

INCLUSIVE MELBOURNE STRATEGY 2022-32



CITY OF MELBOURNE

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

The City of Melbourne respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land, the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong Boon Wurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. We are committed to our reconciliation journey, because at its heart, reconciliation is about strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, for the benefit of all Victorians.

Council Plan 2021-25

The Council Plan 2021-25 sets out our strategic direction and commitment to the community for the next four years. Based on six strategic objectives for our city, this is our detailed plan for our city's revitalisation and considers the needs of all people who access and experience the City of Melbourne municipality. For more information visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/council-plan



Safety and wellbeing

Our priority is to ensure the city is safe, and that people feel safe when they come into the city is our priority. We will plan and design for the safety and health and wellbeing of all people in the City of Melbourne, and we are committed to strengthening community social connections.

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Endorsed February 2022

Cover Image: A local gathering place

Disclaimer

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FOREWORD FROM THE LORD MAYOR OF MELBOURNE AND COUNCILLOR



The City of Melbourne has a bold vision. We want Melbourne to be a city of possibility, where the world meets and the extraordinary happens. A city that is accessible, affordable, and inclusive.

The Inclusive Melbourne Strategy will enable us to realise this vision and continue important work towards reducing inequality, and enhancing safety and accessibility across the municipality.

It is underpinned by a number of existing plans, strategies and policies that together contribute to a more inclusive city.

From the Affordable Housing and Economic Development strategies to the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan and Reconciliation Action Plan, this overarching Inclusive Melbourne Strategy brings all our thinking about inclusivity into one clear framework for the next 10 years.

This strategy has been devised with our recovery efforts in mind. It provides an opportunity to reset the trajectory of our city to ensure no one is left behind in our city's renaissance.

Regardless of culture, age, gender, sexuality, religion or ability, Melbourne must be a place where everyone can prosper, where every voice is as important as the next and where diversity is celebrated for the vibrancy and richness that benefits us all.

This notion is inherent in our commitment as members of the Welcoming Cities national network, and the pledge we have made to report our progress towards the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Thank you to everyone who has dedicated time to this strategy, to listening and responding to the aspirations of our community, and making meaningful plans to create a more diverse, more inclusive, and more resilient Melbourne.

Melbourne, a city of possibility for everyone.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sally Capp".

Lord Mayor
Sally Capp

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Olivia Ball".

Councillor Dr Olivia Ball
**Portfolio lead for Health,
Wellbeing and Belonging**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Melbourne has always been a significant gathering place. The city's Aboriginal culture, knowledge and heritage provides the foundation for today, a place where all cultures, backgrounds, genders, sexualities, and abilities are welcomed, celebrated, and protected.

The diversity of our municipality is one of our greatest assets. We are proud of Melbourne's diverse communities and recognise that we are all better off when everyone has a voice, can contribute, and thrive. We strive to provide greater opportunities for all. Everyone should benefit from participating in our city's social, economic, cultural, physical, and political aspects.

Purpose

This Inclusive Melbourne Strategy will help realise our vision of a truly inclusive Melbourne over the next 10 years. It outlines how the City of Melbourne will embrace the diversity of cultures, ages, genders, sexualities, backgrounds, religions, and abilities of the people who live, work, study and visit the city.

This strategy recognises that groups of people within the community experience persistent barriers to equal participation. This strategy amplifies the voices of Aboriginal peoples, LGBTIQ+ communities, children and young people, older people, women, people with a disability, culturally and linguistically diverse people, international students and people experiencing poverty and homelessness.

The Inclusive Melbourne Strategy responds to the Council Plan and the Health and Wellbeing Plan and provides a framework for the City of Melbourne that progresses inclusion for our city.

Defining inclusion and diversity

Social inclusion is defined as the process of improving the terms of participation in society through enhancing opportunities, access to resources, voice, and respect for rights (United Nations, 2016).

Diversity refers to the differences between people and how they identify, such as cultural and ethnic background, sexuality, age, gender, socioeconomic status, income, education level, occupation, ability, faith, and beliefs.

Vision

Our city is where people of all cultures, backgrounds, ages, genders, sexualities, beliefs, and abilities are welcomed, celebrated, and protected. As a result, our urban communities are fair, sustainable, safe, affordable, and inclusive, drawing people from around the world to visit, work and live. We are proud of the vibrancy this diversity brings to every aspect of city life.

Inclusive recovery

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact around the world, especially for people experiencing social exclusion. The World Bank has called for an inclusive recovery which addresses the exclusion and long-standing systemic inequalities that COVID-19 has laid bare (October 2021). The World Bank's unprecedented investment has included more than \$157 billion to fight the pandemic's health, economic and social impacts. This included support to protect the poor and vulnerable, support businesses, create jobs and jump start a green, resilient, and inclusive recovery.

This Inclusive Melbourne Strategy recognises that investing in economic reactivation and recovery is essential. In line with The World Bank, we aim to do this in a way that ensures no one is left behind, creating a more sustainable and fair society that builds prosperity for all.

Social exclusion

Several factors drive exclusion and cause people in the community to experience structural and systemic disadvantages. These factors include unemployment, job insecurity, physical and mental health issues, isolation, loneliness, racism, gender inequality, family violence, poverty, ageism, childhood or adult trauma and lack of access to education and technology. In addition, we acknowledge the intersection of factors that contribute to the experience of exclusion. For instance, people who are sleeping rough and experiencing homelessness are often impacted by several of these factors.

Addressing barriers to inclusion

Although significant factors cause exclusion for members of our community, the City of Melbourne is home to one of the world's most harmonious and culturally diverse communities. More than 56 per cent of residents were born overseas, and 48 per cent speak a language other than English. In addition, City of Melbourne residents speak over 137 languages, and more than 87,300 international students lived in Melbourne before COVID (2019).

