

7.1 PRIDE CIVIC ARTWORK

Director Place and Environment, Pene Winslade
City Design and Economy

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Notes the outcomes of community and stakeholder engagement regarding the painting of intersex inclusive pride flag.
2. Endorses the painting of an intersex inclusive pride flag on the footpath adjacent to Michelle Guglielmo Park at 260 Sydney Road Brunswick.
3. Refers to the next Quarterly Budget Review the installation cost of up to \$20,000 for the installation of the intersex inclusive pride flag as per point 2 above.
4. Endorses further exploration of Glenroy Community Hub as the potential location for a second future pride artwork, for potential incorporation in Council's public art program.

REPORT

Executive summary

In April 2025, Council resolved to consult the community on their preferences for the painting of Intersex inclusive progress pride flags at potential locations in both the north and south of the municipality.

Formal community engagement ran in June and July 2025. This included a survey asking respondents for their preferences for two locations. Targeted stakeholder engagement was undertaken with community service providers and user groups in and around the proposed locations.

From the survey responses and stakeholder feedback, a location in the Brunswick Town Hall precinct is recommended. Balancing site requirements with technical constraints and sensitivity to the heritage precinct, the ideal site is recommended on the footpath adjacent to Michelle Guglielmo park. In the north, the Glenroy Community Hub precinct is recommended as the preferred location for a potential future pride artwork installation. This would be determined over time working collaboratively with local communities towards a place-based outcome.

Previous Council decisions

Rainbow Crossings – Sites for Consultation – 9 April 2025

That Council:

1. *Endorses the eight identified locations listed below for community engagement to help select two sites and designs for the installation of pride flags on Council roads or footpaths:*
 - *Piera Street, Brunswick East*
 - *Howarth Street, Brunswick (adjacent to Yubup Park)*
 - *West Street, Brunswick (adjacent to Bulleke-bek Park)*
 - *Brunswick Town Hall*
 - *Waterloo Road and Snell Grove intersection, Oak Park*

- *Glenroy Community Hub (in forecourt)*
 - *Victoria Street, Coburg (outside Coburg Library)*
 - *CB Smith Reserve (outside Fawcner Leisure Centre)*
2. *Notes that any site that is trafficable will be subject to a road safety audit and recommendations from an audit could add to the cost, between \$3,500 and \$20,000 per site. This applies to Piera Street, Howarth Street and Waterloo Road / Snell Grove.*
 3. *Includes in the community engagement the following:*
 - *information about the relative environmental impacts of the materials considered in the report for the application of the rainbow crossings*
 - *information about sites where additional costs may arise resulting from road safety audits and the range of possible costs*
 - *specific consideration of the needs of vision-impaired people in the design of the rainbow crossings.*
 4. *Acknowledges that of the two sites to be selected, one is to be in the municipal area north of Bell Street and one in the municipal area south of Bell Street.*
 5. *Refers the installation of two rainbow crossings (progressive pride flags) on Council roads or footpaths at a total cost of \$45,000 to the 2025/2026 Council budget process for consideration, noting that if the selected site/s require additional investment resulting from a road safety audit, that these additional costs will be referred to the final budget before adoption or a quarterly budget update. Insert resolution here (italics)*

One community, proudly diverse: Rainbow crossings for Merri-bek – 12 February 2025

That Council seeks a report by April 2025 that:

1. *Identifies suitable locations on Council roads or footpaths with high levels of pedestrian activity within Merri-bek to paint a progressive pride flag as a symbol of inclusivity and welcome for LGBTIQ+ people with the aim of installing this design on two roads or footpaths - one in the north of the municipality and one in the south.*
2. *Provides an estimated cost for these installations to consider in upcoming budgets.*
3. *Recommends an approach to community engagement to select the sites and final designs.*

1. Policy context

Council Plan 2025 – 2029

The proposed installation of pride murals aligns with the 'Healthy and Inclusive Merri-bek' strategic objective and Council's Community Vision that 'Merri-bek leads, and leaves no-one behind'.

LGBTIQ+ Action Plan 2023 – 2026

Council's LGBTIQ+ Action Plan includes actions to deliver projects that increase signs of support towards LGBTIQ+ communities in Council buildings and infrastructure across Merri-bek.

2. Background

Merri-bek has a large and diverse LGBTIQ+ population across all parts of the municipality. LGBTIQ+ people have played a key role in the historical, social, creative and economic vibrancy of the city.

