



# Building a Child-Friendly City

## Report to children and young people from Wodonga Council





## December 2010

### **In 2009, Wodonga Council and Charles Stuart University held consultations with children and young people that ended with a summit in June, 2009.**

The information that children and young people provided during these consultations fell under five major topics areas. These areas included:

1. Safety and security;
2. Parks and open spaces;
3. Fun activities;
4. High St and shops; and
5. Baranduda specific.

Within each area, children and young people identified concerns, positives, ideas and solutions. This summary was then presented to councillors. Councillors carefully considered all points raised and have identified:

1. Projects that are already taking place that covered ideas made by children;
2. Projects that are in developmental stages: Children's ideas have been passed on to relevant staff members for their consideration with that project; and
3. Other ideas that have been noted for future projects.

In addition, children and young people's ideas and concerns were presented to:

- The Integrated Planning Group of Wodonga Council on the October 29, 2009. This group involves managers and other staff at council responsible for some of the issues children and young people raised.
- The High St Reference Group on the October 27, 2009. The High St Reference Group was made up of residents, traders, mums and dads and business owners. They were looking at how Wodonga's High St could better meet the needs of the community.
- The community safety project officer visited the summit and saw children and young people's comments and tried to address these issues in the Community Safety Strategic Plan.

The aim of this report is to let children and young people know what the



council did with the information they gave us, provide some information and answers to them and to provide contact details of people they may wish to contact in the future.

## 1. Safety and security

Your concerns	Your ideas/solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drunks - both violent drunks and drunk-drivers</li> <li>• Pubs</li> <li>• Broken glass</li> <li>• Bullying</li> <li>• Syringes/needles</li> <li>• Public toilets</li> <li>• Public transport doesn't feel safe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More police presence</li> <li>• More involvement in neighbourhood watch</li> <li>• Better lighting</li> <li>• Security cameras</li> <li>• Better adult supervision in a variety of spaces</li> <li>• More footpaths, so children feel safe walking along the street/ or riding their bikes</li> </ul>

**Safety and security** –The *Wodonga Community Safety Strategic Plan* was launched in November, 2009. This plan was put together by police, council and community members who worked together to come up with ideas on how to make Wodonga safer for all. The key message is that Wodonga says NO to violence in the home, school, sporting events, parks and gardens and hotels and clubs .Many of the ideas that children came up with are included in this plan. For more information on the safety strategic plan or to find out about other ideas related to safety, please contact Tracey Farrant on (02) 6022 9300.

**Streets Ahead** – Streets Ahead is a Wodonga Council project that encourages children to walk and ride in a safe and fun way to and from school and around the neighbourhood. Walking routes will be made into adventure routes scattered with fun activities. October each year is also 'Walktober'. For more information on the Streets Ahead project, you can contact Kat Bennett on (02) 6022 9338.

**Footpaths** – Historically when a subdivision was developed, footpaths were paid for but put in at a later date. Now footpaths are put in at the time as the development so as not to ruin people's lawns. The council is working on footpaths around the hospital and in areas where older residents live. For more information on footpaths, contact Peter Dicker on (02) 6022 9348.



## 2. Parks and open spaces

Your concerns	Your positives	Your ideas/solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bullying - Bigger kids stop younger kids from using play equipment</li> <li>• Don't like the bark underneath playgrounds</li> <li>• Dirty water</li> <li>• Broken glass/syringes</li> <li>• Air pollution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peaceful and beautiful places – feels like you are in the countryside</li> <li>• Good place to spend time with family, friends and play</li> <li>• Good places to walk dogs and for people to get exercise</li> <li>• Love the wildlife, particularly the ducks</li> <li>• Being able to walk to parks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More seats</li> <li>• Barbecues</li> <li>• Sponge bottomed playgrounds</li> <li>• Picnic area in High St</li> <li>• Clean up water areas</li> <li>• Pick up rubbish</li> <li>• Nesting houses for the birds</li> <li>• Better playgrounds</li> <li>• Plant more flowers and more trees</li> <li>• More parks close to children's houses</li> </ul>

**Nesting houses-** Wodonga Council provides nesting houses for threatened species. Each species has different requirements. Two examples are the squirrel glider and brown tree creeper. There are some nesting boxes at Willow Park that were erected with the help of local schools. The council is in the process of developing a management plan for erecting nesting boxes. Schools can be involved in this project and take ongoing responsibility for the nesting boxes. Schools can also access the SEED (School Environment Education Directory) website at [www.necma.vic.gov.au](http://www.necma.vic.gov.au) which provides information relating to environmental sustainability. For more information on nesting boxes, contact Glenda Datson on (02) 6022 9330.

