

Bellevue Ward update

Councillor Jim Parke | August 2014



A community hub for Bellevue

A new community hub is planned for the City's north-east, offering a range of services for people of all ages.

This welcome development came following the North Balwyn RSL Sub-Branch's generous decision to negotiate a long-term lease with Council for the site at 2 Centre Way, Balwyn North, to allow for construction of a new facility that can serve the whole community.

For a number of years, Council has been considering opportunities to provide a community facility in Balwyn North that could offer a range of community services and programs.

In 2013, close to 800 residents were asked what community services,

activities and programs they would like to see in a community hub in Balwyn North.

The priorities that emerged were for an expanded childcare centre, a maternal and child health centre, community services and programs, community meeting spaces, U3A activities, consulting rooms and a library lounge.

The proposed hub will also deliver improved access to Greythorn Shopping Centre.

There will be many opportunities for the community to comment on the

initial site plan as it is developed in 2015. Council will keep the community updated on consultation dates and will use these consultations to shape the detailed design phase.

The development of the community hub will be dependent on the community's views and Council considering an additional financial allocation in its long term financial plan.

Pending planning application approval, construction is expected to commence in mid-2016 and be completed by mid-2018.

Getting noticed in Greythorn

From November, shoppers in the Greythorn Shopping Centre will notice a new trial-digital noticeboard – the first in the City of Boroondara.

The noticeboard, part of a project led by a team including Greythorn Traders Association, Bellevue Ward Councillor Jim Parke, local residents, neighbours, shoppers, and community groups, is expected to be installed by November 2014.

"By working together with the Greythorn Traders Association, and learning from a similar project in Maling Road, we have been able to come up with both a modern and practical communication solution for the local community," Cr Parke said.

"Traders, the community, and Council, will be able to run promotions on the noticeboard, and we are especially excited that the medium gives flexibility to deliver languages other than English", he said.

The Greythorn digital noticeboard trial is part of a bigger noticeboard project to review Council's noticeboards in terms of how Council presents community, trader and Council information, locations, consistency and effectiveness.

"This is part of a potential \$15,000 investment, and is being funded from a priority projects bid for the 2014–2015 financial year," he said.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the noticeboard will take place in December 2014, during the Christmas trading period.

Anyone wanting more information about the project can contact Deb Ganderton, Executive Manager Communications and Engagement, on 9278 4490 or deb.ganderton@boroondara.vic.gov.au.



Bellevue Ward
Cr Jim Parke

Including parts of
Kew East and Balwyn North



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Dear neighbour,

Council recently passed its 2014–15 budget, again delivering the lowest rate rise in a decade of 4.6 per cent, which was below the forecast increase of 5 per cent. My view is that councillors must continue to drive down rate rises, whilst delivering the high standard of services and facilities for which we are renowned.

Very significant progress has been made towards the long-awaited North East Community Hub and I am delighted that Council is on track to commence construction of the facility by late 2016, within my first term as your representative. In the September 2013 *Bellevue Ward Update*, I announced that Council's community consultation was about to commence, to gain your views about community services that could be located in the planned North East Community Hub.

Nearly 800 people from Balwyn, Balwyn North and Deepdene shared their ideas through workshops and surveys, including a randomised telephone survey. The most requested spaces/activities were meeting rooms and spaces for hire by community groups, health services and counselling, programs and activities for all age groups and child care. There was also strong interest in having a facility where community information can be displayed, library books and resources dropped off and collected and where there is access to computers.

The North Balwyn RSL Sub-branch has generously agreed to negotiate a long-term lease with Council to its site at 2 Centre Way, Balwyn North (at the rear of the Greythorn shops), so that Council can develop a new community facility. Council appreciates the North Balwyn RSL Sub-Branch's role in supporting the planning for a hub for the local community.

