

AVENEL COMMUNITY PLAN 2022 - 2026



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The Avenel Community Plan was developed in consultation with the Avenel community in 2022. It reflects the values and aspirations of the Avenel people and makes recommendations that are founded on achievable and sustainable goals and objectives. The objective of the plan is to provide medium term guidelines for community development.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge that we are on Taungurung Country and pay our respects to the Taungurung as the Traditional Owners of the land on which we live.

We pay our respects to Taungurung leaders and Elders, past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge injustices experienced by the Taungurung and by all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We commit to working in partnership with the Taungurung in the spirit of reconciliation and caring for Country, Culture and People.

Taungurung Country

Taungurung Country encompasses a large area from the Campaspe River to Kilmore in the west, eastwards to Mount Beauty, and from Benalla down to the top of the Great Dividing Range.

Taungurung people are part of the Kulin Nation, and alliance with the five adjoining Woiwurrung, Boonwurrung, Wathaurung and Djadjawurrung tribes, sharing common dreamtime ancestors, creation stories, religious beliefs, and economic and social relationships.

Traditional Taungurung society was severely impacted by European settlement. Mortality rates soared because of introduced diseases, conflict and denial of access to traditional lands, foods and medicines. Later many Taungurung were removed from Country and incarcerated.

Today the Taungurung Land and Waters Council works to preserve cultural heritage, guide culturally-informed natural resource management, and raise cultural awareness.

ABOUT AVENEL

Avenel is a small town in the south of the Strathbogie Shire, with an estimated population of more than 1,300.

Europeans first settled in the Avenel region in the early 1800s. The area was first surveyed in 1851 and by 1855 became a bustling village around Hughes Creek, which was a crossing point for coaches and livestock and a campsite for travellers to and from the goldfields. Many historic buildings survive from this period and continue to contribute to the village atmosphere, community spirit and charm of Avenel today.

In 2022 the Avenel district boasts thriving equine, cropping, livestock and wine industries, as well as growing hospitality, retail and tourist attractions. Avenel is also a growing township, with housing development attracting new residents and businesses.

Much of Avenel's business and community life today revolves around the Queen and Bank Streets retail precinct, hospitality venues, the Avenel Primary School and Pre-School, Jubilee Park and Avenel Memorial Hall, as well as the wide variety of community organisations and clubs active year around.



AVENEL ACTIVE

Avenel Active Inc. is a community action group established within the guidelines and support of the Strathbogie Shire Council.

Avenel Active was incorporated in January 2021 and is the successor organisation to the Avenel Action Group, which developed the previous 2018–2022 Avenel Community Plan.

Our purpose is to advance the social and public welfare of the township of Avenel and its people by:

- providing services and activities that encourage improved health, wellbeing and social cohesion;
- advocating and contributing to better amenities; and
- protecting and caring for the natural environment.

We foster and support community development through collaboration with other organisations in town and local authorities.

At the time of writing Avenel Active has more than 60 members, comprised of residents and representatives of community organisations and businesses.

Avenel Active members meet monthly and have a number of special interest groups focused on areas of community interest, including:

- Avenel Nature Conservation Group
- Renewable Avenel Energy
- Avenel Stationeers
- Arts, Culture and Events Group
- NAIDOC Week Working Group

Avenel Active may be contacted at avenelactiveinc@gmail.com

COMMUNITY PLANNING

Community planning is described by Strathbogie Shire Council as locality-based planning undertaken by community planning reference groups to:

- Represent the community through a democratic process of open community planning sessions and the development of a Community Plan.
- Implement actions which are identified in the Community Plan which strengthen and develop communities.
- Advocate on behalf of the community to other government agencies for appropriate funding for initiatives identified by communities.
- Balance the present and future interests of all Shire residents and visitors

Community Plans are renewed every four years.

A Shire-endorsed Plan is required to receive funds through the Shire's Community Planning Program in support of projects identified in the Plan.



