



ANNUAL REPORT HIGHLIGHTS
2004–2005

Great Place –
A Great Move



GREAT PLACE

- Dynamic and diverse city
- Recognised as ‘Melbourne’s 2nd City’
- Victoria’s manufacturing heartland
- Home to 7,000 businesses
- 170 parks & reserves
- Home to Sandown International Raceway
- Multi-million dollar performing arts centre opening 2006
- Land area of 129.5 square kilometres

GREAT PEOPLE

- 133,000 residents
- People from 152 nations
- Half our residents born overseas
- 70,000 people employed locally
- 150 local community groups and service clubs
- An active and committed volunteer community
- National women’s basketball champion team

GREAT SHOPS

- A thriving and bustling Dandenong Market
- Modern shopping complexes at Dandenong & Keysborough
- Wide variety of fresh produce, seafood and meat
- Over 50 Asian restaurants & specialty supermarkets
- Extensive range of factory outlets
- Monthly Springvale craft market

GREAT TIMES

- Festivals held monthly
- Sandown Racing – cars, horses and greyhounds
- Scenic bike paths stretching from Jells Park to Carrum beach
- 200 active sports clubs
- Indoor & outdoor swimming pools
- Largest basketball stadium in the southern hemisphere
- Victoria’s largest Lunar New Year festival

OUR VISION

A great city in which to live and work with great people for neighbours and friends where:

- People from all cultures and walks of life are welcomed and involved.
- All residents are proud of their city.
- Plans are in place for a dynamic sustainable future.
- Achievements are recognised and celebrated.
- Environmental, economic, social and civic wellbeing is a reality.

OUR MISSION

To achieve the vision for Greater Dandenong through effective leadership, good governance and the delivery of high quality services.

MESSAGE FROM
THE MAYOR



Cr MARIA SAMPEY
MAYOR



CEO'S OVERVIEW



CARL WULFF
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



The City of Greater Dandenong has experienced a truly formative year, building a strong foundation for future growth.

It is the combined efforts of our residents, diverse community organisations, businesses and government allies that are drawing together the resources of our community to create a vibrant, prosperous city of regional significance.

For the second consecutive year, council has backed its commitment to growth through record spending on its city improvement program (CIP). It has pledged \$36.9 million to complete major projects started in the past year. This includes the redevelopment of the Dandenong Town Hall into a performing arts centre; the upgrade of the Dandenong Market; refurbishment of Dandenong Basketball Stadium to house Victoria's state volleyball centre; a new Community Services Centre and Aged Care facility at Noble Park; the development of the metro 3175 inner city residential estate; the conversion of Armytage Hall to a premier youth music venue known as The Castle, and adjoining Hemmings Park youth precinct including a skate park and BMX tracks; the development of Tatterson Park, which will eventually include sports fields, walking tracks, education facilities and family health services.

I feel privileged to be mayor at such a turning point in Greater Dandenong's history. The results in our annual report are the outcome of the dedicated efforts of staff, councillors, residents and all of our strategic partners. The past year's accomplishments lay the bedrock for even greater things to come and are something to be truly proud of.

Cr MARIA SAMPEY
MAYOR

The City of Greater Dandenong is Victoria's premier transit city and this year we have moved steadily closer to cementing that vision. As the economic hub of the south east region, Greater Dandenong is set for significant growth over the next 20 years.

The council has thrown its weight behind this vision with a commitment to invest more than \$36.9 million in capital works improvements in the city for the second year running. Together, we can ensure that Greater Dandenong is a thriving community, a preferred residential address and a much sought after business location.

There have been a number of milestones reached in the past financial year that have seen us make significant progress. The council adopted over \$370 million worth of building approvals, leading the way for economic development in the city. Together with our Retail Revitalisation Strategy and Economic Development Strategy, we are well placed to build on the great strides forward we have taken in the last twelve months.