As a member of the Welcoming Cities national network, we are committed to creating a place where everyone can belong and participate. We will improve participation in society for all members of the community by enhancing opportunities, improving access to resources, amplifying community voices and respecting rights. We will address barriers to inclusion when:

- designing physical environments
- providing programs and services
- running events and activities in the municipality
- planning and delivering projects
- employing and promoting our workforce
- undertaking decision-making processes.

Community consultation

The strategy has been developed through an extensive consultation process. We consulted widely with stakeholder organisations. In addition, we held focus groups with community members representing city workers, businesses, residents, students, and a diversity of cultures, religions, abilities, genders, and sexualities. In implementing the strategy, we will collaborate with Traditional Owners, government, business, community organisations and stakeholder groups.

Priority areas

Our three overarching priorities have corresponding outcomes and evaluation measures. We will monitor our performance against our priorities annually.



1. Organisation, services, programs, and places for all

A diverse and inclusive workforce underpins our delivery of services, programs and places that are accessible and meet the needs of our diverse communities.

- Our organisation is diverse and inclusive.
- Our people feel culturally safe, valued, and belong.
- Our services, programs and places are responsive to the evolving priorities of our diverse communities.
- Our services, programs and places are welcoming, safe, accessible, and affordable for all.
- Our information is accessible, and messaging is inclusive.
- Council policies, strategies, plans and other public - facing information are developed and published under universal design principles.



2. Sustainable and fair recovery

The city's recovery and regeneration from COVID-19 provides an opportunity to build back better for all. A diverse and resilient community is at the centre of a liveable city.

- Our city economy is inclusive – all people can contribute to and benefit from our shared prosperity.
- The City of Melbourne and our partners enable a community-led recovery through capacity building practices.
- Our Council Plan initiatives deliver a long-term, sustainable recovery through integrating social, economic, and environmental priorities.
- Our leadership and decision-making are underpinned by the five guiding principles of an inclusive recovery.

See page 22 for the guiding principles



3. Empowered, participatory communities

We want to encourage participation from all community members, ensuring that people feel heard, and their needs are addressed.

- People have the capacity to identify local needs and are empowered to lead change in their neighbourhoods.
- People and communities are connected and participate fully in community life.
- All people can participate in city decision-making.



STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Impact of COVID-19

Melbourne has been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, and it continues to have profound economic, health and wellbeing impacts on our community.

Many existing stressors were facing Melbourne before the pandemic, including:

- racism towards minority groups and people of colour
- food insecurity
- safety concerns
- youth unemployment
- mental health issues
- unemployment among overseas-born residents, who are more likely to be unemployed than Australian-born residents (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016).

Homelessness was a major issue before COVID-19, with Melbourne experiencing the highest rates of presentation for homeless assistance by Aboriginal people in Australia, and critical shortages of affordable, accessible, and quality housing. Before the pandemic, we already had a short fall of 5500 safe and affordable rental homes and emergency accommodation for people on moderate, low, and very low incomes, including those experiencing homelessness. The lack of affordable housing meant that one-third of households renting in Melbourne were living in rental stress (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016).

COVID-19 has exacerbated these underlying vulnerabilities and inequities, with some groups being disproportionately impacted, such as women, low-income earners, international students, and people experiencing homelessness.

As a result, economic and social disadvantage has increased. In addition, some community members have experienced violence and racism, and people have reported poor mental health through social isolation and loss of community connection. The pandemic also exposed the digital divide in our communities with many families reporting 'stress around access to digital services and accessing schoolwork over the last 12-16 months' (The Smith Family, 2021).

The City of Melbourne Social Indicators Survey 2020 (CoMSIS) shows that young people, residents from CALD backgrounds and low-income residents are most heavily affected by social isolation as a result of COVID-19.

The survey reports that personal wellbeing and feeling part of the community have declined compared to pre-pandemic results, along with participation in sport and exercise, and people volunteering. In addition, there has been a 33 per cent increase in self-harm injuries and a 90 per cent increase in demand for mental health services (City of Melbourne, 2020).

COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE OF COVID 19

Young Victorians have been proportionately affected by the COVID-19 crisis, experiencing high rates of job losses, financial and housing stress and education disruption. This substantially increases the risk of mental ill health among this age group.

– Centre for Multicultural Youth (2020)

Many young people have expressed their concerns about increased racism and discrimination brought on by the COVID-19 crisis. Internationally, racism and racial discrimination have been dubbed the 'Second Pandemic' and racism declared a 'public health emergency'.

– Centre for Multicultural Youth (2020)

Mental health is another area in which existing inequities have been amplified. Multicultural and ethnic communities have faced additional barriers due to challenges accessing in-language support, disruption in trusted community networks, and the prevailing lack of culturally responsive mental health services.

– Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria (2020)

A sizeable minority of Chinese-Australians (18%) say they have been 'physically threatened or attacked' in the past 12 months because of their Chinese heritage. Two-thirds (66%) say COVID-19 contributed to or caused these reported experiences in the past year.

– Lowy Institute (2021)

While wellbeing outcomes are lower across all groups, people from English speaking backgrounds and people on higher-income earners enjoy better personal wellbeing outcomes than people from non-English speaking backgrounds and lower-income residents. (CoMSIS 2020).

There has been an increase in family violence during the pandemic. According to the latest reported crime statistics, the rate of family violence incidents in Melbourne increased by 18.5 per cent from 2019-20 to 2020-21. Melbourne-based multicultural family violence service inTouch reports an increased number of clients during COVID-19. 'Along with an increase in the number of referrals during the pandemic, our case managers also report increases in the complexity of client cases and the need for more contacts with individual clients' (inTouch, 2020).

There is also consistent reporting of lower perceptions of safety at night for women than men. In 2021, 64 per cent of men reported feeling safe at night compared with just 37 per cent of women. (CoMSIS 2020)

In addition, residents from CALD backgrounds have higher risk of food insecurity, with 39% having experienced food insecurity compared to 27% of non CALD backgrounds. (CoMSIS 2021).

Global context: United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Leaving no-one behind is an essential theme of the Sustainable Development Goals (Goals), a United Nations framework that the City of Melbourne supports. The framework consists of 17 Goals with specific targets focused on economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental protection. The City of Melbourne has embraced the Goals as a means for making Melbourne a better place to live, work and visit.

