

RAINBOW READY ROADMAP ASSESSMENT: SUMMARY REPORT



BACKGROUND

The City of Greater Geelong (the City) has been a leader in LGBTQIA+ inclusion for many years, particularly in the youth space. Our Gender and Sexuality Program (GASP) has its beginnings in 1996, making it one of Australia's first LGBTQIA+ youth social groups.

The Victorian Government has a 10-year LGBTQIA+ strategy: *Pride in Our Future*. This plan frames how all government work can drive equality and inclusion for our LGBTQIA+ communities. The Victorian Government also released a set of resources called the *Rainbow Ready Roadmap* to help regional and rural communities progress this work. The community consultation that informed the *Rainbow Ready Roadmap* was one of the largest consultations undertaken with LGBTQIA+ Victorians, and included the Geelong community.

RAINBOW READY ROADMAP

The *Rainbow Ready Roadmap* is being used by the City to frame and guide our progress in LGBTQIA+ inclusion.

The *Rainbow Ready Roadmap* is based on four core LGBTQIA+ principles: understanding, inclusion, visibility, and safety. There are 15 indicators for local governments to achieve. The following tables provide a summary our progress against the indicators, showing what we are doing well and where further work is needed.

This report captures actions taken up to April 2024 and is a high-level summary; there may be further City work that has not captured.

NEXT STEPS

The *Rainbow Ready Roadmap* guides us from **assessing** where we are now, to **planning** how we will achieve each indicator. Following this assessment, we will:

- consult with the LGBTQIA+ Advisory Committee and other community partners;
- determine resources and opportunities; and
- identify priorities.



Understanding

LGBTQIA+ inclusion is underpinned by education and understanding.

Indicator 1: Council educates its staff and volunteers on LGBTQIA+ inclusion

Achievements

- ✓ LGBTQIA+ inclusion e-learning available to staff.
- ✓ Annual IDAHOBIT (international day against LGBTQIA+ discrimination) awareness raising event for employees.
- ✓ The City's *Inclusion and Diversity Roadmap 2021* commits to ongoing and evolving employee education.

- ✓ Inclusive Practice Training has been delivered to some staff teams and to community organisations.
- ✓ Awareness raising messaging is regularly included in employee communications.

Gap Analysis

- A low number of employees have completed the available LGBTQIA+ inclusion training opportunities.
- Specific LGBTQIA+ inclusion education is not provided to volunteers, except for the L2P program volunteers.

CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE

100 Brougham Street,
Geelong VIC 3220
8.00am – 5.00pm

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

WADAWURRUNG COUNTRY
PO Box 104, Geelong VIC 3220
P: 03 5272 5272

E: contactus@geelongcity.vic.gov.au
www.geelongaustralia.com.au

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Inclusion

LGBTQIA+ people are included in the journey.

Indicator 2: LGBTQIA+ residents take part in council committees and in council planning.

Achievements

✓ LGBTQIA+ Advisory Committee established.

✓ Rainbow Youth Advisory Group has provided input to key youth projects, such as the Geelong Youth Hub.

Gap Analysis

- The overall level of input from the LGBTQIA+ community in general community consultations on the Have Your Say platform is unknown.

Indicator 3: Council grants are provided to support local LGBTQIA+ initiatives.

Achievements

✓ LGBTQIA+ projects have been funded through the City's grants program, e.g. Geelong Pride Film Festival Diapsalmata Orchestral Performance and Geelong Rainbow Festival.

✓ The Healthy and Connected Communities grant prioritises projects promoting gender equity and diversity.

Gap Analysis

- The City demonstrates strong performance against indicator 3, but there may be an opportunity to include the LGBTQIA+ community as a priority group for other grants streams, in line with the *Social Equity Framework*.

Indicator 4: The council supports local LGBTQIA+ events.

Achievements

✓ Annual IDAHOBIT and Wear It Purple events.
✓ IDAHOBIT and Wear It Purple day are celebrated within our Family Services education and care settings.
✓ Support for local schools to hold queer events.

✓ Attracting to Geelong and sponsoring the Better Together conference, at GMHBA Stadium in June 2024.
✓ Launch event for the Rainbow Crossing.
✓ Free promotion of local events and initiatives through the events 'Events Geelong' webpage.

Gap Analysis

✓ The City demonstrates strong performance against indicator 4.

Indicator 5: The council provides an inclusive workplace for LGBTQIA+ employees and volunteers.

Achievements

✓ Commitment to the *Inclusion and Diversity Roadmap 2021*.

✓ Establishment of the LGBTQIA+ Employee Network.
✓ Provision of gender transition leave in the Enterprise Agreement.

Gap Analysis

- The *Inclusion and Diversity Roadmap 2021* is working on foundations of employee inclusion and it will take time to see change across such a large organisation.
- There is no data easily available on volunteer experiences in relation to inclusion.



Visibility

LGBTQIA+ people and their culture are visible and celebrated.

Indicator 6: The council has a strategy or plan for LGBTQIA+ inclusion.

Achievements

✓ The *Inclusion and Diversity Roadmap 2021* (workforce strategy) is being implemented.