The council is now looking towards the future with the possible adoption of a Strategic Services Partnership (SSP). The SSP will join the council with a private sector partner to deliver council services. The model will deliver high quality services and efficiencies and attract business from outside the city to grow Greater Dandenong both geographically and financially.

Our challenge as we head into these truly exciting waters will be to continue to build on our past successes and continue to foster the partnerships we have built between the councillors, our community and staff.

On behalf of the Executive team, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the councillors, staff and the community who have assisted in achieving the results of the past twelve months. In the next twelve months, these partnerships will become even more important.

CARL WULFF
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

The following pages are a snapshot of achievements from council's 2004–05 Annual Report, available online at www.greaterdandenong.com



ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

Highlights

- Community satisfaction with the performance of council's town planning policies and approvals was 68 per cent in the Local Government Annual Community Satisfaction Survey, the highest in the group to which we are compared.
- New investment in residential, commercial and industrial properties as measured through building approvals reached \$375million.
- Five central Dandenong improvement plans are currently active.

Challenges

- Reducing the average decision-making timeframe for delegated planning approvals.
- Community satisfaction with local roads and footpaths fell to 62 per cent.

Future directions

- The Springvale Structure Plan will be exhibited prior to submission to council for adoption.
- A draft Economic Development Strategy including a Strategic Employment Framework has been developed and it will be implemented within the coming year.
- Destination Dandenong – Central Dandenong Structure Plan will be submitted to council for adoption.
- More opportunities for automated and online information for rates and parking fines will be provided.

SOCIAL WELL-BEING

Highlights

- 'The Time of Your Life' Youth Strategy programs implemented including research into youth needs, Youth Leadership Program and improving drug and graffiti prevention programs.
- Municipal Families with Children Strategy adopted.
- Community satisfaction with health and human services was 73 per cent in the Local Government Annual Community Satisfaction Survey.
- Residents perception of safety in their homes during the day rose to 96 per cent and at night were 90 per cent indicating that council's safety promotion activities are positively influencing perceptions of crime.
- Community satisfaction levels with library services were recorded at 99 per cent.
- Over 913,000 people visited the libraries.

Challenges

- Demand for services for the aged continue to be high.

Future directions

- Establish an integrated youth services centre at Hemmings Park, to be called The Castle.
- Complete construction of the Noble Park Community Services Centre, to be called The Paddy O'Donoghue Centre.
- Officially open the Drum Theatre at the Dandenong Town Hall.

ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING

Highlights

- Shopfront Improvement Scheme was successfully run with 30 agreements made to improve local shopfronts.
- Environmental Improvement Strategy prepared and adopted.
- 1160 residents participated in tree planting events.
- 20 000 seedlings planted throughout the city.
- Domestic recyclables rose to 4.91kg per household per week.

Challenges

- Average kilograms of domestic waste to landfill per household per week remains high at 10.61kg.

Future directions

- More than 800 trees will be planted throughout the city.
- More than 18 000 seedlings will be planted over the next 12 months.

CIVIC WELL-BEING

Highlights

- Community satisfaction with council's role in advocacy rose to 69 per cent.
- Best Value improvement plans were identified including traineeship opportunities, talking technology in the libraries, re-branding of community newsletters and reducing paper usage.
- Youth Participatory Leadership program developed and conducted.

Challenges

- Community satisfaction with customer contact fell to 72 per cent.

Future directions

- Remaining service reviews to be completed within the year.
- Council elections will be held in November 2005.



Council provides approximately \$1.6 million annually through the Community Grants and Donations Program towards a range of activities for youth, families, festivals, leisure and recreation, aged and disability programs, arts activities and community and cultural development.

Successful applications aim to encourage community participation and promote well-being, and as such are aligned to council's corporate goals. In 2004-2005, the Community Grants and Donations Program comprised of four distinct funding programs.

*Visit **greaterdandenong.com** for full details of the Community Grants program.*

General Support and Establishment Grants

The majority of the total grants are towards general support such as project costs, purchase of resources and running costs, salary, bus hire, hall hire, rental, and establishment grants.