We have mapped the alignment of the Goals to our work throughout this strategy. We will measure our progress against relevant indicators from these Goals in addition to the specific indicators in this strategy.

The Inclusive Melbourne Strategy plays an important role in further integrating the Sustainable Development Goals into our priority areas. The most applicable goals are:



End poverty in all its forms everywhere.



End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.



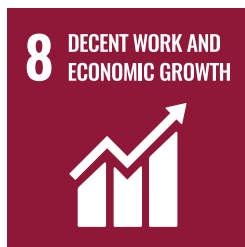
Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.



Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.



Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.



Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.



Reduce inequality within and among countries.



Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.



Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Australian context: National and Victorian legislation

In developing the Inclusive Melbourne Strategy, we have considered relevant legislation at both the Victorian and Australian Government levels in the areas of inclusion, diversity, and equity.

It is unlawful to discriminate based on age, disability, race, sex, intersex status, gender identity and or and sexual orientation in Australia. These anti-discrimination laws are contained in national legislation:

- [Age Discrimination Act 2004](#)
- [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#)
- [Racial Discrimination Act 1975](#)
- [Sex Discrimination Act 1984](#)



[Victorian Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005](#) The Child Safe Standards (Standards) were introduced via amendment to the Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005 and are compulsory for all Victorian organisations that provide services or facilities for children. Compliance with the Standards is regulated and monitored by the Commission for Children and Young People.



Under [Local Government Act 2020](#), councils must act for the benefit and wellbeing of the municipal community. They must achieve the best outcomes for the community, plan for climate change and provide accessible and equitable services responsive to diverse needs.

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires councils to create a Community Engagement Policy. The City of Melbourne's policy states that: "whenever the City of Melbourne is planning, delivering a project or making a decision that significantly impacts the way our community experiences the city or their interaction with our organisation, the community must have the opportunity to participate in that process meaningfully."



Victoria's [Gender Equality Act 2020](#) requires public entities, including councils, to support the identification and elimination of systemic causes of gender inequality in policy, programs and delivery of services in our workplaces and in the communities we serve. As per the Act, the City of Melbourne will conduct gender impact assessments on all policies, programs, and services we develop.



We are also bound by [Victoria's Equal Opportunity Act 2010](#), which aims to make public life free from discrimination, namely; parental status, employment and industrial activity, expunged homosexual conviction, lawful sexual activity, marital status, physical features, political belief or activity, religious belief or activity, pregnancy and breastfeeding.



The [Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities](#) is a Victorian law that sets out all people's fundamental rights, freedoms, and responsibilities in Victoria. It contains 20 rights that promote and protect freedom, respect, equality, and dignity. The Charter requires public authorities, such as Victorian state and local government departments and agencies, and people delivering services on behalf of government, to act consistently with the human rights in the Charter.



The [Multicultural Victoria Act 2011](#) enshrines principles of multiculturalism which the City of Melbourne follows. The Act acknowledges that individuals come from diverse backgrounds and are entitled to mutual respect and understanding and to access opportunities and participate in and contribute to the community's social, cultural, economic, and political life.



Local Government has a role in supporting community members to achieve optimal health and wellbeing, as set out in section 24 of the [Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008](#). Under this Act, local governments are required to develop a municipal public health and wellbeing plan every four years. To meet this requirement, the City of Melbourne has developed the Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–25, integrated as part of the Council Plan to demonstrate what the Council will do to protect, improve, and promote public health and wellbeing in the City of Melbourne.



CITY OF MELBOURNE SNAPSHOT

The population of Melbourne's municipality is made up of people of all ages and from many different cultures. Residents include young professionals, international students, and older couples.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, almost 1 million people used the city on an average weekday, and each year Melbourne hosted over three million international visitors.



183,756
residents

49%
males

51%
females

56%
of residents
born overseas

48%
speak a language
other than English

19%
speak
Mandarin

910,800
people live, work, study or
socialise in the municipality

87,300
overseas students

1 in 10
residents in the municipality
are affected by poverty



1653
same-sex
couple
households

468
Aboriginal
people

18%
of people
in Victoria have
a disability



289
people experiencing
homelessness

32%
of households
experience rental
and mortgage stress

33%
experience
food insecurity

22%
have been
diagnosed with
depression
or anxiety

1123
people per
100,000 population
reported incidents
of family violence

*Statistics typically reflect pre COVID-19 data. They do not take into consideration impacts stemming from this event, such as travel and working from home restrictions and should not be taken to reflect the current daily population.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM THE COMMUNITY

We developed this strategy through extensive consultation with specific groups, including Aboriginal and culturally and linguistically diverse communities. We consulted people with a disability, people of all ages including children and young people, faith-based, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer community members.

The engagement included focus groups and in-depth interviews with city residents, workers, and visitors; workshops with community organisations and individual stakeholders; industry and government, and a four-week consultation period and survey on Participate Melbourne.

The community engagement provided valuable insights centred on themes of representation, opportunity, accessibility, and participation. People understood inclusion as feeling a sense of belonging, having a voice in community decisions, and visible diversity in the community.

Throughout our engagement with our diverse communities on our community vision, four-year Council Plan and Community Engagement Policy, we heard that inclusion matters to everyone. One in five – 19 per cent – of people said their top priority for the City of Melbourne is for it to be inclusive, accessible, and affordable.

Stakeholders identified the following groups as at risk of exclusion: Aboriginal communities, multicultural communities, LGBTIQ+ communities, people with socioeconomic disadvantage, people experiencing homelessness, people with disabilities, women, young people, older people, people with a mental illness or who are neurodiverse, refugees and international students.