**Playgrounds-** There are 62 playgrounds in the Wodonga area. To look after these playgrounds, the council has developed a playground strategy. Part of this strategy looks at maintaining all playgrounds to a suitable level and making the playgrounds more exciting and child-friendly. Wodonga Council will invite children to have input on further playground upgrades. Since the summit, Les Stone Playground has been upgraded with a pirate theme and work is being done to identify other playgrounds for upgrading. For more information, contact Sherryn Dechert on (02) 6022 9300.



**Belvoir Park Playground** - A new regional playground has being built at Belvoir Park. Children from Wodonga have had input into the ideas for the playground. The playground has barbecues and seating.

**New seating** - The council also identifies which parks require new seating.

**Neighbourhood Power** – This is a council project that looks at helping citizens, including children, improve their neighbourhoods. To find out more on how to empower your neighbourhood, contact Tracey Farrant on (02) 6022 9347.

**Bark versus sponge** - This matter has been examined extensively. The cost of sponge-bottom playgrounds is expensive and can cost more than some play equipment. Some playgrounds in Wodonga have been built on floodplains. If it floods, the water can damage the sponge bottom so is therefore not suitable for these playgrounds. For safety and cost-effectiveness for all playgrounds, the council prefers to use bark. For more information on playgrounds or to give ideas that could enhance Wodonga’s playgrounds, please phone Sherryn Dechert on (02) 6022 9354.

**Plants and flower beds** - The council has been unable to plant any new flower beds due to water restrictions in recent years. The council buys reclaimed water from the North East Water treatment plant to water the gardens and trees that are already in the city. There has been a suggestion that the council should no longer plant annuals as they use so much water and, in the future, will perhaps plant more drought-tolerant plants.

**Rubbish** – Collection of rubbish relies very much on the public’s help. Rubbish bins in public places are emptied on a roster system but, if the public notices full or overflowing bins, they can contact the council and these bins can be emptied as soon as possible. The council is also responsible for picking up other debris, including shopping trolleys. To notify the council of a litter problem, please phone (02) 6022 9300.

### 3. Fun activities

--	--	--



Your concerns	Your positives	Your ideas/solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not enough activities for children and young people</li> <li>• Just want fun places to go that are off the street</li> <li>• Did not want to have to always go to Albury to do things</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BMX track</li> <li>• Skate bowl</li> <li>• Sumsion Gardens and Willow Park</li> <li>• Bike tracks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wodonga's own cinema</li> <li>• Water activities/park</li> <li>• Theme park</li> <li>• More events in town – such as a Lounging on High for children</li> <li>• A junior BMX and junior skate bowl for the younger children</li> <li>• More community activities aimed at children aged eight to 14 years</li> </ul>

**Skate park** – Wodonga Council has a new *Skate BMX Mountain Bike Strategy* that looks at future projects for Wodonga. For more information or to give ideas on BMX and skate parks, contact Jenelle Williamson on (02) 6022 9238.

**Activities for children and youth in Wodonga** – Wodonga Council holds many events that are free for families including Children's Fair, Carnivale Wodonga, Lounging on High and Todos Arte. Art Space Wodonga and the library also hold school holiday programs. Council activities can be found at [www.wodonga.vic.gov.au](http://www.wodonga.vic.gov.au)

**Cinema** - A cinema will be going ahead in Wodonga. The developers, along with the council, are looking for an appropriate site as the first proposed site will no longer be big enough. The plan will be to have six to eight cinema screens, 10-pin bowling, cafes and restaurants. For all new developments, go to the council website or read the *CityLife* newsletter.

**Theme parks** – Theme parks are generally owned by private developers, not the council. The Wodonga population is not big enough at present to call for a theme park.

**Pool** -The council has endorsed plans for a \$6 million heated outdoor pool to be built at White Box Rise Estate within three years. The Victorian Government has already committed \$2.5 million to the planned pool. The council is keen to see the project begin and give Wodonga residents the best value for money. Plans for the new pool are now on display on council noticeboards, in the library and on the website.



#### 4. Shops /High St

Your concerns	Your positives	Your ideas/solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Main street dirty/ and not welcoming</li> <li>Not enough shops in Wodonga</li> <li>Not enough shops for children and young people</li> <li>Don't want to always spend money in Albury</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Love the water tower and lights</li> <li>The war memorial</li> <li>Arts Space Wodonga was mentioned often – children and young people liked the sculptures and the sense that Wodonga was a creative place</li> <li>The library</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Should clean up the main street more regularly</li> <li>Should get shops like Rebel, Supre, etc.</li> </ul>

**High St** – Before it was disbanded in 2010, the High St Reference Group was made up of residents, traders, mums and dads and business owners. Their job was to create guidelines on how Wodonga’s High St should look and feel. The guidelines consisted of values, vision and essential elements. Their aim was for a better mix of shops to create a vibrant place to visit, shop and enjoy. Council has received funding to beautify High St and work will commence soon. For more information on High St or if you have any suggestions for its improvement, contact Patience Harrington on (02) 6022 9300.