In 2004-05, 218 applications were received and \$1,477 was distributed to 180 applicants.

Establishment Grants encourage applications from new and emerging groups. Up to \$1,000 can be given to assist in areas such as becoming incorporated, meeting room hire and stationary costs.

Community Strengthening Projects

Programs focussing on community building outcomes are eligible. The aim is to strengthen the capacity of community groups to participate in, and influence the growth and development of their community.

In 2004-2005, 46 applications were received in this area and 20 projects were funded to the value of \$150,000. Types of projects funded included leadership and mentoring programs for young people, programs to tackle men's health and issues of social isolation, workshops dealing with inter-generation difference amongst newly settled migrant groups and a peer support life skills program for people with multiple sclerosis.

Occasional Grants

Open all year, up to \$1,000 is available to assist community groups or individuals throughout the city.

Occasional Grant funding has enabled young Greater Dandenong residents to represent their state or Australia at sporting events and community groups to conduct minor repairs at their facilities to address emergency situations.

The 2004-2005 Occasional Grant program received 168 applications, of which 132 were funded to a total value of \$53,220.

**CAPITAL
IMPROVEMENT
PROGRAM**



**EMPLOYER
OF CHOICE**

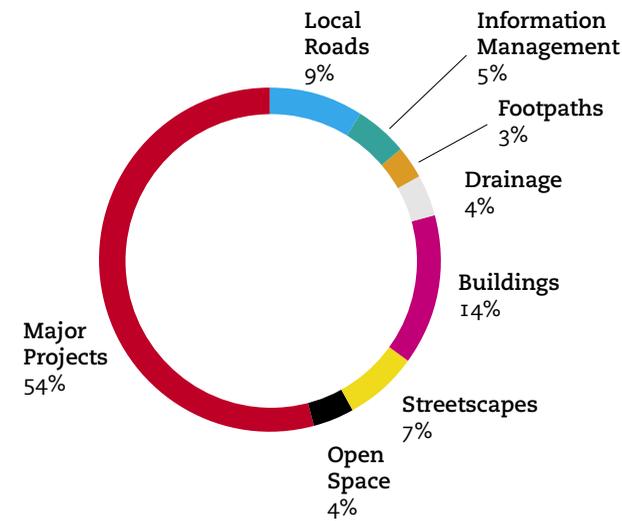


Our Capital Improvement Program is on track, with work beginning on several important projects such as the \$13 million Drum Theatre at the Dandenong Town Hall. The theatre will be a catalyst for revitalisation in the city centre and is one of the council's great successes for the year.

Work has also begun on a \$5.8 million community services centre at Noble Park, cementing council's commitment to improving services to older people, youth, families and children.

We have made significant progress in the environment with the adoption of the Environmental Strategy. This follows the planting of 20 000 seedlings throughout the city. Combined with the adoption of the Green Office program, council is leading the way in planning for a sustainable and environmentally friendly future. Waste to landfill was reduced, with an average of 4.9 kilograms of domestic recycling recovered per household per week in the municipality.