Across most of our community consultations, participants identified that there are groups in the community who face persistent barriers to participating in the social, physical, economic, cultural, and political life in the City of Melbourne. Barriers included:

- Safety concerns – feeling concerned about physical safety, elevated for some groups of people, including women and LGBTIQ+ community members.
- Representation – lack of opportunity to be represented in aspects of city life, including leadership, events and festivals.
- Social – lack of understanding of the needs of different groups can lead to not feeling welcome to participate.
- Physical – limited access to streets, buildings, and public transport.
- Economic – lack of finances preventing participation in some activities in Melbourne.

Participants suggested the City of Melbourne could embed inclusivity when designing physical environments, programs, and services, running events and decision-making processes.

COVID-19 Recovery workshops

As part of the consultation process, we held two workshops on 'how we can ensure that our COVID-19 recovery is inclusive and sustainable.' Stakeholders from across the community, business, university, environment and arts sectors and the Victorian Government reflected on their vision for Melbourne's recovery and how to ensure that we create opportunities for everyone in a post-COVID world.

Given this crisis' unprecedented and evolving nature, stakeholders focused on the 'how' of recovery, over articulating a clear, mapped out vision of a good recovery. Workshop participants highlighted the need to bring diverse voices into shaping our recovery because of the strength that a diversity of people, experiences, and thinking provides.

Other workshop outcomes included the need to work in partnership, leveraging existing investments to deliver on a fair and inclusive recovery, keeping the community at the centre of decisions and taking a conscious approach to legacy. Participants wanted a long-term, equitable and sustainable recovery, not just building back to where we were but transporting us into a bigger, better future.



PRIORITY 1. ORGANISATION, SERVICES, PROGRAMS, AND PLACES FOR ALL

This priority aims to achieve a diverse and inclusive workforce. It strives toward delivering services, programs and places that are accessible and meet the needs of our diverse communities.

Our workforce

As the first local government to have a [Reconciliation Action Plan](#) endorsed by Reconciliation Australia, we are committed to supporting local Aboriginal peoples' voices, ambitions, and employment. We will continue to actively participate in advancing reconciliation actively.

We continue to strive for equality for people of all genders and are committed to ending men's violence against women in all its forms. Our workplace culture ensures that women enjoy respect, equal opportunity, and full participation.

We aim to provide all LGBTIQ+ people with a safe, engaging, and diverse working environment that offers equal opportunities. We are a proud member of Pride in Diversity and work to improve our policies and entitlements so that they are fair.

We seek an 'access for all' working environment. Therefore, we will work to identify any barriers to people with a disability being employed by the City of Melbourne and strive to overcome those barriers.

We also seek to have a diverse age profile that is representative of the municipality. Amplifying young voices and harnessing the experience of our mature workforce will improve our decision-making and services.

BENEFITS OF INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP AND WORKPLACES

The biggest takeaway we found is a strong and statistically significant correlation between the diversity of management teams and overall innovation. Companies that reported above-average diversity on their management teams also reported innovation revenue that was 19 percentage points higher than that of companies with below-average leadership diversity—45% of total revenue versus just 26%.
– Harvard Business Review (2017)

Inclusive environments are associated with improved job and/or team performance, as well as higher return on income and productivity.
– Diversity Council of Australia (2015)

Inclusion is associated with a higher sense of employee well-being and psychological safety, as well as employees feeling valued and respected.
– Diversity Council of Australia (2015)

We strive to overcome barriers to employment for people from culturally diverse backgrounds and recognise the significant benefits of recruiting highly skilled, creative migrants and refugees who reflect the diverse people in our communities.



‘This is about being a great place to live, having the right services for people so the community can thrive.’

‘My vision for the city is to be able to go into the City of Melbourne and feel welcomed and embraced and respected.’

- Community member

‘People being able to see diversity in the workforce is important—police force, tram driver, Lord Mayor... helping people feel that things are possible.’

- Community member

‘We want to ensure that our services are safe and accessible because we know from experience, if they’re not, that people simply won’t access them and then they’ll be left looking for other places to go. And it can be through simple things like misgendering somebody or assuming that somebody’s partner is of a particular gender. Just those simple things can suddenly set up a barrier that says, “I’m not safe here, I’m not included here”.’

- Community member

‘I think we need to consider a co-designed approach by having women of all ages, trans women, women of colour, women with disability, women who work in the city, who study in the city all come together and talk about, “how can we make certain spaces safer for us?”’

- Community member

WHAT WE HEARD

‘There could be more efforts made to, you know, celebrate people of different backgrounds and different communities. I feel like the Council could have control over that, and that could be something that they could easily do. Having events that show appreciation for everyone in Melbourne would be really nice.’

- Community member

‘So, when I finished university, I realised that there were a lot more barriers that were going to come my way as a migrant woman, as a black woman, trying to kick start my career, essentially. So, I think one of the more pressing issues for me is that there’s a whole new generation of those who I will probably represent.’

- Community member

‘We’re working on our employment policies, strategies and the way that we do business so we can make these processes more inclusive and responsive to the needs of all people.’

- City of Melbourne staff member

Our services, programs, and places

We commit to making all services, programs and places delivered by City of Melbourne accessible and equitable. Accessibility includes digital, physical access, as well as making everyone feel secure, comfortable, and welcomed. Our programs will support the needs and priorities of all communities.

By including diverse groups in the design of our programs, services, facilities, built environments and public open space, we will ensure these assets are accessible for everyone. In addition, this co-design approach will reduce barriers to participation in events, activities, services, and programs.

We will create safe, inclusive recreation facilities and programs that support the community's physical health and mental wellbeing. We will improve the accessibility of our online services and facilities for all people, including people with a disability. For example, we will increase and upgrade inclusive spaces for women in City of Melbourne sports facilities.

Our events and activities will be accessible, safe, affordable, celebrate Melbourne's diversity and create a sense of belonging in the city. In addition, our library services will expand to include digital literacy services, facilities, and initiatives to reduce the digital divide.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE OF EXCLUSION

1 in 3 surveyed customers from Indigenous or Non-European backgrounds, and people with a disability, and nearly 1 in 2 customers who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual and people who practice a noticeable Faith (42%), say their customer needs were often unmet over the past 12 months.

