STRATEGIC PLAN

MELBOURNE: A GREAT PLACE TO AGE

CITY OF MELBOURNE 2020–24



CITY OF MELBOURNE



A CITY FOR PEOPLE

A city for people welcomes all. It is accessible, affordable, inclusive, safe and engaging. It promotes health and wellbeing, participation and social justice.

Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians

The City of Melbourne respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Bunurong Boon Wurrung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin Nation 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.

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FOREWORD FROM THE LORD MAYOR OF MELBOURNE AND COUNCILLOR





Melbourne is a great place to age. The diversity of older people living in, working in and visiting Melbourne adds to the vibrancy of the community and is one of our great strengths.

The City of Melbourne municipality is home to about 14,000 people aged 60 and over. These residents are an important part of our community, making up 10 per cent of the population.

Over the next 20 years the number of people aged 60 and over living in our municipality will more than triple to 53,000.

As our city grows it is vital we ensure they continue to feel included and supported, and valued members of our diverse community.

The City of Melbourne has developed its Melbourne: A Great Place to Age strategic plan 2020-24 to guide our work to challenge negative stereotypes towards ageing and change the discourse to one of pride, strength and resilience.

This plan outlines the way the City of Melbourne will work over the next four years to be one of the great cities in the world in which to grow older.

The strategy seeks to ensure older people continue to contribute actively to the City of Melbourne and that their skills and knowledge are used for the greater good of the entire community.

A key part of achieving this goal is ensuring they are respected, safe, connected and supported to remain active members of the community.

City of Melbourne recognises a number of older people in our community require support and assistance to remain in their homes and we will continue to advocate for high-quality services to support their needs.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted that loneliness and social isolation are significant issues for these people, particularly as social interaction has gone online to limit face-to-face interaction.

The digital divide puts older people without access to technology at further risk of social isolation.

Efforts to protect them during the COVID-19 pandemic should not overlook their incredible resilience, positivity and important contribution in the crisis response.

We have seen tremendous examples of older members of our community lending a hand, whether it be as paid or unpaid caregivers, health care workers, volunteers and community leaders.

City of Melbourne, guided by our Melbourne: A Great Place to Age strategic plan 2020-24, sees the COVID-19 recovery as an opportunity to set the stage for a more inclusive and age-friendly community.

This strategic plan is designed with older people at its heart, and fostering their wellbeing is its core mission.

We value older people and we are committed to supporting and empowering them to lead healthy and active lives, and thrive in all aspects of social, community and public life.



Lord Mayor
Sally Capp



Cr Beverley Pinder
Chair,
People City Portfolio



OLDER PEOPLE IN THE CITY OF MELBOURNE

Melbourne is a great place to age. We celebrate, value and respect the wisdom, creativity and diversity of older Melburnians. As our city grows we will ensure that older people are included. We will welcome, connect and support older people and pay respect to their life experience in all aspects of social, community and public life.

This strategic plan describes the way we will work over the next four years to be one of the great cities in the world in which to grow older. We will challenge negative attitudes and behaviours towards ageing and change the discourse to one of pride, strength and resilience.

Older people are a vital part of the city of Melbourne community. People aged 60 and over comprise nearly 10 per cent of the population. The number of people aged 60 and over is expected to more than triple by 2041 (from approximately 14,000 to 53,000).

Older people make a significant contribution to the fabric of Melbourne by contributing to the economy in numerous ways including workforce participation, providing assistance and care through volunteering and participating in civic life within local neighbourhoods. As a capital city, Melbourne attracts older people for housing, retail, hospitality, arts, cultural events, sporting activities, health and support services and business opportunities.

The City of Melbourne is committed to engaging with the Victorian Aboriginal community to ensure that Aboriginal culture, knowledge and values are fully embedded in this strategy to ensure the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal Elders are fully realised.

Significant contributions of older people

Tourism:



Approximately **one-quarter** of national and international visitors are **aged 55 years and over**

Workforce participation:



At least 30% of residents aged 60 and over in the municipality are **engaged in the paid workforce**

Almost 70% employed in professional and managerial positions, indicating an educated and affluent working population



Volunteering:

One in five residents aged 60 and over volunteer

Caring responsibilities:

Older people play an important role as informal carers with **12%** of residents aged 60 and over **providing unpaid assistance** to others

Of the **total number of informal carers** in the City of Melbourne, **22%** are aged 60 and over

A diverse older community

The diversity of older people living, working in and visiting the city of Melbourne adds to the vibrancy of the community and is one of our great strengths. We will continue to recognise and celebrate individual and community experiences, identities and aspirations.

Gender:

48% of residents aged 60 and over are **male**

74% of all centenarians (people aged 100 and over) in the municipality are **female**

Cultural and linguistic diversity (CALD):

40% of residents aged 60 and over speak a language **other than English** at home

8% of residents aged 60 and over speak either **Mandarin** or **Cantonese**

The other **most common** languages spoken are **Italian, Vietnamese** and **Greek**

Indigenous:

0.3% of residents aged 45 and over identify as **Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander** or both

Aboriginal people experience ageing earlier than other members of the population, with old age being from as young as 45 years

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse and intersex (LGBTI):

Current estimates suggest LGBTI people represent **11%** of the general population. LGBTI people are likely to be represented by at least the same proportion in older populations





Impacts of ageing

Ageing impacts people in different ways. More services and support may be needed at key transitional events that may occur later in life such as retirement, loss of a spouse, becoming homeless, having a disability, becoming a carer, or dealing with the end of life.

Many older people across Australia and the city of Melbourne face disadvantage and other barriers that affect their health and wellbeing and opportunities for social and economic engagement.