2018 - 2022 COMMUNITY PLAN ACHIEVEMENTS

This 2022-2026 Avenel Community Plan builds on the achievements of the previous Avenel Action Group 2018-2022 Community Plan.

Many priority projects from the 2018 -2022 Community Plan were successfully delivered with the dedicated effort and support of the Avenel community, Strathbogie Shire Council, volunteers and many generous donors.

Completed and ongoing projects and activities include:

- Advocacy for road crossing safety improvements at the Jones Street/Hume Freeway intersection
- Installation of three plantations of native trees at town entrances to Avenel
- Installation of solar panels and battery at Avenel Memorial Hall to provide a heat refuge for vulnerable residents during power outages
- Installation of an overhead projector, screen, and associated audio capability at the Avenel Memorial Hall
- Fundraising enabled purchase of a Grand Piano for the Avenel Memorial Hall and refurbishments to the stage
- Supporting fundraising for Jubilee Park heritage building renovations, including refurbishment of the old Police House Residence, now the Avenel Community Hub
- Repairs and upgrades at the Avenel Swimming Pool
- Skatepark at Avenel Recreation Reserve
- Refurbishment of the clubrooms at the Avenel Tennis Club
- Installation of the Avenel all-abilities fitness hub at Jubilee Park
- Arts events, including performances by the Flinders Quartet and Eddie Perfect, and the Roaming Rhythms weekend music festival
- Establishment of the Community Garden at Avenel Primary School
- Facilitation of two treks up Mt Bernard guided by a geology expert
- Participation in regular Clean up Australia activities

ACHIEVEMENTS CONTINUED

- Establishment of the *Get Me to the Shops* community bus service to Seymour catering for the elderly and those with mobility issues
- Community engagement towards renewable energy initiatives for householders
- Fundraising initiatives for three local CFA brigades
- Fortnightly delivery of the *GoNagambie Community Voice* to residential mailboxes
- Be Connected digital literacy classes for those aged 50+
- Installation of six local history tourist storyboards at Avenel landmarks
- Development of the Avenel Welcomes Newcomers booklet and information pack

Avenel Active thanks all community members, clubs, organisations and businesses for their support for these projects.



AVENEL COMMUNITY PLAN CONSULTATION

This 2022-2026 Community Plan was developed by and in consultation with the membership of Avenel Active, residents, businesses and community organisations via:

- Community survey conducted between December 2021 and March 2022. There were 73 responses to the survey which gathered quantitative and qualitative feedback in priority areas
- Consultation with community organisations and individual residents
- Community engagement at the monthly Avenel Market
- Discussion of community priorities at Avenel Active meetings

During this period risks associated with Covid-19 prevented larger community meetings being held.

Residents' surveys included many specific proposals for new or improved services, infrastructure and activities. All data will be kept for reference and action where there is sufficient community support, but not all proposals could be included in the Plan.

Responses to quantitative survey questions are presented in the Community Priorities charts on pages 22 and 23 of this Plan.

A text-only word version of this document is available on request via avenelactiveinc@gmail.com



WHAT WE HEARD

Residents told us their highest priority is that Avenel maintains its rural village character, supported by timely provision of infrastructure and services for safe and sustainable growth of the township.

Specific concerns were the lack of a clear town centre and business precinct to support local businesses and services; traffic management and car parking for public safety and access; and the improvement of footpaths and bike paths for connectivity, exercise and safety.

Avenel residents strongly value the wide range of recreational and cultural activities available and the clubs, networks and organisations at the heart of our community life. Maintaining and improving community facilities that support these activities is of critical value.

The community also placed a high value on our local environment, particularly protection of the Hughes Creek, continued tree planting, and advancing renewable energy opportunities.

Finally, social and community opportunities for residents of all ages were seen as critical to maintaining a sense of place and belonging.