– Australian Human Rights Commission (2017)

Despite this, the majority of these customers (80% or more) often do not provide feedback to organisations about how to better meet their needs, suggesting information gaps.

– Australian Human Rights Commission (2017)

If diverse customers are not treated respectfully or fairly as a person, they are much more likely to just walk away. Plus a lack of organisational support for diversity/equality triggers some diverse customers to actively dissuade others from using the organisation's products or services.

– Australian Human Rights Commission (2017)

Surveyed customers who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual or who practice a noticeable Faith, were about twice as likely as comparator groups to recommend an organisation to another person based on its reputation as supportive of gender equality, marriage equality, people with a disability, older people or cultural diversity.

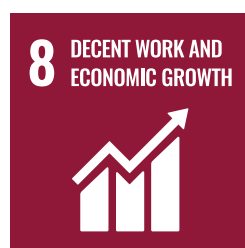
– Australian Human Rights Commission (2017)

Priority 1. Outcomes and Indicators

OUTCOMES	INDICATORS	TIME FRAME	OUR ROLE
Our organisation is diverse and inclusive.	Increased diversity reflected in workforce data. Barriers to people from diverse backgrounds being employed or remaining employed by the City of Melbourne have been identified and action to overcome those barriers has been demonstrated.	Medium	Deliver
Our people feel culturally safe, valued, and belong.	Increased feelings of safety and belonging through staff survey data.	Immediate	Deliver
Our services, programs and places are responsive to the evolving priorities of our diverse communities.	The needs of all people in the community are a key input into the planning and design of services programs and places.	Medium	Deliver
Our services, programs and places are welcoming, safe, accessible, and affordable for all.	Increased diversity of people and communities accessing services, programs, and places.	Medium	Deliver
Our information is accessible, and messaging is inclusive.	Communication and information meet accessibility standards. Editorial Style Guide reflects inclusive language applied across all channels.	Immediate	Deliver
Council policies, strategies, plans and other publicly facing information are developed and published under universal design principles.	Universal design policy created. Number of staff trained in universal design principles. Proportion of Council policies, strategies and plans that are developed according to universal design principles.	Medium	Deliver

Time frame: Immediate: 1-3 years, Medium: 4-6 years, Long-term: 7-10 years

Priority 1 aligns with these Sustainable Development Goals





PRIORITY 2. SUSTAINABLE AND FAIR RECOVERY

The city's recovery and regeneration from COVID-19 provides an opportunity to build back better for all. A diverse and resilient community is at the centre of a liveable city.

The World Bank has defined inclusive recovery as addressing the exclusion and long-standing systemic inequalities that COVID-19 has laid bare. It is integral that our recovery expands opportunities so that everyone can experience prosperity and overcome barriers to advancing their wellbeing. Underpinning this approach is the theory of inclusive growth, which argues that economic growth, social development, and inclusion help support a robust economy where all people can thrive and access equal opportunities.





We are committed to building a more sustainable and fair recovery that ensures no one is left behind. We acknowledge that this is a dynamic, evolving, and complex challenge, and our focus is on how we engage, lead, partner, adapt and work together to find a path through this uncertainty. We have developed the following guiding principles to support this commitment.

Five guiding principles for an inclusive recovery:

- **Legacy building**
- **Work in partnership**
- **Draw on evidence to continually adapt approaches**
- **Deliver best value**
- **Strengthen community resilience and enable community-led activity**



Priority 2. Sustainable and Fair Recovery Guiding Principles

 Legacy building	 Work in partnership	 Use evidence to continually adapt	 Deliver best value	 Strengthen community resilience and enable community led activity
<p>Long term and focused towards a north star</p> <p>Provide intentional and sustained leadership</p>	<p>Develop long term partnerships</p> <p>Deliver programs and infrastructure across sectors in partnership with community, State Government and other organisations</p>	<p>Continue to adapt to our approach based on what is working: be prepared to try and fail</p> <p>Measure and track progress</p>	<p>Deliver in a way that optimises environmental, social and economic priorities</p> <p>Leverage existing investments</p>	<p>Start with an understanding of community context and First Nations connection to place</p> <p>Enable communities to drive activities within the strategic framework established by the City of Melbourne</p> <p>Strengthen capacity in the community to engage, co-design and deliver</p>

BENEFITS OF AN INCLUSIVE ECONOMY

Australia faces the mutually reinforced challenges of boosting labour supply and promoting social inclusion. Labour underutilisation is especially prevalent among groups such as lone parents, people with disability, and Indigenous Australians. These are also groups at greatest risk of social exclusion. Thus better integration of these groups into the labour market would enhance inclusion.

– OECD (2011)

A more inclusive Australia would generate an economic dividend of \$12.7bn annually.

– Deloitte (2019)

There doesn't have to be a trade-off between growth and equality. On the contrary, the opening up of opportunity can spur stronger economic performance and improve living standards across the board.

– OECD (2015)

'If you can help shape what the offerings are, you feel more tie-in, belonging, and it becomes more genuine.'

- Community member

'Recovery will demand that everyone contributes to it. It will require leveraging inclusion to drive that recovery.'

- Community member

'We've got an opportunity to really rethink the role and shape of the city. We have a once in a lifetime opportunity to build back better, to create a city that is more diverse, more inclusive, and more resilient. My vision for the city is one of diversity and constant evolution.'

- Community member

'Be deliberate and authentic when engaging with community, listen to diverse voices and perspectives and engage with those who are often excluded from the conversation.'

- Community member

WHAT WE HEARD

'Consider how CoM will work differently to commit to inclusive recovery, including through working in partnership across sectors, communities and initiatives.'

- Community member

'The key things in any good recovery are that the community is at the centre of decisions that are made. Every decision you make around the environment, around business, around infrastructure impacts on the other components of a good city, and indeed a good recovery.'

- Community member

'The foundation of a truly inclusive approach is understanding, working with and empowering the community.'

