

Ballarat is Open

Discussion Paper



- *What is our distinctive and authentic Ballarat story? What deserves to be told? If Ballarat had a personality, what enduring traits would it have?*
- *What makes us proud to be citizens of Ballarat? What do we value? What do we not value? Why do we choose to be here?*
- *What proposition does Ballarat offer others – be they future residents, tourists or investors? What compelling Ballarat advantages would we wish to share?*
- *How can our citizens play their own part, and collaborate, to demonstrate 'our Ballarat' - to build a more prosperous city for all?*

What is Ballarat is Open?

Ballarat is Open is a project to develop a framework to guide the future prosperity of Ballarat. It will articulate our 10-year vision for our city – where we wish to be and how we will get there - and will guide future strategies and plans, including our city-wide marketing.

To develop this framework, we need to ask ourselves what Ballarat stands for and aspires to as a city. And the answers need to come from our community, businesses and organisations.

Questions such as those above have of course been asked in various ways before; every time we consult about a strategy or major project for our city. So, we have reviewed 20 of these most recent consultations in order to summarise the valuable input we have already received. The results are in the following pages to get you thinking.

Our heritage and stories – passing on lessons of the past¹

We love our heritage – be it cultural, natural, historic or architectural. Our historic heart, streetscapes, views and sense of history are an important part of Ballarat.

Our heritage contributes market value – via cultural tourism, arts, recreation and liveability. Our heritage assets are also a ‘public good’, contributing to our city’s culture. Whilst we understand the need for change, we want to make social and economic changes in a way that sustain it.

We highly value our heritage as reflected in our magnificent public buildings and streetscapes, but

we also respect and value the considerable contribution of our Aboriginal heritage and the continuing Wadawurrung culture.

Ballarat’s stories are a valuable tool in passing on knowledge, inspiring change and attracting tourists, residents and industries to Ballarat. Culture and heritage offerings for our visitors is something we want to continue. We value our tales of gold, with the Eureka story being a significant part of our local and national identity and sense of place. We want it to be interpreted and accessible for residents and visitors alike.

Our enviable lifestyle – both vibrant and relaxed²

We love our great lifestyle in Ballarat. Our city is easy to move around, we have access to greenery with our beautiful parks and gardens and we have all the benefits of excellent health and education facilities, community involvement and infrastructure.

We love our natural environment, our settlement and liveability, our tapestry of distinctive streetscapes and a diversity of housing to suit all needs. Our location means we are not far from a capital city, but our growing city is also catering

well to our sporting, cultural and recreation needs - offering vibrancy as well as a friendly community. We even love our well-defined seasons.

We are particularly proud of our beautiful historic CBD and of Lake Wendouree, the ‘jewel in our crown’. Lake Wendouree is a drawcard for locals and tourists alike, with fine gardens, passive and active recreational opportunities, events and a strong historical context.

¹ This information has been summarised from consultation data for the following City of Ballarat strategies / projects:

- *Our People Culture and Place*. A plan to sustain Ballarat’s Heritage 2017-2030
- *Bakery Hill Urban Renewal Project*: Response to Feedback (2019)
- *Making Ballarat Central*: CBD Action Plan 2017-2021
- *Ballarat East Local Area Plan* (2019)
- Consultation in 2018-2019 for *Eureka Centre and Eureka Stockade Memorial Gardens Interpretation Plan* (being prepared)
- Background research to inform Visit Ballarat’s *Made of Ballarat* Campaign, 2017

² This information has been summarised from consultation data for the following City of Ballarat strategies / projects:

- *Today Tomorrow Together: The Ballarat Strategy – Our Vision for 2040* (2015)
- *Economic Program 2015-2019*
- *Lake Wendouree Master Plan* (2017)
- *Making Ballarat Central*: CBD Action Plan 2017-2021
- Consumer research to inform Visit Ballarat’s *Made of Ballarat* Campaign, 2017
- *Ballarat East Local Area Plan* (2019)

A welcoming, inclusive and active city – demonstrating our shared values³

We love our friendly and welcoming city with a strong sense of community. We want it to advance the liveability and prosperous health of people of all abilities and ages. We want our citizens to have active, healthy and happy lifestyles and to be able to participate in Ballarat life – be it through sports, active citizenship, leadership or other pursuits. We also want a Ballarat that is welcoming, warm and embracing, with a ‘heart of gold’.