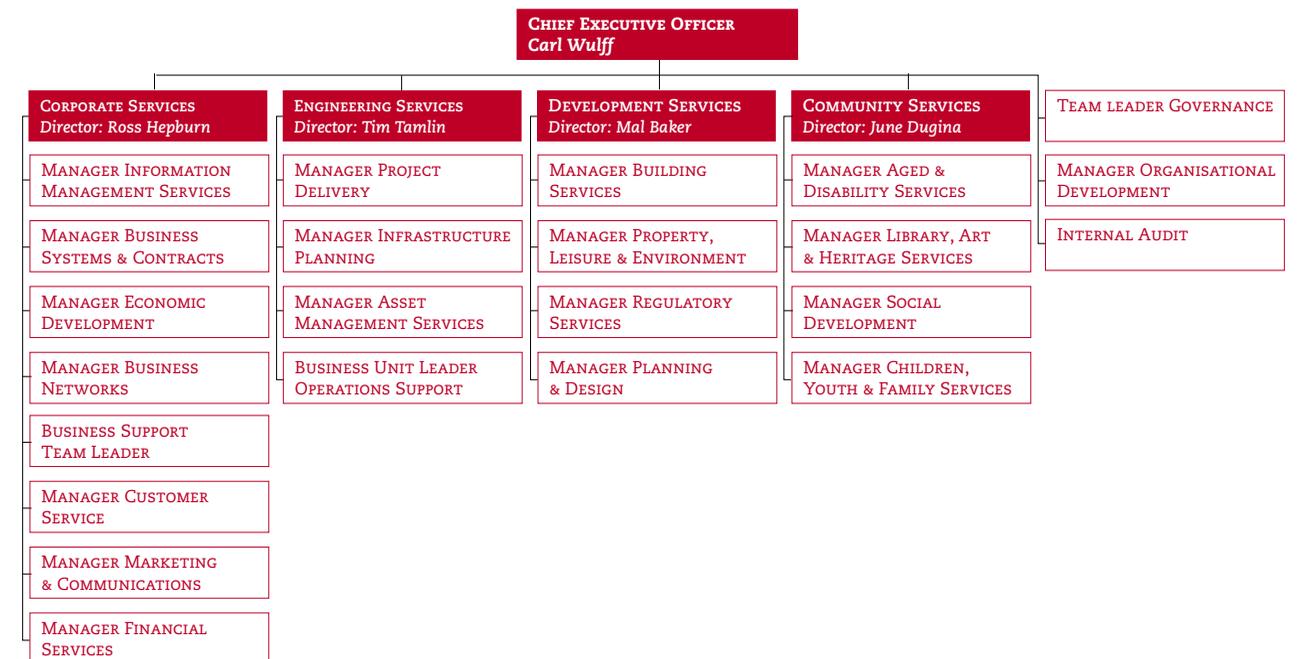
City Improvement Program 2004/2005
% of money spent per Category

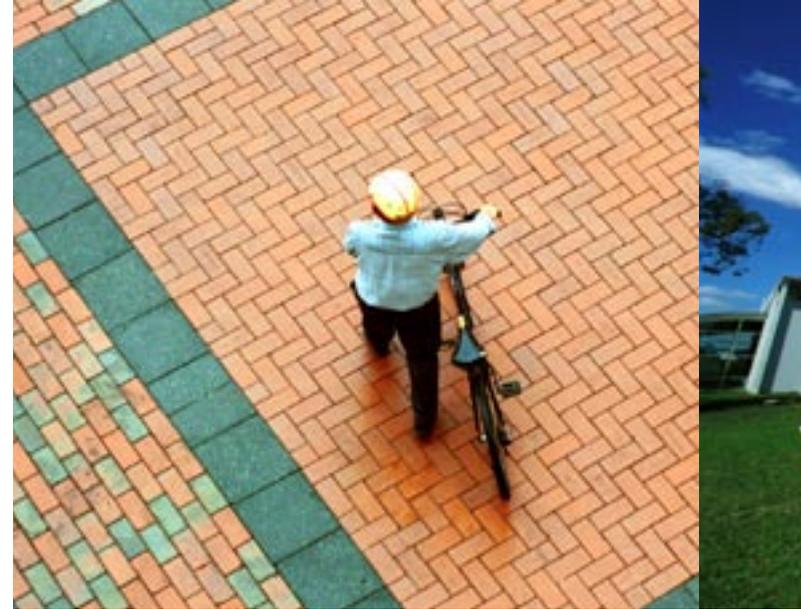


The City of Greater Dandenong employs 795 staff and is committed to promoting effective and contemporary organisational development practices that assist employees to balance their work, family, health, study and other life commitments. A set of practical guidelines has been produced to assist employees to access flexible work options. Council's Enterprise Agreement, which was certified in 2003, recognises the work life balance responsibilities of employees through improvements to parental leave provisions and initiatives such as after hours dependant care, cultural and ceremonial leave, defence services leave, emergency services leave and special leave. A survey was conducted across all staff seeking feedback in regards to their work-life balance.

