Business and Economic Development Advisory Committee and regular roundtable groups to facilitate meaningful knowledge exchange.	<p>Council is provided with highly informed insights on how its diverse services can be tailored to support the prosperity of the local economy.</p> <p>A network of business leaders is created where they share insights and experiences to help shape strategy and inform Council's advocacy agenda.</p> <p>Council will be provided with a greater insight into the macroeconomic conditions influencing business trends and confidence.</p>
Connecting women in business	<p>Support the unique needs of women running small businesses.</p> <p>Facilitate women's understanding of leadership pathways in the workplace.</p>	<p>Business women are better equipped to manage their unique challenges,</p> <p>Women operating home- based businesses feel less isolated.</p> <p>Women are encouraged to pursue leadership opportunities.</p>
'Meet Your Mates' networks in industrial precincts	Establish a number of precinct networks in Kingston's industrial areas to encourage supplier alliances and collaboration.	Business-to-business relationships are established through an increased awareness of the capabilities of neighbouring businesses.
Kingston co-working hub	Work with the State Government to partner an appropriate entity to create a shared working environment where independent professionals can come together to work and collaborate within a community.	<p>Traditional home-based business operators are less isolated.</p> <p>Opportunities are created for collaboration between independent professionals.</p> <p>A 'clustered hub' of support services is provided to Kingston's industrial and retail service centres.</p>
Promote the investment pipeline in the municipality.	Proactively inform the business community of key strategic investments planned in Kingston.	Local businesses begin to leverage contracts through major strategic investments.



Priority 7

Business sustainability

The concept of business sustainability needs to be viewed in the broadest context. The aim is for businesses to be sustainable and provide secure employment for our community

Business sustainability is the management and coordination of environmental, social and financial demands to ensure responsible, ethical and on-going success.

Challenges presented to businesses include rising production and operating costs, managing supply chain risks, waste management and consumer scrutiny.

INITIATIVE	ACTIONS	EXPECTED OUTCOMES
Business Sustainability Network	<p>Coordinate the Kingston Business Sustainability Network to facilitate collaboration and knowledge exchange in all areas of business sustainability.</p> <p>Access funding opportunities to assist local manufacturers to reduce costs associated with energy, waste disposal and water usage.</p>	<p>Information on sustainable business practices is shared with and between local businesses to enable operating cost reductions.</p> <p>There is a reduction in the use of resources and in the amount of business waste going to landfill.</p>
Business model innovation	<p>Foster greater understanding of emerging opportunities associated with new ways of doing business.</p> <p>Conduct monthly farmers' market to provide small food manufacturers with a direct route to consumers.</p>	<p>Businesses are able to exploit new revenue streams.</p> <p>Small niche food manufacturers have a low cost sales opportunity.</p>
ASPIRE Project	<p>Work with partner Councils and the State Government to implement the Advisory System for Processing, Innovation and Resource Exchange (ASPIRE) to facilitate the exchange of by-products from production processes between companies.</p>	<p>Costs, including transportation, of disposing of by-products to landfill are reduced.</p> <p>New income streams are generated.</p> <p>Innovative new products are developed.</p> <p>Innovative new ways of reusing and recycling of material resources are identified and supported.</p>
Emergency management	<p>Provide appropriate frameworks and templates to assist businesses implement comprehensive emergency management plans to deal with unexpected events.</p> <p>Provide businesses with appropriate connections to emergency service agencies.</p>	<p>Business operators are better equipped to deal with unexpected events.</p> <p>There are less business failures as a result of unexpected events.</p>



Priority 8

Being an effective voice for the business community

Business owners often find it difficult to have their individual voices heard. Council has established communication channels to listen to the concerns of local operators and assist in raising concerns to the relevant organisation or representative.

Council advocates to State and Federal Governments and relevant industry bodies on a number of important economic and business issues to assist in maintaining the competitiveness of local companies. In consultation with the business community, Council will continue to advocate for the interests of local businesses whenever appropriate.

Council also provides a platform to promote the diversity and strengths of the business community and the local economy.

INITIATIVE	ACTIONS	EXPECTED OUTCOMES
Advocacy	<p>Advocate for Kingston's industrial areas to have access to high speed broadband.</p> <p>Monitor the economic environment, emerging trends and proposed Federal and State Government initiatives to identify impacts on local companies.</p> <p>Promote Federal and State Government initiatives that support business growth and global trade.</p>	<p>Businesses maximise the opportunities associated with faster broadband.</p> <p>Businesses remain globally competitive.</p> <p>Issues are raised in a timely manner with relevant government agencies.</p>
Chambers of Commerce	Encourage and support the formation of effective Chambers of Commerce.	There is timely and effective two-way communication between small businesses and Council.
Business Communications	Promote Kingston Council's multi-channel communication tools through the website, Kingston Business Bulletin, e-newsletters and other social media.	<p>Businesses will be well informed about Council and other government services available to them.</p> <p>Success stories will be recognised and shared.</p>
Transport, logistics and port infrastructure	<p>Work collaboratively with Infrastructure Victoria on the establishment of a 2nd container port for Melbourne.</p> <p>Advocate against any future deepening or widening of the shipping channels or heads in Port Phillip Bay.</p>	<p>The Port of Hastings is actively considered as an option when Infrastructure Victoria assesses Victoria's container port requirements.</p> <p>The environmental values of Port Phillip Bay are protected.</p>

Kingston Business

taking care of business in Kingston

1230 Nepean Highway,
Cheltenham, VIC 3192
PO Box 1000, Mentone, VIC 3194

📞 1300 653 356

✉️ info@kingston.vic.gov.au

🌐 kingston.vic.gov.au/business



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