We are an inclusive intercultural community that celebrates a diversity that has continued to grow

since the goldrush, when we were one of the most cosmopolitan cities in the world. Our shared values are freedom, democracy, social inclusion, the rule of law and equal opportunity.

We are a community that respects all its members, and assists them to maintain independence and participate in civic society. We provide the support needed for healthy children and thriving families as well as for our older population; and we have a community that encourages healthy eating, active living, strong mental health and community safety and equality.

An innovative and clever city - managing its growth sustainably⁴

We are a city well-placed as the capital of Western Victoria, and this is supported by strong population growth as well as record levels of government infrastructure investment. Already a home to internationally-recognised organisations, Ballarat has an economy that is growing and diversifying. New businesses are constantly attracted to Ballarat, with precinct planning projects in place to support sustainable residential and business growth. Ballarat already does, and is in a strong position to continue to, capitalise on the economic benefits of inbound and outbound international engagement and foreign direct investment attraction.

Our community wants our city to grow in a way that is empathetic to our heritage, but that also leverages the benefits of entrepreneurship, technology and innovation. This, combined with the strong university presence in the city,

provides strong potential for Ballarat to become a premier technology and knowledge-based regional economy.

We want to see increasing levels of start up and service industries and we want to be seen by others as entrepreneurial and inventive. We are starting to use clever technology, combined with a collaborative and open approach to sharing knowledge and data – which will facilitate innovation and produce better outcomes for our community.

We want Ballarat to have an economy and community ‘powered by STEAM’, one which takes the critical and creative thinking skills of science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics, and embeds them into the wider life of Ballarat – brokering relationships between industries and sectors to benefit all.

³ This information has been summarised from consultation data for the following City of Ballarat strategies / projects:

- Community Consultation for *Active Ballarat Strategy* (being prepared) (2018)
- *Ballarat Intercultural City Strategic Plan 2018-2021*
- Community Consultation for *Growing Older Well in Ballarat Strategy* (being prepared) (2018)
- *Municipal Early Years Plan 2015-2018*
- *Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021*
- Consumer research for Visit Ballarat *Brand Story*, 2015
- *Today Tomorrow Together: The Ballarat Strategy – Our Vision for 2040* (2015)
- *Making Ballarat Central: CBD Action Plan 2017-2021*
- Consumer research to inform Visit Ballarat’s *Made of Ballarat* Campaign, 2017

⁴ This information has been summarised from consultation data for the following City of Ballarat strategies / projects:

- *Ballarat’s Creative City Strategy* (2019)
- *Smart City Framework* (2019)
- *International Business and Trade Engagement Framework* (internal document) (2019)
- *Economic Program 2015-2019*
- Consumer research to inform Visit Ballarat’s *Made of Ballarat* Campaign, 2017

A creative and increasingly sophisticated city - drawing attention⁵

'Ballarat is an iconic city which inspires creativity, demands discovery and rewards the inquisitive'.

We want a city that has visible creativity, embedded in the wider life of Ballarat; that seeks out new audiences, participants and markets for its creative endeavours; that sustains creative practitioners and industries; that demonstrates innovation and experimental cultural offerings, as well as ground-breaking creative institutions and a world-class creative precinct.

We want to share our distinctive Ballarat story – people, culture, place – with the world. We want to be seen by others as artistic, elegant, creative, but also progressive and inventive. We want a CBD that is elegant and beautiful; exciting and multi-layered. We want it to reflect our heritage and living history, whilst showcasing our

innovation, creativity and vibrancy. We appreciate our strong arts community, reflected in our galleries, theatres and university town.

Our world-class tourist attractions are there for visitors and residents to enjoy. Ballarat is also a compelling destination for events, which should all make a positive difference to Ballarat – generating economic, social and reputational benefits. Population growth is bringing sophistication and energy into the city, with artisans and new business operators shaping a fresh face for Ballarat – with a focus on arts and culture, sports, seasonal food and wine, craft beer. Spaces such as our CBD and Lake precincts offer wonderful cultural and event destinations.

⁵ This information has been summarised from consultation data for the following City of Ballarat strategies / projects:

- *Ballarat's Creative City Strategy* (2019)
- *Making Ballarat Central: CBD Action Plan* 2017-2021
- *Lake Wendouree Master Plan* (2017)
- *Ballarat Events Strategy 2018-2028* (internal document)
- Consumer research to inform Visit Ballarat's *Made of Ballarat* Campaign, 2017