The next step will be to draw up a concept plan for the site and seek feedback from residents, before developing a detailed design. It is expected that Council will begin consultation later this year. Council would then develop a detailed design in 2015. Subject to budgetary considerations, construction of the long-awaited facilities would commence in 2016.



Cr Jim Parke

Council cautiously welcomes residential zoning changes

Council has welcomed the Minister for Planning's approval of some of its proposed residential zoning reforms, including mandatory height limits for the Neighbourhood and General Residential Zones, but is disappointed with modifications to its original proposal.

"This is the most significant and positive change to local planning in a generation. For the first time there are now mandatory height limits in most Boroondara residential zones, bringing certainty for residents and developers," said City of Boroondara Mayor, Councillor Coral Ross.

"While the height limits will preserve what our residents love about Boroondara, Council is disappointed that the Minister has not approved our proposed minimum lot size, site coverage, setbacks and open space requirements," Cr Ross said.

During Council's consultation process, Boroondara residents were clear in saying they wish to preserve their leafy streets and the character of their neighbourhood, and raised particular concern about the Minister's request

to increase by 1.7% the proportion of residential land included in a Residential Growth Zone. The Residential Growth Zone provides for more intensive development. However, Council is awaiting the Minister's decision regarding his advisory committee's review of this proposal.

"Many Boroondara residents will be pleased to know that the Minister's approval limits the Residential Growth Zone land to 0.8 per cent," said Cr Ross.

Boroondara Planning Scheme Amendment (C190) introduced the new residential zones on 19 June 2014. Council has written to individual households confirming their zone, and the process to be followed if any changes are thought necessary.

Boroondara's World Environment Day Award

It is fitting that Boroondara, which means 'a shady place', has been recognised for its environmental innovation at the United Nations Association of Australia's 2014 World Environment Day Awards.

The award – in the 'Local Government – Best Specific Environment Initiative' category – was in recognition of Council's initiatives to protect biodiversity for native flora and fauna, and was presented to Boroondara Mayor Cr Coral Ross in Sydney on Friday 13 June.

"Council's submission captured the progress on first year actions in the Urban Biodiversity Strategy 2013–23, including establishing new biodiversity zones, delivering the popular Backyard Biodiversity program, the design of new interpretive signage and assessment of 200 new indigenous trees on the Significant Tree List," Cr Ross said.

"It was a tight field, with four great finalists from Melbourne, Adelaide, Darebin and Randwick, so it was an honour for Council's Environmental and Sustainable Living, and Parks and Gardens teams to be acknowledged and celebrated."

The awards recognise innovative and outstanding environmental programs and initiatives across Australia, as well as the important work of environmental leaders.

More information about awards can be found at www.unaa.org.au/environment-day-awards.html.

Budget highlights

The 2014–15 Budget continues Council's commitment to reduce debt and keep rate increases to a minimum, while investing in the arts, culture, infrastructure and services.

In the coming 12 months, work will begin on numerous projects for the benefit of our Ward, and wider City. These projects are in response to community needs and feedback.

In Bellevue Ward, the Freeway Golf Course (pictured below) is a recipient of Budget investment, with \$300,000 allocated for its development, as well as \$120,000 for replacement fencing around the courts at Boroondara Tennis Centre. Further significant refurbishment funding has been allocated for Bellevue Kindergarten (\$200,000) and Glass Street Kindergarten (\$250,000). Other infrastructure improvements include drainage replacement at White Avenue.

A significant Council project funded by the new Budget is the expansion of the Boroondara Sports Complex in Balwyn North, scheduled to begin in early 2015, with funding of \$3.3 million.

Across Boroondara, Council will continue to invest in many essential services, including \$8.4 million that

will go to the five City libraries' state-of-the-art facilities and community WiFi, with an initial project design for the refurbishment of the Balwyn Library to commence in 2014–15. A total of \$2.4 million will be made available to the arts, including the operations of Hawthorn Arts Centre and Kew Court House, plus other cultural events.