**Cleaning** – Cleaning of the CBD is done every morning with rubbish picked up and seats and art work wiped clean. Any cleaning or graffiti issues can be reported to the council on (02) 6022 9300. These will be dealt with quickly. The council also aims at educating the public and shopkeepers around rubbish on private property. This is the responsibility of the owner and can be kept in order by them.

#### 5. Specific to Baranduda

Things children want in Baranduda	Your positives	Your ideas/solution



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The pool is not publicly accessible as it is private</li> <li>• Need our own police station</li> <li>• Schools for children to learn</li> <li>• More playgrounds</li> <li>• More signs</li> <li>• Fire Station</li> <li>• A hospital</li> <li>• Footpaths and crossings</li> <li>• A high school</li> <li>• A library</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The bush, birds and insects</li> <li>• The skate park</li> <li>• The milk bar</li> <li>• Tennis courts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A public pool</li> </ul>
---	--	---

**Baranduda:**

- The new housing estate, Baranduda Park, will have paths that connect to the main hub of Baranduda.
- The catchment area of Baranduda is not large enough at present to have its own fire station or hospital.
- There are three schools in the area.
- There will be a new pool built at White Box Rise Estate, with public transport from Baranduda.
- Baranduda currently has three playgrounds. As these playgrounds are upgraded, council will be seeking input from children.
- The mobile library makes a stop at the Baranduda Community Centre every second Thursday between 3pm and 4pm. All are welcome to attend.

**Other points of interest:**

- Wodonga Library now has new computers for public use as well as play stations and two children’s touch screen computers. The library operates many activities for children and young people. For more information, contact the library on (02) 6022 9117 or the website [www.wodonga.vic.gov.au](http://www.wodonga.vic.gov.au)
- The railway has now been removed from the city and work is being done to remove



the old railway lines. The new railway station has been completed and will be opened sometime in 2011.

- The final schematic designs of the new civic centre are now complete after community conversations took place. The new arts centre is being funded by three sources including \$3 million from the federal government's Regional Local Community Infrastructure Program, \$4 million from the state government via Regional Development Victoria and Wodonga Council. Demolition works will commence on the Wodonga Civic Centre, which was built in 1972, before the end of the year. Ten to 12 weeks have been earmarked for the demolition and early-works phase. There will be minor impacts to the council car park and pedestrian access on the north side of the Wodonga Civic Centre. These disruptions will be communicated via signage on site, on the council's website and in future editions of the council's monthly newsletter, *CityLife*.
- Gateway Village is situated on Gateway Island between Wodonga and Albury. It has a lot to offer both locals and visitors. Spending time in the village could include these activities:
  - A picnic with the family in the shady picnic area, rotunda and free barbecue facility;
  - A visit to Byrne Lagoon, a place for bird watchers, nature lovers and artists;
  - Popping into the many shops which have a focus on the arts and cultural activities; and/or
  - Eating at the La Maison Cafe which has a great reputation for its quality food.
- The removal of the existing rail line from the CBD is due for completion in late 2010. The project will free up approximately 19 hectares of development land in the heart of Wodonga in this \$185 million project. Complimenting this, the announced redevelopment of the Mann's Mitre 10 complex will provide additional opportunities for major development to take place in Wodonga's CBD. Development of the CBD continues with a \$20 million medical super clinic recently announced along with a \$5.5 million TAFE facility. The council is currently revising its master plan for the CBD, with a view to revitalising the city centre.



**Other things you can do:**

All citizens, including children and young people, are welcome to attend council meetings. Council meetings are open to the public and are held on the third Monday of the month. Meetings are held in the Wodonga Council chambers on level two, council offices, 104 Hovell St, Wodonga and commence at 6pm. The agenda for each council meeting is posted on the website on the Friday afternoon prior to the Monday meeting. For information on asking questions at council meetings, contact Kevin Scully on (02) 6022 9237.

Councillors' contact details are as follows:

**Cr Mark Byatt**

Mayor  
mbyatt@wodonga.vic.gov.au  
0408 285 930

**Cr Angela Collins**

Deputy Mayor  
acollins@wodonga.vic.gov.au  
0428 464 678

**Cr Chris Ferguson**

cferguson@wodonga.vic.gov.au  
0427 785 329

**Cr Ed Foulston**

efoulston@wodonga.vic.gov.au  
0428 619 330

**Cr Lisa Mahood**

lmahood@wodonga.vic.gov.au  
0409 562 903

**Cr Anna Speedie**

aspeedie@wodonga.vic.gov.au  
0417 138 938

**Cr Rodney Wangman**

rwangman@wodonga.vic.gov.au  
0400 956 253