The City of Greater Dandenong is one of seven councils across Victoria participating in an innovative cross industry online mentoring program, known as the Peer Support Program, designed to share knowledge and develop skills for local government staff. Mentors or mentees from participating councils across Victoria are matched electronically and join in a mentoring relationship, which is monitored and evaluated online.

The organisation places strong emphasis on ongoing professional and personal development with over 1,100 attendees participating in training opportunities during 2004-05. Management development programs were conducted in the areas of leadership, change management and coaching skills.





Service Review process

Over the past four years every team within the council has been challenged to review their services and identify opportunities to improve the level of service provided to customers. A series of principles form the Best Value model. The aim of these principles is to continuously challenge teams to provide better service to customers. Outlined below are some of the activities and improvements undertaken by teams throughout the past 12 months. Complete details of the progress teams have made in reviewing and improving their services are outlined in the full version of the Annual Report. A copy is also available on council's website: greaterdandenong.com.

What We Have Done:

Customer Feedback on Satisfaction Levels With Services

- 13,852 customers have been given the opportunity to provide comment on how satisfied they are with services provided by council.
- Overall customer satisfaction ratings have ranged between 5.01 and 9.51 out of a possible 10. The majority of services received ratings in the range of 6.8 to 7.8 out of a possible 10.
- In general terms, customers find staff to be courteous and responsive to customer needs. Areas of improvements focused predominantly on the need to better understand customer's needs and ability to solve problems.

Some of the Improvements Implemented in 2004-2005

- Customers have responded positively to the new look and content of the community and business newsletters - 'The City' and 'Stakeholder'. The change was inspired by information provided by customers.
- A wider range of activities are now being enjoyed by participants attending the Adult Day Activity Support Service.
- A new operations centre has been designed and developed to incorporate environmental improvements that are cutting electricity and water usage costs. More efficient use of land has also been achieved.
- A management program for reinvigorating the appearance of our roads has been implemented through the Leafy Legacy tree planting and replacement program.
- Reviews have been introduced to measure the results of local area traffic management projects.
- 'Talking Technology' has been introduced in the libraries to provide customers 24x7 hour access.
- Increased options have been given to customers for management of waste.

- Support services have been introduced to address health issues for parents by helping them access the health network system and give them information on where they can receive additional services for their family.
- More detailed information and responses can now be provided to customers immediately at the first point of contact through the development of a web based application called 'Council Assist'.
- A wide range of information is now available on-line to the community relating to minimising the negative impact of drugs and improving community safety.
- The youth program has been improved as a result of involving young people in the planning and delivery of new programs.
- Many teams have been investigating ways to reduce paper usage and reduce costs.
- A number of teams have introduced trainee programs that provide young people with opportunities to learn new skills, build on the job work experience and gain a base qualification.

Greater Dandenong's Approach

A series of learning and review modules have been developed for teams to work through as they consider ways of improving the services they deliver. The focus on development and involvement of staff is a key feature of the Best Value Program, as staff are the primary providers of the services and the predominant point of contact with customers. Building a culture that encourages staff to be proactive and innovative is an important outcome of the program.

Every team has identified and implemented improvements to their services over the past year and many have been able to improve the promises they make to customers in their service quality guarantees. Improvements implemented by staff are reported to the council and the community monthly.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The following is a snapshot taken from the annual financial statements. Visit www.greaterdandenong.com to find a full explanation of council's financial performance during 2004-05.