Council will spend \$13.1 million on aged, disability and health services and support community groups such as Camcare by providing almost \$2.5 million in direct grants.

Other City-wide facilities supported by the Budget include five recreation centres, Boroondara Tennis Centre, Junction Skate and BMX Park, Macleay Park netball courts, Freeway Public Golf Course and Kew Traffic School. These facilities attract more than two million visitors each year.

The importance of infrastructure is also upheld in the Budget, with \$13.4 million to be spent on drainage, and footpath and road replacements.

Renewal work on community buildings will be completed at a cost of almost \$7.5 million, and work will commence on a further 12 buildings at a cost of more than \$1.5 million.

Strong operational management achieved considerable savings in 2013–14 which has enabled Council to remove the need to undertake a planned \$2 million of borrowing in the 2014–15 Budget. Accelerating repayment builds financial capacity and is part of a long-term plan for the continued financial sustainability of Council.

Further still, astute financial management has resulted in our lowest rate increase in a decade of 4.6 per cent, below the forecast rate of 5 per cent.

You can view the Budget at www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/budget, Council's customer service centres and libraries.



Freeway Golf Course

In brief

My Waste app

Boroondara residents can now download and use the MyWaste app on their mobile phone or tablet on both iOS and Android devices. The app has all of the information you need to know about our residential waste and recycling services, including a helpful reminder that can be set so you never forget to put out the right bin. Simply download the iPhone/iPad or Android app and select Boroondara.

Green waste fees

From 3 August 2014, the fees applied to the drop-off of green waste at the Boroondara Recycling and Waste Centre throughout the week will also apply on Sundays. Fees begin at \$18 per car boot/station wagon load.

Options for green waste removal include fortnightly kerbside bin collection and two booked bundled green waste collections each year. To ease the transition, until 30 September green waste bins will be available for a one off fee of \$57. Additional pre-loved bins are also available to all households for a one-off fee of \$57. More information – 9278 4444 or visit www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/waste-recycling.

Boroondara Sports Complex

Council is progressing with plans to consolidate the Boroondara Sports Complex and Balwyn Leisure Centre. In 2013, community members were encouraged to view and provide feedback on the draft plans for the facility, and overall, the comments during the engagement process were positive. Construction on the \$11.7 million project is expected to begin in early 2015, with the aim of completion to be mid-2016.

Road safety and you

Council's Road Safety Strategy outlines the plan for reducing road trauma that occurs in Boroondara. Council is reviewing its current Road Safety Strategy and wants to hear what you think – your experiences with road safety, the issues you think are important, and how these can be addressed. More information can be found on the www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/yoursay website.

Sign-ing up to neighbourhood safety

In collaboration with the Police Service Area (PSA) committee and Neighbourhood Watch in Kew East, Council recently installed Neighbourhood Watch signs in Kew – replacing damaged and old signs.

Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) in Kew East has been in existence for more than 20 years, and the group focusses on the safety and wellbeing of all in the neighbourhood. There are about 40 volunteers and supporters who attend meetings and deliver the newsletters.

"I personally believe that the best way to keep a neighbourhood safe, strong and resilient is for people to be neighbourly – to take an interest in and get to know their neighbours and the area by walking or shopping locally whenever possible," said Betty Shelton, group secretary.

The group's newsletter contains reports from the Police, tips on keeping safe

both inside and outside the home, and information from City of Boroondara.

"Our volunteers deliver to homes in their street. This personal service is a special and unique aspect of NHW. Many local businesses also receive a newsletter," said Betty.

"I know of no other voluntary organisation whose focus is on the safety of a neighbourhood, and the people in it."

The group meets bi-monthly at 7.30pm in the meeting room of the Kew East Uniting Church, Normanby Road. Anyone who is interested in joining the group is invited to attend the next meeting on Thursday 4 September.



Powerful thoughts...

Nothing that is morally wrong can be politically right.

William E. Gladstone