✓ The *Social Equity Framework 2021-25* includes LGBTQIA+ people as a priority population and is being applied to the City's services, programs and facilities.

Gap Analysis

- The organisation does not have a standalone LGBTQIA+ inclusion strategy or plan.

Indicator 7: The council has a statement of LGBTQIA+ inclusion that is publicly visible.

Achievements

✓ The permanent Rainbow Crossing is a visual demonstration of LGBTQIA+ inclusion.

✓ The Geelong Mayor, Councillors and CEO have regularly made statements of commitment to LGBTQIA+ inclusion in the media and at public meetings.

Gap Analysis

- The City of Greater Geelong does not have a formal statement of LGBTQIA+ inclusion that is publicly visible.

Indicator 8: Council information incorporates LGBTQIA+ inclusive language and images.

Achievements

✓ The 'How To Write Guide' for employees includes section on inclusive language.

✓ Active promotion of the Victorian government's 'LGBTQIA+ Inclusive Language Guide'.

✓ Gender impact assessments regularly undertaken.

✓ Inclusive image library of photographs used.

✓ New photography is required to be inclusive.

✓ Corporate email signature template is LGBTQIA+ inclusive.

Gap Analysis

✓ The organisation demonstrates strong performance across indicator 8.

Indicator 9: The council takes opportunities to fly the rainbow or trans flags.

Achievements

✓ Rainbow flag is flown at City Hall for IDAHOBIT and Wear It Purple Day, and the Trans flag for Trans Day of Visibility.

✓ Catenary lights are turned rainbow, purple or blue and pink for IDAHOBIT, Wear It Purple Day and Trans Day of Visibility respectively.

✓ Permanent rainbow crossing has been laid in Yarra Street depicting the Progress Pride flag in a permanent display of support for our LGBTQIA+ community.

✓ Early Years Services and Integrated Child Care Hubs display the rainbow flag and stickers.

Gap Analysis

✓ The organisation demonstrates strong performance across indicator 9.

Indicator 10: The council's website and social media profile LGBTQIA+ initiatives, events, people and resources.

Achievements

✓ Regular profiling of LGBTQIA+ related content on website and social media.

✓ In depth information on the GASP website for queer young people, their families and teachers.

Gap Analysis

- LGBTQIA+ resources are limited on the Geelong Australia website.
- The City's website does not have a LGBTQIA+ webpage connecting relevant information from across the site.



Safety

LGBTQIA+ peoples' safety is a priority.

Indicator 11: Bookings and assessment processes are LGBTQIA+ inclusive.

Achievements

✓ Exemplary booking and assessment processes across the GASP social programs within the Youth Development Unit.

✓ Early Years settings incorporate gender neutral language in all enrolment forms.

✓ Regular audits across Early Years services to build an environment and educational program (e.g. toys, books, equipment etc) that is inclusive and gender neutral.

Gap Analysis

- Current booking forms and processes have not been uniformly audited across the organisation to ensure they are inclusive of LGBTQIA+ people.
- Education for public facing staff on LGBTQIA+ inclusive language and greetings may not be routinely provided.

Indicator 12: LGBTQIA+ groups and services are supported to access council spaces.

Achievements

✓ Council spaces utilised for delivery of the GASP social groups and Stand Out community of practice for schools.

✓ Courthouse venue provided for Platform Arts.

✓ Geelong West Neighbourhood House precinct renovation (2022) helped accommodate Geelong Rainbow.

Gap Analysis

- The GASP program does not currently have a youth-friendly venue, however a new Geelong Youth Hub will be opening early in 2025.

Indicator 13: The council provides all gender bathroom and change room options.

Achievements

✓ A range of all-gender bathroom options for the public and City employees at Wurriki Nyal.

✓ Ongoing increase in the provision of all-gender toilets at facilities across the municipality.

Gap Analysis

- The City does not have a formal policy or position on all-gender toilets that informs new builds or renovations.
- The organisation does not have a centralised list of all gender toilets across the municipality.
- The outcome of the review of the Neighbourhood Amenity Local Law review is not yet known.

Indicator 14: Potential risks to the safety of LGBTQIA+ group members are identified and minimised.

Achievements

✓ Risk assessments for LGBTQIA+ events and programs

✓ Application of the Community Safety Framework 2022–26.

Gap Analysis

- Specific engagement with LGBTQIA+ community regarding their everyday safety has not been undertaken.
- Guidelines for hosting safe LGBTQIA+ events are not finalised or integrated into City processes.
- Processes for managing hate speech related to LGBTQIA+ social media posts require more efficient solutions.

Indicator 15: The council responds to LGBTQIA+ phobic incidents.

Achievements

✓ Swift removal of LGBTQIA+ phobic vandalism.

✓ City responds to detractors by affirming the rights of LGBTQIA+ people and keeps a register of correspondence (calls, emails, letters).

Gap Analysis

- Further exploration of the experiences of LGBTQIA+ identifying staff members in relation to LGBTQIA+ phobia and microaggression in the workplace could be undertaken.