Themes

Feedback from community consultation has been organised into seven themes:

- 1 Liveable Avenel
- 2 Economy and Business
- 3 Arts, Culture and Events
- 4 Conservation, Environment and Climate Change
- 5 Sport, Recreation and Wellbeing
- 6 A Strong and Supportive Community
- 7 Traditional Owner Engagement

Each theme identifies:

- Overall Objectives during the life of the Plan
- Projects to be progressed during the life of the Plan
- Advocacy to be progressed during the life of the Plan, for Projects that cannot be delivered within the capacity or responsibilities of community organisations

Avenel Active will work collaboratively and in consultation with our members, Strathbogie Shire Council, Committees of Management, community organisations, clubs, businesses and residents to support and progress Community Plan Projects and Advocacy, in the context of community priorities and available resources.

1 LIVEABLE AVENEL

'We need to start thinking about a town centre for the future'.

Objectives

- Maintenance of Avenel's village atmosphere, heritage and lifestyle
- Sustainable land use planning and infrastructure development
- Improved traffic management and car parking for community safety
- Safe and connected walking, cycling and exercise paths for all ages and abilities
- Improved access to public and community transport services

Projects

- Undertake a feasibility study for improved parking and paths between Avenel station and the Bank Street precinct
- Investigate opportunities to create a community pocket park at the corner of Murchison Road and Bank Street
- Investigate the potential for loop walking paths and/or exercise tracks, including at Pioneer Park, and Shelton Street and Stewart Park
- Investigate improvements to pedestrian and cyclist safety at the intersections of Henry and Hughes Streets, and Mitchell and Livingstone Streets

Projects

- Investigate options for safety lighting along key pedestrian and cycle paths
- Investigate demand for off-leash dog parks
- Sustain the 'Get Me to The Shops' community transport program
- Undertake disability access audits of community facilities
- Accessibility upgrades to community facilities and equipment

Advocacy

Work with residents, Strathbogie Shire Council and relevant authorities towards:

- Improved and updated township master planning for today and the future
- Improved streetscapes for community amenity
- Improved maintenance of roads and drainage
- Improved traffic management and car parking
- Increased public transport services consistent with population growth
- Further investigation of the feasibility of a footbridge across Hughes Creek

2 ECONOMY AND BUSINESS

'Avenel market is a great meeting place and an opportunity to support local businesses'.

Objectives

- Land use planning and infrastructure development to support local business
- Improve traffic control and car parking
- Promote Avenel as a regional and state-wide visitor destination
- Improve mobile telephone and internet connectivity
- Support local businesses and producers to thrive

Projects

- Promote Avenel Market and local attractions
- Promote Avenel's businesses, producers and buy-local initiatives
- Facilitate events that promote local businesses and attractions
- Improve tourism attraction and signage at Avenel town entrances
- Investigate opportunities to increase availability of tourism accommodation
- Investigate opportunities to improve mobile telephone and internet
- Investigate potential pop-up retail and tourism attractions
- Promote Avenel on cycling routes
- Investigate potential routes for cycle paths and trails to surrounding towns

Advocacy

- Improved and updated township master planning enabling promotion of business activity and access
- Improved town entrances
- Improved streetscapes to support business activity
- Improved car parking to support business precincts and visitation
- Continuation and growth of essential services, including Avenel Post Office, Pharmacy, Medical and Allied Health practices
- Investigation of opportunities to site future small business activity



3 ARTS, CULTURE AND EVENTS

'Musical concerts at the Hall...love them!'
'More creative activities for children would be great'.