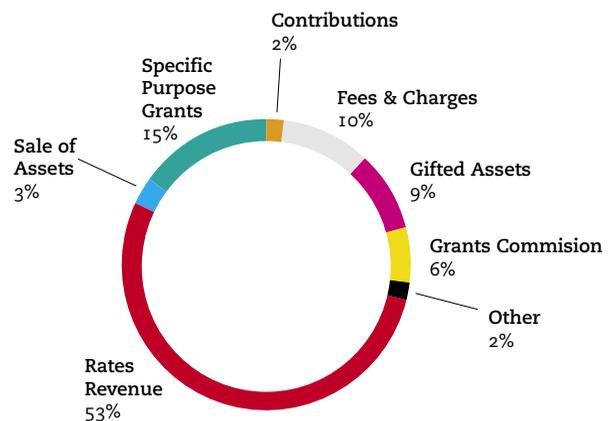


Despite significant capital projects, the council achieved an operation surplus of \$5.21M for 2004-2005. Cash held at the year-end was \$3.77M whilst maintaining a healthy financial position.

Council's five year Financial Plan is one that demonstrates a sound financial position, a good strategic view of the future and overall a sustainable financial position. Council's cash position is a sustainable position and reflects the desire of the council to ensure that as much funding as possible is being made available to maintain council's assets and provide the community with infrastructure that meets its needs and expectations, and enhance the lifestyle of the community.

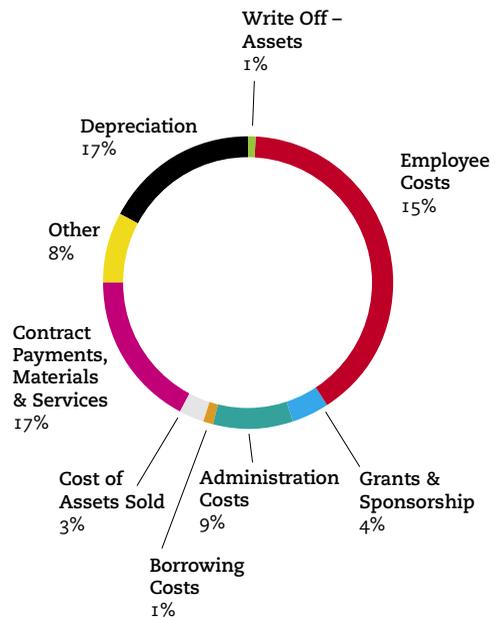
The following provides an overview of where the council's money comes from and how it was spent in the 2004-2005 financial year.

Council receives money from a number of sources. The largest amount comes from rates and charges collected from businesses and households throughout the region. Government grants provide \$20.8m of income. The breakdown of revenue by major categories is depicted in the graph below.



Each year the council invests a significant amount of money into amenities and infrastructure.

Total recurrent expenditure for 2004-2005 including depreciation and cost of assets sold was \$92.6m, compared to \$82.6m in 2003-2004. The major items of expenditure are depicted in the graph below.



The City of Greater Dandenong's 11 councillors are elected as representatives of all residents and ratepayers within the city. Their key responsibilities include:

- establishing the strategic direction of the city
- advocating a broad range of issues
- management of the community's assets
- ensuring the delivery of quality services
- providing fair and equitable representation of all constituents
- enforcement of local laws

Greater Dandenong Council was elected on 14 March, 2003 and will retire in November, 2005.

CLEELAND WARD Cr Paul Donovan	NOBLE PARK WARD Cr Kevin Walsh
DANDENONG WARD Cr David Kelly	NOBLE PARK NORTH WARD Cr Maria Sampey Mayor, November 2004-current
DANDENONG NORTH WARD Cr John Kelly	SPRINGVALE CENTRAL WARD Cr Youhorn Chea
KEYSBOROUGH WARD Cr Roz Blades	SPRINGVALE NORTH WARD Cr Naim Melhem
KEYSBOROUGH SOUTH WARD Cr Peter Brown	SPRINGVALE SOUTH WARD Cr Clare O'Neil Mayor, March 2004-November 2004
LYNDALE WARD Cr Angela Long	



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