- Community member

Priority 2. Outcomes and Indicators

OUTCOMES	INDICATORS	TIME FRAME	OUR ROLE
Our city economy is inclusive – all people can contribute to and benefit from our shared prosperity.	An increased number of social enterprises and socially responsible businesses are operating in the City of Melbourne.	Long-term	Deliver, partner and advocate
	Identify any barriers to people from minority backgrounds starting or operating a business in the City of Melbourne.		
	Inclusion is built into the governance, implementation, and advocacy of our economic recovery initiatives.	Immediate	Deliver
	City of Melbourne support for businesses ensures our systems, processes and procedures enable equal access to opportunities for all businesses; including social enterprises, socially responsible businesses and minority-owned businesses.		
The City of Melbourne and our partners support a community-led recovery through capacity building practices.	City of Melbourne grants, procurement and employment practices have been reviewed to deliver inclusive, just and sustainable outcomes.	Medium	Deliver, partner and advocate
Our Council Plan initiatives deliver a long-term, sustainable recovery through integrating social, economic, and environmental priorities.	Thirty per cent of Council Plan major initiatives apply an integrated approach, delivering on social, economic, and environmental outcomes.	Immediate	Deliver
Our leadership and decision-making are underpinned by the five guiding principles of an inclusive recovery.	Executive Leadership team and Council regularly reviews progress against the guiding principles.	Immediate	Deliver

Time frame: Immediate: 1-3 years, Medium: 4-6 years, Long-term: 7-10 years

Priority 2 aligns with these Sustainable Development Goals





PRIORITY 3. EMPOWERED, PARTICIPATORY COMMUNITIES

This priority aims to build connection and empowerment. We want to encourage participation from all members of our community. Representation from diverse voices will lead to a more cohesive, inclusive city. We want to ensure that people feel heard, and our organisation's responses demonstrate we have listened to people's needs and aspirations.

We want people to share their ideas and perspectives, recognising that contributing to decision-making is essential to strong communities. Our aim is for people to shape the future of their city.

The City of Melbourne understands the strengths, assets, and connections to place that our community has. We invest in building the capacity of our community to lead and affect change. We will ensure that the community is supported to identify place-based concerns and opportunities, and we will work together to address these and realise aspirations.

The City of Melbourne Community Engagement Policy 2021 outlines the City of Melbourne's commitment and approach to community engagement practice.

It details the principles that guide our work towards delivering sustainable outcomes for our city: through shared problem-solving, open dialogue and meaningful participation. The policy seeks to foster a deeper culture of public participation. It provides a common language that strengthens community engagement for all.

We will implement a neighbourhood model by working with communities to develop neighbourhood plans and service centres that respond to the local community's existing and projected needs. The neighbourhood model will ensure that community strengths, needs and priorities are understood and supported through our work, investment, and advocacy.

We will foster reciprocal relationships with different parts of our communities, including Traditional Custodians, community organisations, residents, workers, businesses, students and other precinct and neighbourhood-based stakeholders. We will bring groups together to forge connections, share ideas and learn from each other.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Trust in government is essential for social cohesion and well-being. Today, more than ever, citizens demand greater transparency from their governments. Information on the who, why and how of decision making is essential to hold government to account, maintain confidence in public institutions and support a level playing field for business.

Broader public engagement in the decision-making process is also important for holding the government to account and maintaining confidence in public institutions.

– OECD (2022)

As the level of government closest to the community, councils have both the opportunity and the responsibility to enable participatory democracy. Many citizens now want a stronger voice in shaping their community's future. To be successful, it must encompass strategies and processes that are sensitive to the community-context in which it occurs.

– Local Government Act (2020)

95 per cent of people consulted agreed that: "Public participation in Council planning leads to better decisions and more sustainable solutions. Our different perspectives and experiences are valuable, and we all have a right to be involved in decisions that affect where and how we live."

– City of Melbourne Community Engagement Policy (2021)

'You know, if you have things where people can make a statement or voice, they feel they're more part of it, that they're part of this community and it belongs to them as well. It changes that idea of it belonging to the business people. No, the city belongs to everyone because we all make up the city.'

- Community member

'I don't just want the City of Melbourne to just be a liveable city for people from diverse backgrounds, but it actually becomes a city where people from diverse background thrive.'

- Community member

'Public participation brings views into the discussion which may be missed or ignored otherwise.'

- Community member

WHAT WE HEARD

'Bringing everyone to the table, looking at how can we be more resourceful? How can we build off the capacities and the smarts, talents, vibrants and the rest of our amazingly diverse communities?'

- Community member

'It's about creating a city that's safe, welcoming and inclusive and really reflects the things that make it up. That's going to be expressed in many different ways in terms of the leadership from government and executives. It's the language, it's the accessibility of the spaces and it's the way it interacts with its stakeholders and partnerships.'

- Community member

'Participating through group activities is key, gives people a chance to hear other views, which may challenge their own position.'

- Community member

'The future is local. We need to move residents out of the status of consumers and to have that, you need to delegate authority, power, resources, and bring in residents to have legitimate decision-making power.'

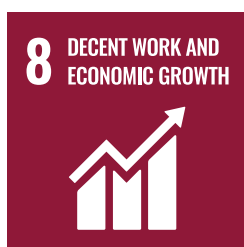
- Community member

Priority 3. Outcomes and Indicators

OUTCOMES	INDICATORS	TIME FRAME	OUR ROLE
People have the capacity to identify local needs and are empowered to lead change in their neighbourhoods.	Communities develop neighbourhood plans and collaborate to implement priority actions.	Medium	Deliver and partner
People and communities are connected and participate fully in community life.	Communities report high levels of social connection, access to learning, volunteering, recreation, and cultural opportunities.	Immediate	Deliver, partner and advocate
All people can participate in city decision-making.	Increase in ranking for community decisions, consultation, and engagement in Satisfaction Survey (higher than Victorian average).	Immediate	Deliver

Time frame: Immediate: 1-3 years, Medium: 4-6 years, Long-term: 7-10 years

Priority 3 aligns with these Sustainable Development Goals





A WHOLE OF CITY OF MELBOURNE APPROACH

We will operationalise the Inclusive Melbourne Strategy across the whole of our organisation.