Objectives

- Support community arts, crafts and cultural events and activities
- Facilitate musical events and performances
- Facilitate opportunities for local and regional creative arts practitioners
- Promote Avenel as an arts, culture and events destination

Projects

- Support the continued growth of Avenel Market, including signage, equipment, entertainment and attractions
- Refurbish Avenel Memorial Hall foyer

Projects

- Support maintenance of heritage and historic buildings and sites
- Support preservation of local history, including through digitalisation projects and purchase of an archive quality document and image scanner
- Develop a local historic walking tour app
- Facilitate an annual community event, performance or festival
- Investigate potential for pop-up galleries and workshops
- Support touring exhibitions at local community facilities and venues
- Investigate opportunities for local community cinema
- Facilitate a celebration event for the 150th anniversary of the railway in Avenel
- Facilitate creative after-school and school holiday programs for children and young people

Advocacy

- Maintained and improved heritage and community facilities to support arts, culture and events

4 CONSERVATION, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

*'The Hughes Creek should be restored to what it once was'.
'The large trees lining the streets must be kept, and more trees grown for the future'.*

Objectives

- Protect and enhance biodiversity, landscapes and waterways
- Support local and regional environmental sustainability initiatives
- Facilitate community adaptation and resilience to climate change
- Facilitate knowledge and practice of environmental sustainability

Projects

- Develop a plan to facilitate Hughes Creek remediation works, in consultation with the Goulburn Broken Catchment Authority and local Landcare Groups, including the Hughes Creek Catchment Collaborative
- Undertake a biodiversity survey of Hughes Creek
- Continue community tree planting initiatives, including projects with Avenel Primary School
- Create opportunities for shade, including installation of a shade sail at the Jubilee Park playground
- Support local CFA brigades' fundraising and sharing of community information

Projects

- Complete a business plan for community-scale renewable energy systems
- Support renewable energy upgrades for community facilities
- Support recycling and waste reduction initiatives, including Clean Up Australia Day
- Support installation and upgrade of watering systems to sustain tree planting and green open space
- Facilitate access to environmental sustainability information for families and businesses
- Engage with Avenel Primary School to support environmental activities and education
- Support operation of the Avenel Memorial Hall Heat Refuge during power outages
- Support the Avenel Recreation Reserve Committee of Management to review management and potential replacement of ageing trees

Advocacy

- Reliable and affordable community energy solutions
- Equitable community access to climate adaptation and resilience strategies

5 SPORT, RECREATION AND WELLBEING

'Increase and maintain walking and cycling paths'. 'Extend the swimming pool season'.

Objectives

- Maintain and improve community facilities, clubs and programs
- Support community sports, recreation and exercise activities for all ages and abilities
- Support sports, recreation and well-being initiatives that sustain community engagement

Projects

- Support group walks, including in the town and the local area
- Facilitate walking and cycling skills education programs for children and adults, including use and maintenance of equipment
- Maintain and continue improvements to Avenel Swimming Pool
- Resurface Avenel tennis courts
- Upgrade fencing around the football ground
- Upgrade toilets at the football ground

Projects

- Investigate timer-switch lighting for evening use of outdoor sports facilities
- Support projects for safe storage of community-owned equipment
- Explore options for child-safe fencing around the Jubilee Park playground
- Investigate ways to provide more safe and nature-play areas for young children
- Increase community use of Avenel skate park
- Facilitate community development of a Men's Shed
- Support community gardening initiatives

Advocacy

- Investigation of community support for more sports facilities, including an indoor sports facility, outdoor athletics facilities and a BMX track

6 A STRONG AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

'Avenel has a true small country village atmosphere'. 'Community gatherings, opportunities to have a voice'.

Objectives

- Facilitate community connection and networks of support
- Support community gatherings for all ages and demographics
- Facilitate community support for Avenel Primary School and Pre-School
- Improved access to childcare and school holiday programs
- Foster a sense of place and belonging

Projects

- Support continued development of the Jubilee Park Avenel Community Hub
- Support community use of Goulburn Valley Libraries services at the Avenel Community Hub
- Establish an annual family-friendly community get together
- Facilitate awards and scholarships to support children and young people achieve their goals
- Support improvement of safe pathways between the school and the kindergarten
- Facilitate after-school and school holiday programs for children and young people

Projects

- Investigate interest in establishing an Avenel Active Youth Committee
- Support availability of first aid kits at community facilities
- Support community first aid training
- Continue distribution of the Community Voice Newsletter to households
- Continue the Be Connected digital skills program
- Improve online access to community information and meetings

Advocacy

- An online presence for Avenel community groups and news
- Investigation of options for more community-based childcare

7 TRADITIONAL OWNER ENGAGEMENT

'Avenel must walk with the Traditional Owners'.

