WHITEHORSE CITY COUNCIL

Housing Strategy Review

Over the next 25 years, Whitehorse is projected to grow by over 60,000 people and by 2051, more than 240,000 people are expected to call Whitehorse home.

As our municipality grows and changes over time, we need to plan for the right mix of homes with varied sizes and types in well-located areas to support our diverse and multicultural community.

Why are we reviewing our Housing Strategy?

The State Government has set housing capacity targets for every council across Victoria. For Whitehorse, this means we need to plan for 76,500 new homes by 2051. To achieve this, we need to carefully ensure housing growth is balanced with improving liveability and maintaining what makes Whitehorse special.

We are reviewing our Housing Strategy to plan for homes that meet the needs of our changing community, now and into the future.



The new Housing Strategy will be a 15-year plan that guides housing across Whitehorse. It will:

- → Show how Whitehorse will plan for its housing capacity target of 76,500 new homes by 2051
- → Identify appropriate locations for medium and higher density homes, close to shops, transport and daily services
- → Identify actions to improve housing affordability including the need for more social and affordable housing
- → Guide how new homes will contribute to the valued characteristics of our neighbourhoods such as trees, landscaping and quality design
- → Coordinate housing with transport, community infrastructure and services
- → Support sustainable, liveable and climate-resilient neighbourhoods

Learn more about our Housing Strategy review

A snapshot of Whitehorse

Whitehorse today

Whitehorse is well connected to metropolitan Melbourne through existing public transport connections and future Suburban Rail Loop stations at Box Hill and Burwood. As our population grows and housing needs become more diverse, Whitehorse will need to accommodate more homes in locations that are well connected to jobs, services, public transport and community infrastructure.



185,367 residents in Whitehorse



76,753 total homes across Whitehorse



45,894 low-density detached homes



30,859 medium and high-density homes

Whitehorse in the future

Our population and housing needs have continued to change, with growing demand for different types of homes and more housing in areas well-served by transport, services and employment. Major State Government reforms, housing targets and planning changes are also influencing where and how housing growth occurs across Whitehorse. Areas such as Box Hill and Burwood are expected to experience significant growth. We need to consider how housing responds to these changes while remaining flexible to future trends such as an ageing population and more single-person households.

76,500
State Government 2051 housing capacity target for Whitehorse

248,672
Number of residents projected in 2051 (that's an increase of 63,305 more people than today)

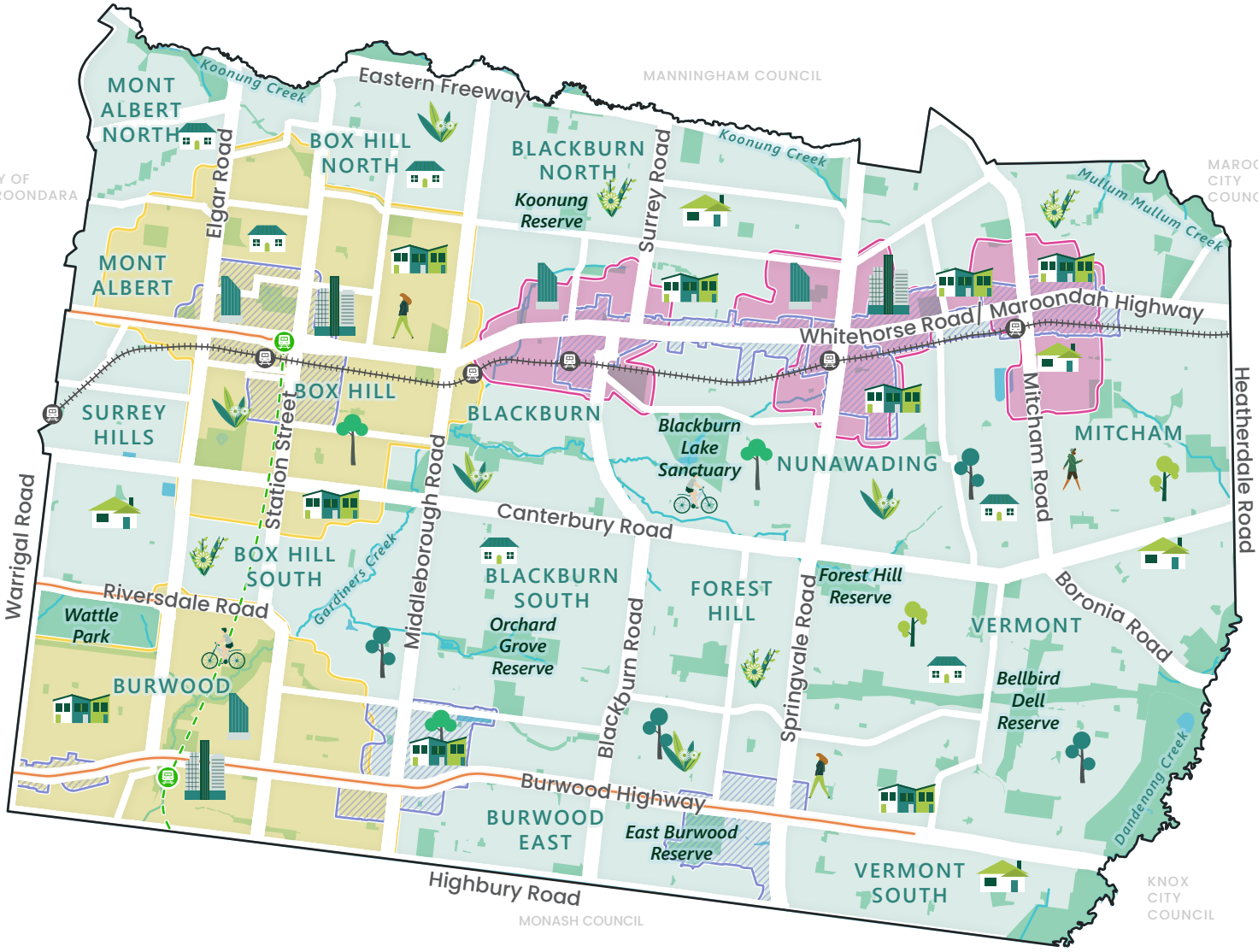
2.65 people
Average household size in 2051. That's slightly less than today (indicating an increase of single-person households)

