



DISABILITY ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK 2022-2025





Image: Wagarra dancers, Upstream - Festival of Art + Culture, 2021

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Traditional owners

Wodonga Council acknowledges the traditional owners of this land on which we stand and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and future, for they hold the memories, the tradition and the culture of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

The Wodonga Disability Access Advisory Group

The Wodonga Disability Access Advisory Group brings together people with disability, carers and organisations with broad and diverse knowledge and experience of disability and provides the council with strategic advice on access-related issues that can be responded to at a council level.

The council acknowledges the contribution and expertise of the Wodonga Disability Access Advisory Group members in developing this framework.



INTRODUCTION

Wodonga Council aims to ensure that everyone in the community enjoys the same opportunities, rights and respect. Creating a more equitable and inclusive community is critical to improving the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and the broader community.

The Wodonga Disability Action Plan Framework (the framework) continues council's ongoing work to promote community participation and inclusion and outlines the priorities of the council to improve access to its services, programs, communications and infrastructure.

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Diversity within the Wodonga community is recognised as one of our community's greatest strengths. Together, we commit to supporting the growth of a community that builds on the strengths of all people; values diversity and tolerance; and, recognises the fundamental right of all citizens to have equitable access to opportunities and meaningful civic participation.

The council is committed to ensuring that all residents have the opportunity to achieve their potential, helping to drive our future prosperity and build a stronger, more cohesive community.

Council plans and practices will acknowledge and consider that all people have the same rights to participate socially, culturally, economically, physically and politically in the Wodonga community.

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

The *Victorian Disability Act 2006*, section 38, requires all councils to develop a disability action plan focused on:

- Reducing barriers to persons with disabilities accessing goods, services and facilities;
- Reducing barriers to persons with disabilities obtaining and maintaining employment;
- Promoting inclusion and participation in the community of persons with disabilities; and,
- Achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against persons with disabilities.

In addition to meeting the legislative obligations under the Disability Act 2006, the implementation framework also aligns with the following legislation and standards.

- *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities*
- *United Nations Convention on the rights of Persons with Disabilities*
- *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013*
- *Disability Education Standards*
- *Disability Access to Premises*





APPROACH

The *Council Plan 2021-2025* sets council's strategic direction and outlines the key strategies for action across the next four years to achieve the council's vision that "Wodonga is a progressive, well-planned, growing city that is affordable, offers an abundance of opportunities and is led by strong, empathetic stewardship".

To ensure the principles of access, equity and inclusion are considered in all responsibilities, activities and services of council, the council has elected to articulate its commitment to disability in the *Council Plan* and integrated *Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan*. As a secondary tier plan, the *Disability Action Plan Implementation Framework* details how we will fulfill strategic commitments to improve access and inclusion and establish a shared agenda across-council and with key partners.

OUR DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

The council has used the *Social Model of Disability* to guide the development of this framework. The *Social Model of Disability* focuses on the interaction between persons living with an impairment, conditions or impairments and the environmental and attitudinal barriers they encounter. Using the *Social Model of Disability* directs the council's focus toward addressing barriers created by attitudes, practices and structures which limit the opportunities for people with disabilities to fully participate in community life.

REVIEW AND REPORTING

Review of the this framework will be undertaken annually in correlation with the annual review of *Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan*. The council will report through its annual report.



WHEELCHAIR SPORTS NSW

WHEELCHAIR SPORTS

Revel





LEADERSHIP AND ADVOCACY FOR CHANGE

Image: *Accessibility is Everyone's Responsibility* by Rebecca Randall

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

<i>Victorian Disability Act</i> priority	Achieve tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against persons with disabilities.
<i>Council Plan</i> priority	Strong, responsible and sound leadership Provide transparent governance and strong leadership, demonstrating excellence in the way we do business by being innovative and responsive.
<i>Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan</i> indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase in overall satisfaction with level of advocacy.• Increase in satisfaction with decisions made in the interest of community.