Objectives

- Community engagement with Taungurung Land and Waters Council
- Increased visibility and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) cultures

Projects

- Establish an annual NAIDOC Week event
- Investigate potential for development or hosting of a Taungurung cultural exhibition
- Investigate development of interpretative signage about Taungurung Country, history and culture
- Facilitate cultural learning opportunities led by Taungurung and other First Nations Peoples
- Facilitate natural resource management education led by Taungurung Land and Waters Council



ACTION PLAN 2022-2023

Themes

Projects

Liveable Avenel

- Undertake a feasibility study for improved parking and paths between Avenel station and the Bank Street precinct
- Investigate opportunities to create a community pocket park at the corner of Murchison Road and Bank Street
- Investigate the potential for loop walking paths and/or exercise tracks, including at Pioneer Park, and Shelton Street and Stewart Park

Economy and Business

- Investigate opportunities to improve mobile telephone and internet connectivity

Arts, Culture and Events

- Facilitate a celebration event for the 150th anniversary of the railway in Avenel
- Facilitate an annual community event, performance or festival for 2022-2023
- Purchase an archive quality document and image scanner
- Facilitate creative after-school and school holiday programs for children and young people



ACTION PLAN 2022-2023

Themes

Projects

Conservation, Environment and Climate Change

- Continue community tree planting initiatives, including projects with Avenel Primary School
- Installation of a shade sail at the Jubilee Park playground
- Complete a business plan for community-scale renewable energy systems
- Support operation of the Avenel Memorial Hall Heat Refuge during power outages

Sport, Recreation and Wellbeing

- Support group walks, including in the town and the local area
- Facilitate walking and cycling skills education programs for children and adults, including use and maintenance of equipment
- Explore options for child-safe fencing around the Jubilee Park playground