57,484
Number of residents over 60 years old in 2051 (23.1% of Whitehorse's population - an increase from 22.8% today)

Source: PlaceInfo 2026

Whitehorse's neighbourhoods

Located around 15 kilometres east of Melbourne's CBD, Whitehorse includes a mix of established leafy suburban neighbourhoods, vibrant activity and employment areas.



Existing features

- City of Whitehorse boundary
- Train line and stations
- Tram lines
- Parks and open spaces
- Lakes, rivers and creeks
- Whitehorse activity centres

Major State Government projects

- Suburban Rail Loop (SRL) area
- Future SRL train line and stations
- Train and Tram Zone Activity Centre area

What's changed since 2014?

2014

Whitehorse Housing Strategy and Neighbourhood Character Study 2014 adopted

2018

Suburban Rail Loop (SRL)

State Government announced 2 new stations at Box Hill and Burwood. Planning in these areas is led by State Government.

2025

Plan for Victoria and Victorian Housing Statement

A state-wide planning document that set a housing capacity target of 76,500 new homes for Whitehorse by 2051.

Train and Tram Zone Activity Centres (TTZAC) Program

State Government announced that Blackburn, Nunawading and Mitcham activity centres have been identified as locations for increased housing. Planning in these areas is led by State Government.

Residential planning reforms

State Government released new rules for the assessment, design and planning for new homes for all Councils in Victoria.

2026

TODAY

We are now reviewing and updating our Housing Strategy in response to the above changes in planning rules while also ensuring planning for new homes reflects local community values and priorities.

Council initiative State Government initiative

What can a Housing Strategy do?

Improve housing choices for everyone

Our community is changing and we need a range of housing options to suit different people and stages of life. New homes should also be well designed and environmentally sustainable. **The Housing Strategy will plan for a range of housing options, including units, townhouses and apartments.**

Enhance our trees and character

Trees, leafy streets and the character of our neighbourhoods are highly valued by the Whitehorse community. Recent State planning reforms have reduced the role of neighbourhood character in planning for housing, with greater emphasis on accommodating housing growth rather than managing how new development fits within its surroundings. **The Housing Strategy will consider how to protect and enhance the qualities that make Whitehorse special as the city grows and changes.**

Support more affordable housing

Rents and house prices have risen sharply over the past decade, with around 8,500 households needing social or affordable housing in 2021 and is expected to reach 11,400 by 2036. **The Housing Strategy will identify ways Council can support housing affordability and affordable housing through advocacy and partnerships.**

Support diverse and liveable neighbourhoods

More homes need to be supported by parks, transport, community facilities and other services people rely on. We also need to create neighbourhoods that are sustainable, resilient and easy to walk and cycle around. **The Housing Strategy will consider how housing growth can support liveable, sustainable and connected neighbourhoods.**

Support well-connected and vibrant communities

Whitehorse is well connected by train, tram and bus, with further housing growth planned around Box Hill, Burwood and the Blackburn, Nunawading and Mitcham activity centres through State-led projects. **The Housing Strategy will consider how housing growth can be integrated with transport planning and reflect local priorities, including traffic management and parking.**



Our role in planning for housing

What <u>can</u> Council influence?

Housing is shaped by all 3 levels of government and everyone has a role to play. The Whitehorse Housing Strategy will focus on the areas where Council can make a difference. This includes making decisions that affect our local community such as:

- where different types of housing can be located across Whitehorse
- assessing some planning permit applications for new housing developments
- how new housing fits within neighbourhoods and activity centres
- working with developers and other organisations to help deliver community benefits which could include Council land
- advocating to higher levels of government for infrastructure, services and housing outcomes that support our community
- planning for local open space and community infrastructure needed to support population growth
- replanting guidelines.



What is <u>outside</u> Council's influence?

Many of the decisions that shape housing are made by the Victorian and Australian governments. While Whitehorse City Council can advocate for the needs of our community and work in partnership with other levels of government, it does not make all decisions. These include decisions around:

- tax settings that affect housing and property investment
- major infrastructure investment (e.g. Suburban Rail Loop, schools, hospitals and highways)
- setting the rules which determine which types of housing proposals are considered by Council
- applications that are determined by the State Government through the Development Facilitation Program
- delivery and provision of public and social housing (Council can play a supporting role)
- construction delivery and raw material supply
- interest rates and lending rules
- rental laws and tenancy regulations
- migration and population policies.



We want to hear from you

Right now, we are sharing information to inform our community about Whitehorse's housing context. In early 2027 we will start our community engagement on the Housing Strategy Review to understand community views and priorities that will inform the development of the draft Whitehorse Housing Strategy.

How you can get involved

November 2026 - January 2027

Learn more about the Housing Strategy review

February 2027

Community engagement on the Discussion Paper

Tell us what matters most to you about housing

Mid 2027

Community engagement on the draft Housing Strategy

Share your thoughts and feedback on the draft Housing Strategy

Late 2027

Final Housing Strategy

We'll share what we heard and how community feedback helped shape the final Housing Strategy

To learn more about housing in Whitehorse and stay updated on upcoming engagement opportunities, scan the QR code or visit:

https://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au/planning-building/planning-strategies/whitehorse-housing-strategy

For more information about the project:

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