Pride flag installations or "crossings" are a creative way of celebrating LGBTIQ+ communities. Pride flags have been painted around the world in locations that hold social or historical connection to LGBTIQ+ communities. Examples include Peel Street in Collingwood, Jackson Street in St Kilda, and Taylor Square in Darlinghurst.

Pride flags have also been painted as a call to action and celebration of inclusion in other locations – recent examples include the Footscray Library and Altona Theatre.

Merri-bek Council has also commissioned a public mural to celebrate LGBTIQ+ history through its Renuwall program at 105 Sydney Road (Wilson Avenue). *Rainbow Warriors* by artist David Lee Pereira features images from the Australian Queer Archives.

The proposed Michelle Guglielmo Park pride flag installation would celebrate both the social and historical connections to the LGBTIQ+ communities in Brunswick. A future potential installation (eg, footpath or public art) would be considered in consultation with emerging LGBTIQ+ communities in Glenroy.

3. Issues

The installation of the pride flag will have a positive community impact and demonstrate Council's continued support for LGBTIQ+ communities across the municipality.

Human rights consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities. The proposal supports Section 8 of the Human Rights Charter which relate to recognition and equality before the law.

4. Community consultation and engagement

Formal community engagement was open between 4 June and 2 July 2025. A Conversations Merri-bek website outlined the initiative and an online survey asked respondents about their location preferences to the north and south of Bell Street. Survey respondents were asked to indicate a preference for both north and south locations, and could provide comments.

Further targeted stakeholder engagement occurred with community service providers, user groups, young people, local school leaders and health providers around the proposed locations. These conversations provided further information about existing and future needs to support LGBTIQ+ people and the pride flag installation.

A total of 180 people completed the survey. 167 respondents live in Merri-bek, and 33 work or study in Merri-bek (28 of these respondents also live in Merri-bek).

Brunswick Town Hall was by far the most popular location, with 90 respondents selecting it, with strong support also for Victoria Street.

In the north, CB Smith Reserve in Fawkner, the Glenroy Community Hub and Waterloo Road / Snell Grove were popular with respondents.

The southern site (Brunswick Town Hall precinct)

Community feedback celebrated the central, visible and high traffic location on Sydney Road, and the strong social and historical connections Brunswick has with LGBTIQ+ communities. Careful consideration was given to the heritage precinct, as well as the scale and design of the pride installation proposed.

It is recommended that the pride flag installation be painted on the footpath adjacent to Michelle Guglielmo Park (260 Sydney Road) – directly opposite Brunswick Town Hall.

The footpath adjacent to Michelle Guglielmo Park on Sydney Road has increased visibility with a large amount of foot traffic, while also meeting the technical requirements of the project. This location will be relatively straightforward to install, requiring footpath but not road closures. Litter bins can be relocated.

Michelle Guglielmo Park is used for a variety of events and community gatherings from diverse groups. The recommended location offers a possible meeting spot or place of connection before using the park or visiting the local retail strip.

The northern site (Glenroy Hub)

Several northern locations received positive feedback, including CB Smith Reserve in Fawkner, the Glenroy Hub and Waterloo Road / Snell Grove. Working through a range of feedback the Glenroy Hub is recommended.

Council heard from a diverse group of LGBTIQ+ community members living in the Glenroy area or using the Glenroy Hub. The location is seen as a safe space that celebrates our LGBTIQ+ communities through social events, library collections and displays.

There was general support from stakeholders at the Glenroy Hub site for the flag. Any design would need to respond to the local community and diverse users in a sensitive manner. It is proposed that a potential Glenroy installation celebrating the local LGBTIQ+ community continues to be explored with stakeholders on the design, scale, location and timing. This would be delivered through Council's annual public art program.

Affected persons rights and interests

Before making a decision that affects a person's rights, Council must identify whose rights may be directly affected and provide an opportunity for that person (or persons) to convey those views regarding the effect on their rights and consider those views.

5. Officer declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and resources implications

Should Council proceed with the Brunswick site at Michelle Guglielmo, it is estimated to cost up to \$20,000, subject to final design and construction requirements.

This will be referred to the next Quarterly Budget Review.

Proactive maintenance of the flag will be incorporated into Council's regular maintenance service program.

7. Implementation

Following a decision from Council, officers will prepare tender documents for a contractor to finalise designs and construct the mural, aiming for late summer 2026.

Attachment/s

There are no attachments for this report.