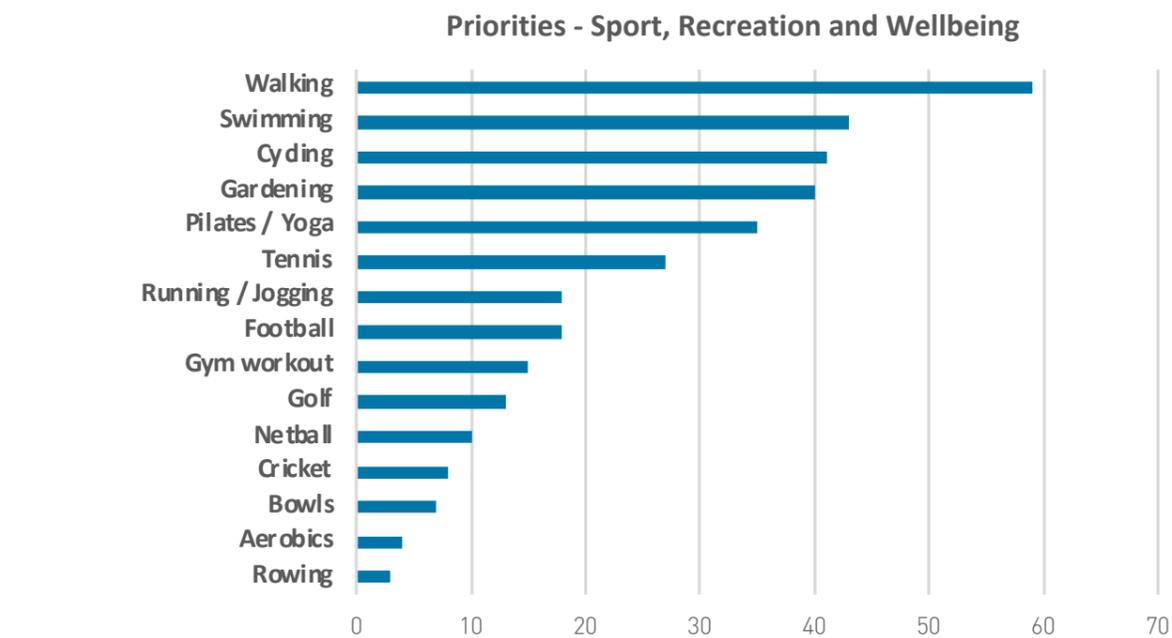
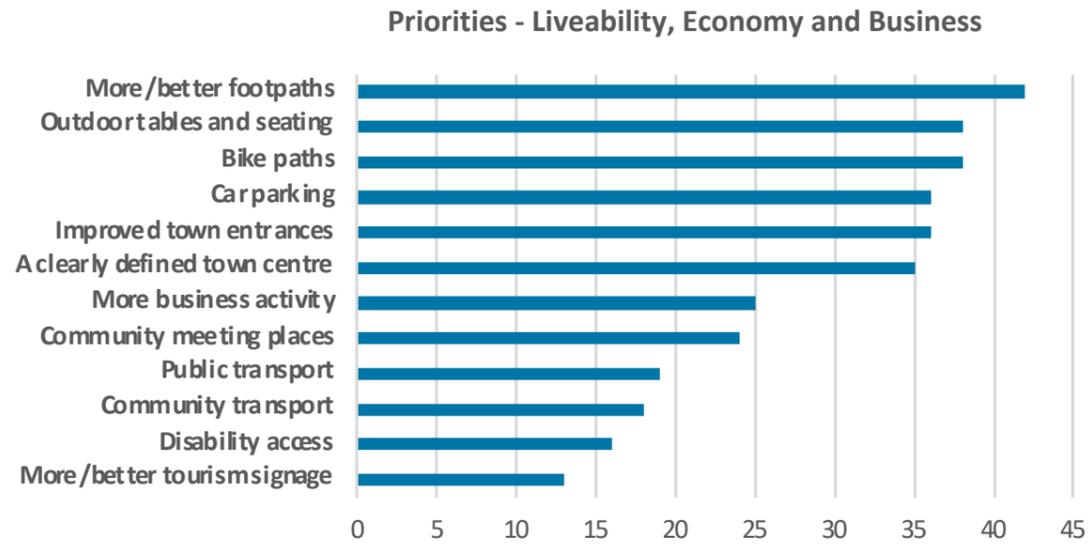
A Strong and Supportive Community

- Support community use of Goulburn Valley Libraries services at the Avenel Community Hub
- Establish an annual family-friendly community get together
- Facilitate awards and scholarships to support children and young people achieve their goals