The strategy builds on the inclusive priorities, actions, and commitments in the Economic Development Strategy 2031 and the Affordable Housing Strategy 2030.

The strategy provides an overarching framework for existing plans, including:

- Melbourne a Great Place to Age
- Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-25
- Active Melbourne.

In addition, it is a framework for:

- the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan
- Reconciliation Action Plan
- our place-based plans
- Creating Communities of Equality and Respect: prevention of violence against women Action Plan 2021-24.

Partnership

Working in partnership will be vital to creating a genuinely Inclusive Melbourne. In implementing the strategy, we will collaborate with Traditional Owners, government, business, community organisations and stakeholder groups. We will achieve the priorities and outcomes through delivering them ourselves, collaborating with others and advocating for change. We will advocate with all levels of government and other partners to deliver this strategy, acknowledging our shared responsibilities in progressing inclusion.

Embedding a community development approach

Adopting a community development approach is central to the implementation of this strategy. Our municipality comprises a broad set of unique and diverse neighbourhoods, from the densely populated CBD to residential Kensington, Carlton and parts of South Yarra. Implementing a neighbourhood model strengthens how we understand and work with different communities across our municipality.

Using community development practice and this place-based approach, we seek to better understand our communities' strengths, needs, and priorities to guide our work and empower communities to identify their priorities and lead change. We will ensure the participation of diverse voices and views, including those of children and young people. We will also facilitate individual capacity and build stronger, more united local communities.

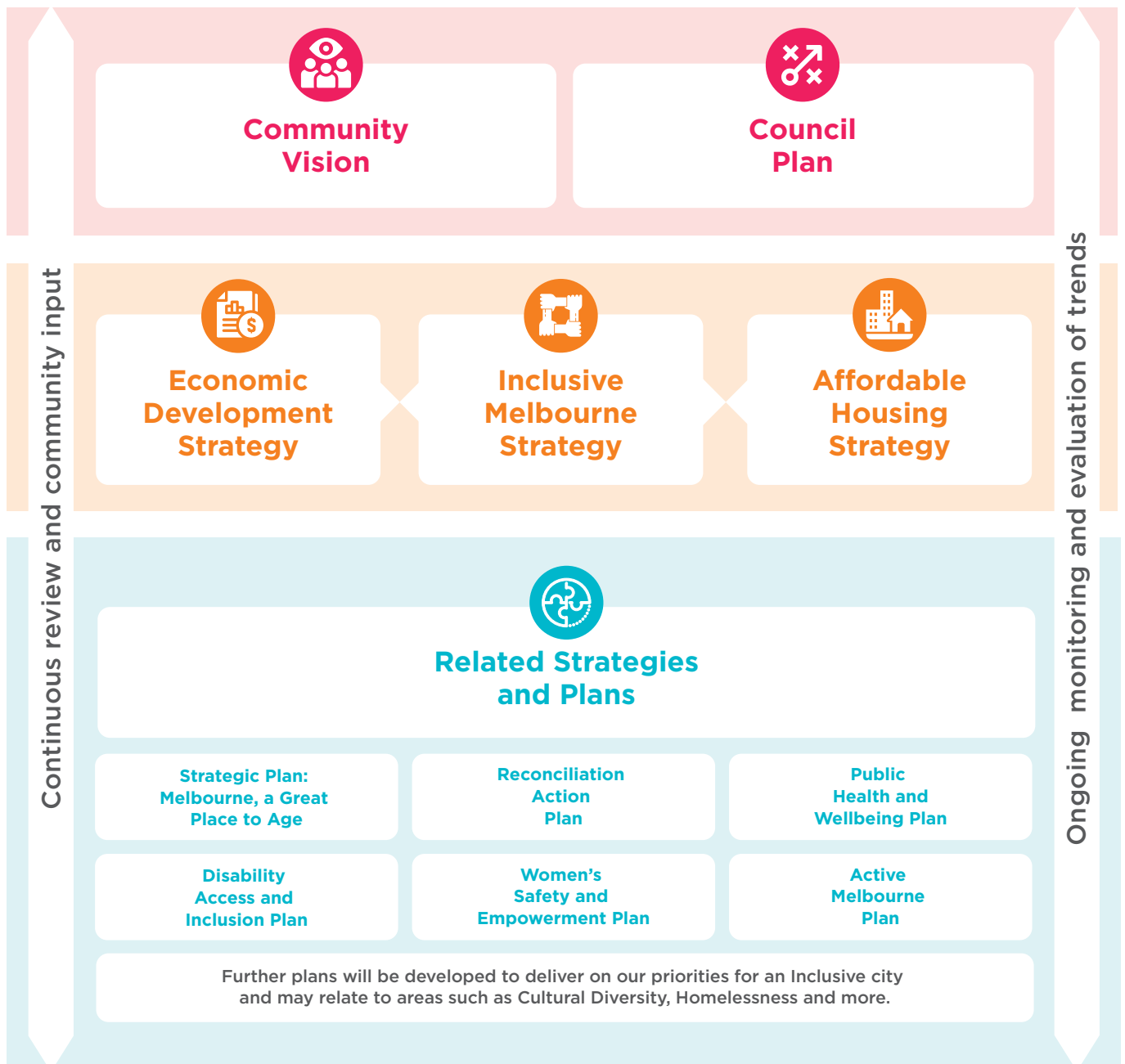
Through understanding our communities better with neighbourhood level insights, we can confidently engage and communicate with communities on our work and respond to needs. It will also allow us to tailor services, programs, and facilities effectively.

It will help ensure that our long-term COVID recovery is sustainable and inclusive by building resilience, creating space for community participation in government decision-making and supporting co-designed and locally led recovery initiatives.

We will also implement a business partnering model to embed inclusion, access and meaningful community engagement across City of Melbourne projects and initiatives. Our business partnering includes a team of Community Engagement and Impact Advisors working with around 80 projects every year. The Advisors will provide support on maximising value for our communities through our everyday work, and embed engagement through our Community Engagement Policy and our Participate Melbourne online platform.