OUR ACTIONS

- Support the timely collection of relevant local data to inform responsive leadership.
- Ensure the views of people with disabilities are acknowledged and represented in council's strategic planning by adopting community engagement strategies and processes that are inclusive of all residents.
- Continue to co-ordinate the Wodonga Access Advisory Group to enable community input in to decision-making and to support the diverse needs, rights and issues affecting people with disability.
- Advocate for improved public transport systems and support the development of the Albury Wodonga Integrated Transport Strategy to improve safety, accessibility and connectivity for all transport modes.
- Advocate for an increase in housing diversity, including adaptable housing and specialist accommodation.
- In collaboration with people with disability and advocacy services, advocate, as required to other tiers of government, business, organisations and the community to address issues of access and discrimination.



PROMOTING COMMUNITY INCLUSION

Image: *Becoming Bulldogs* by Rebecca Randall



STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

<i>Victorian Disability Act</i> priority	Promote inclusion and participation in the community of persons with disabilities.
<i>Council Plan</i> priority	Healthy, safe and resilient community Improve the health and social outcomes for all people in Wodonga to create a healthy, safe, equitable and inclusive community.
<i>Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan</i> indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Improved access and connection to services, amenities and green spaces in key neighbourhood precincts.● Increase in sport and recreation rates.● More people report good to high mental health and wellbeing.

OUR ACTIONS

- Promote disability awareness and inclusion through activities and events for International Day of People with Disability and Social Inclusion Week.
- Work to ensure that internal and external communications, including imagery, messaging and signage, is representative of diversity within the community.
- Exercise leadership by championing the value of community inclusion across Wodonga's business community.
- Support and encourage local sport and recreation organisations and groups develop inclusive practices and increase participation opportunities for people with a disability.
- Publicise and promote good news and success stories of inclusion within the community.



REDUCING BARRIERS TO COUNCIL'S SERVICES, FACILITIES AND PUBLIC ENVIRONMENTS



STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

<i>Victorian Disability Act</i> priority	Reduce barriers to persons with disabilities accessing goods, services and facilities.
<i>Council Plan</i> priority	Connected and Engaged Community Create a welcoming and inclusive city for people of all backgrounds, ages and abilities that is well-connected, which supports people to meet, participate and move safely and access services and opportunities they need.
<i>Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan</i> indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Increased opportunity for all community to engage, communicate and participate.● Increased diversity of community participation.● Increased community satisfaction with community and cultural activities.● Increased community satisfaction with built environment.● Increased satisfaction with local streets and footpaths.

OUR ACTIONS

- Continue to identify and improve the accessibility of council services, facilities and public environments to promote dignified and equitable access for all.
- Update Wodonga's mobility map so people can easily identify accessible facilities, services and amenities such as accessible parking and public toilets.
- Work to ensure that council services, venues, events and celebrations are accessible to all members of the community.
- Promote opportunities for people with disability to participate in arts and community programs.
- Ensure council meetings, websites and documents are accessible to all.



REDUCING BARRIERS TO OBTAINING AND MAINTAINING EMPLOYMENT

Image: *Becoming Bulldogs* by Rebecca Randall



STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

<i>Victorian Disability Act</i> priority	Reduce barriers to persons with disabilities obtaining and maintaining employment.
<i>Council Plan</i> priority	Thriving and vibrant community Advance our position as a leading regional city, fostering opportunities for innovation, development and jobs, and building a destination that offers a variety of experiences, recognising our rich and diverse history and culture.
<i>Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan</i> indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Increased rate of Wodonga's labour force.

OUR ACTIONS

- Be a role model employer, introducing strategies to increase the representation of people with disabilities across council's workforce.
- Work in partnership with community organisations to improve opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in education, training and employment.
- Enhance volunteering opportunities for people with disabilities within council.
- Continue to use social procurement as a lever for improving employment opportunities for people with disability.