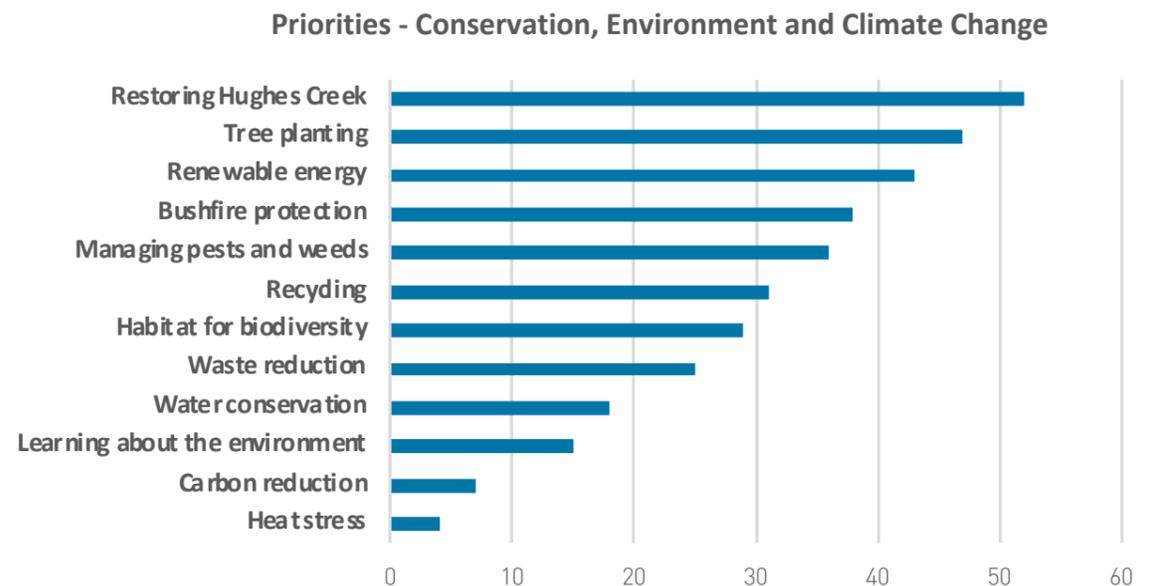
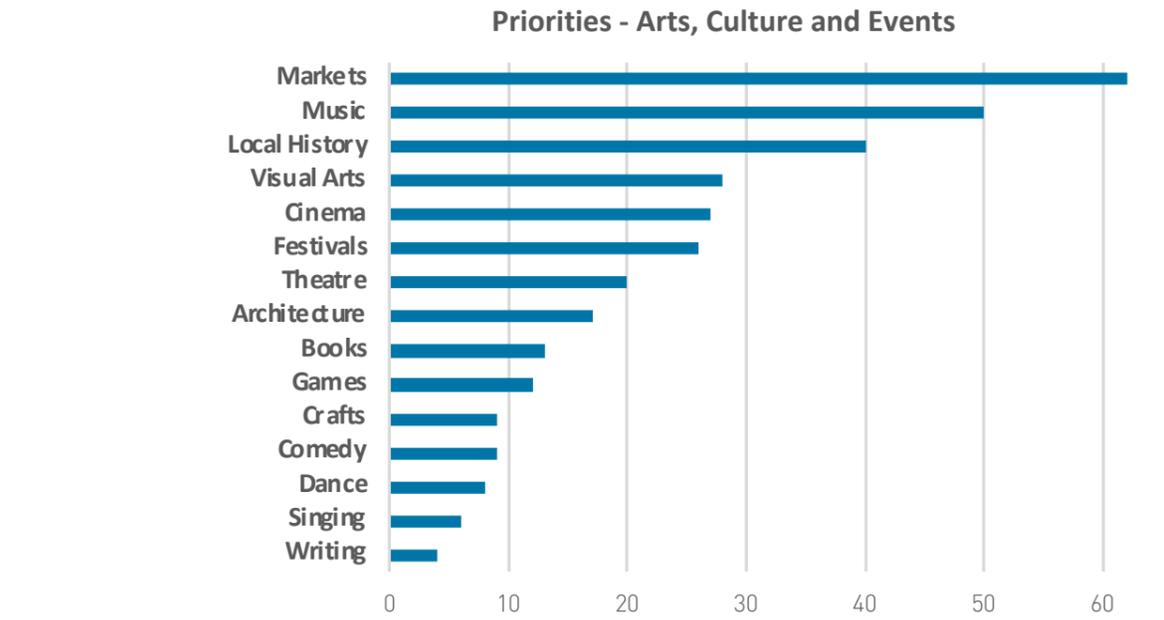
Traditional Owner Engagement

- Investigate potential for development or hosting of a Taungurung cultural exhibition
- Establish an annual NAIDOC Week event

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES - CHARTS



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