This will include using deliberative engagement processes that bring together a real mix of community voices, over a period of time, to work through and consider complex and important issues that impact them, in a supported environment, such as our Council Vision, Council Plan and Financial and Asset plans.

Municipal context: City of Melbourne strategies and plans



TRACKING PROGRESS

We will commence our work on immediate priority outcomes and monitor the implementation of this strategy, reporting annually through 'Pulse Check' reports. Success indicators will be tracked over the 10 years of the strategy and published publicly on our Participate Melbourne digital engagement platform. We will continue to enhance and improve our approach to tracking and monitoring the indicators – including over including the City's progress on a range of UN Sustainable Development Goals.

We will undertake a participatory review of the strategy at the five-year mid-point to ensure our outcomes and indicators continue to meet community aspirations. In its tenth year, a comprehensive evaluation of the strategy's effectiveness will determine the extent to which Melbourne has met its inclusion objectives. We will celebrate the most significant changes through storytelling and community events.



Priority 1. Organisation, services, programs, and places for all

OUTCOMES	INDICATORS	MONITORING OUR PROGRESS	CITY OF MELBOURNE'S ROLE	IMPLEMENTATION TIME FRAME
Our organisation is diverse and inclusive.	Increased diversity reflected in workforce data. Barriers to people from diverse backgrounds being employed or remaining employed by the City of Melbourne have been identified and action to overcome those barriers has been demonstrated.	Annual employee demographics metrics tracking.	Deliver	Medium
Our people feel culturally safe, valued, and belong.	Increased feelings of safety and belonging through staff survey data.	Three-yearly review of People and Culture diversity targets and capacity-building programs. Staff Satisfaction and Culture Survey every quarter.	Deliver	Immediate
Our services, programs and places are responsive to the evolving priorities of our diverse communities.	The needs of all people in the community are a key input into the planning and design of services programs and places.	Four-yearly facility disability and cultural safety audit. Neighbourhood insights incorporating diverse views and voices are consistent key inputs to planning, design and delivery of services, programs, and places.	Deliver	Medium
Our services, programs and places are welcoming, safe, accessible, and affordable for all.	Increased diversity of people and communities accessing services, programs and places.	Annual Specific council services and programs data on diverse participation.	Deliver	Medium
Our information is accessible, and messaging is inclusive.	Communication and information meet accessibility standards. Editorial Style Guide reflects inclusive language applied across all channels.	Diversity of people engaging through Participate Melbourne and community consultations-measured annually.	Deliver	Immediate
Council policies, strategies, plans and other publicly facing information are developed and published under universal design principles.	Universal design policy created. Number of staff trained in universal design principles. Proportion of Council policies, strategies and plans that are developed according to universal design principles.	Universal design policy developed and adopted by Council. Number of staff trained.	Deliver	Medium

Time frame: Immediate: 1-3 years, Medium: 4-6 years, Long-term: 7-10 years

Priority 2. Sustainable and fair recovery

OUTCOMES	INDICATORS	MONITORING OUR PROGRESS	CITY OF MELBOURNE'S ROLE	IMPLEMENTATION TIME FRAME
Our city economy is inclusive – all people can contribute to and benefit from our shared prosperity.	An increased number of social enterprises and socially responsible businesses are operating in the City of Melbourne.	Specific data relating to businesses.	Deliver, partner and advocate	Long-term
	Identify any barriers to people from minority backgrounds starting or operating a business in the City of Melbourne.			
	Inclusion is built into the governance, implementation, and advocacy of our economic recovery initiatives.		Deliver	Immediate
	City of Melbourne support for businesses ensures our systems, processes and procedures enable equal access to opportunities for all businesses; including social enterprises, socially responsible businesses and minority-owned businesses.	Economic Development strategy key inclusive metrics.	Deliver	Immediate
The City of Melbourne and our partners support a community-led recovery through capacity building practices.	City of Melbourne grants, social procurement and employment practices have been reviewed to deliver inclusive outcomes.	Annual City of Melbourne data on grants, procurement, and employment.	Deliver, partner and advocate	Medium
	Increased number of partners and networks engaging in capacity building to support a community-led recovery activity through investment, volunteering, and supporting infrastructure.	Partnership registry to be established.		
Our Council Plan initiatives deliver a long-term, sustainable recovery through integrating social, economic, and environmental priorities.	Thirty per cent of Council Plan major initiatives apply an integrated approach, delivering on social, economic, and environmental outcomes.	Annual Social Return on Investment measurement.	Deliver	Immediate
Our leadership and decision-making follow the five guiding principles of an inclusive recovery.	Executive and Leadership team and Council regularly reviews progress against guiding principles.	A six-monthly survey in the first two years and then an annual survey.	Deliver	Immediate

Time frame: Immediate: 1-3 years, Medium: 4-6 years, Long-term: 7-10 years

Priority 3. Empowered, participatory communities

OUTCOMES	INDICATORS	MONITORING OUR PROGRESS	CITY OF MELBOURNE'S ROLE	IMPLEMENTATION TIME FRAME
People have the capacity to identify local needs and are empowered to lead change in their neighbourhoods.	Communities develop neighbourhood plans and collaborate to implement priority actions.	Annual reporting on Neighbourhood Plans and progress.	Deliver and partner	Medium
People and communities are connected and participate fully in community life.	Communities report high levels of social connection, access to learning, volunteering, recreation, and cultural opportunities.	Annual City of Melbourne Liveability and Social Indicator Survey results.	Deliver and partner	Medium
All people can participate in city decision-making.	Increase in ranking for community decisions, consultation, and engagement in Satisfaction Survey (higher than Victorian average).	Annual Victorian Community Satisfaction Survey results. An annual increase in membership of Participate Melbourne online engagement platform.	Deliver	Immediate

Time frame: Immediate: 1-3 years, Medium: 4-6 years, Long-term: 7-10 years



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