Dementia:

The prevalence of dementia in the city of Melbourne is estimated to be approximately **970 people**

By **2050**, this figure is predicted to rise to **almost 5,800 people**[1]

Elder abuse:

The prevalence of elder abuse is estimated to be **up to 10%**, encompassing physical, financial, emotional, social and sexual abuse, and neglect[2]

End of life:

70% of people would prefer to die at home but only **14%** actually do[3]

English proficiency:

10% of residents aged 60 and over have **limited or no proficiency** in English

Geography:

There are pockets of advantage and disadvantage - the **lowest income levels** by suburb are **North Melbourne, Kensington and Carlton**

Homelessness:

Females are more at risk of homelessness and financial disadvantage as they age



There was a **31% increase** in the number of older women in Australia experiencing homelessness between 2011 and 2016

For **Aboriginal** and **Torres Strait Islander** people, the **rate of homelessness** at the 2016 Census was **ten times higher** compared to the rest of the Australian population

Income:

Almost 30% of residents aged 65 and over receive an **age pension** allowance

Living alone:

A **third of residents** aged 60 and over live in a lone person household, with **37 per cent** in a **rental arrangement**

Mental health:

Males aged 85 and over have the **highest risk of suicide** across all ages

1 (Dementia Australia 2017).

2 (University of Melbourne and National Ageing Research Institute 2017).

3 (Australian Centre for Health Research 2016).

Indigenous:

"High density urban Indigenous communities have similar mid-life death rates, similar levels of chronic disease and disability and, importantly for aged care, the same levels of cognitive decline and dementia as found in remote communities. The barriers to aged care service access for rising urban Indigenous population centres needs to be identified and removed."[4]

We recognise that family life is the core of Aboriginal community life and that these family relationships, linkages and obligations involve particular sets of social and cultural obligations. Elders play an integral part in preserving traditional knowledge, they are also pivotal in helping tackle broader community issues such as health, education, unemployment, racism and oppression.

By empowering Elders with the support necessary to address issues in their communities, we can make a positive step in helping close the gap and transferring sacred spiritual knowledge.

Internet access:

Over a third of residents aged 60 and over **do not** access the internet

LGBTI:

"Although most LGBTI Australians live healthy and happy lives, research evidence has consistently demonstrated that a disproportionate number experience poorer mental health outcomes and have higher risk of suicidal behaviours than non-LGBTI people. It is important to note that the adverse mental health outcomes among LGBTI people are not due to their sexual orientation, gender identity or variations in sex characteristics. Rather, it is due to their experiences of stigma, prejudice, discrimination and social exclusion, as key social determinants of health."[5]

Physical disability:

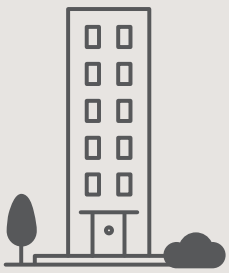


Approximately **12%** of residents aged 60 and over **require assistance** for core activity and the requirement for assistance increases with age

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Tenure:

27% of residents aged 60 and over **live in a rental** arrangement



4 (Australian Government Department of Health 2019)

5 (Australian Government Department of Health 2019)

COVID-19 impacts on older people

The COVID-19 pandemic presents a range of particular risks for older people. Although all age groups are at risk of contracting COVID-19, older people are at higher risk of developing illness if they contract the virus particularly if there are underlying health conditions. Furthermore, older people may be caregivers responding to the pandemic, increasing their risk of exposure to the virus. Some older people may face additional vulnerabilities at this time including the risk of violence, abuse or neglect.

The virus also impacts on social networks. Those who normally receive care at home and in the community risk being disproportionately affected by physical distancing measures. Prolonged periods of isolation could have a serious effect on the mental health of older people, particularly those who are not digitally included.

During the COVID-19 lockdown, the internet and other digital technologies have become a window to the world enabling people to connect with family, friends and the community. However, some older people have limited access to digital technologies. The digital divide can also impede older people's access to essential information regarding the pandemic. Older people may be unable to access services such as telehealth or online shopping and banking during the time of lockdown and physical distancing.[6]



6 (United Nations 2020).

ACHIEVEMENTS

The City of Melbourne provides a range of activities, community infrastructure and facilities to support residents, workers and visitors, as well as services to support older people in their own homes and local community:

- **Information** – Linkage to services, activities and events including over 5,000 newsletters and activity guides distributed annually.
- **Care** – Community care and social support services to over 600 clients funded by the Australian Government's Commonwealth Home Support Programme, Home Care Packages program and the Victorian Government Support for Carers program.
- **Program delivery** – Over 6,000 attendances annually at events and activities that celebrate and build inclusion including the Victorian Seniors Festival, the Coming Back Out Ball, and neighbourhood centre and carer support programs.
- **Resources** – Community grants and other support for over 50 community groups.
- **COVID-19 support** - Information and newsletters, telephone calls for wellbeing checks and social support, telephone group discussions, activity packs, support with technology, virtual music and physical activity programs, and community grants to support local communities affected by COVID-19.





A CASE FOR CHANGE

How we provide services, activities, and community infrastructure will need to change if we are to remain a safe, accessible and 'age friendly' city. This is due to unprecedented social change influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic, population, infrastructure and housing growth in the city of Melbourne, longer life expectancy, a more informed rights-based community, and the impact of substantial Australian Government reform.

The Australian Government reforms aim to create a single, consistent national system of aged care based on a consumer-driven market model that is affordable and sustainable with a focus on promoting wellness and independence. The reforms aim to address increasing demand from an ageing population, increasing diversity among older Australians in their preferences and expectations, increasing complexity of needs associated with longevity, increasing costs to meet needs, and a growing workforce need to address a decline in the relative availability of informal carers.

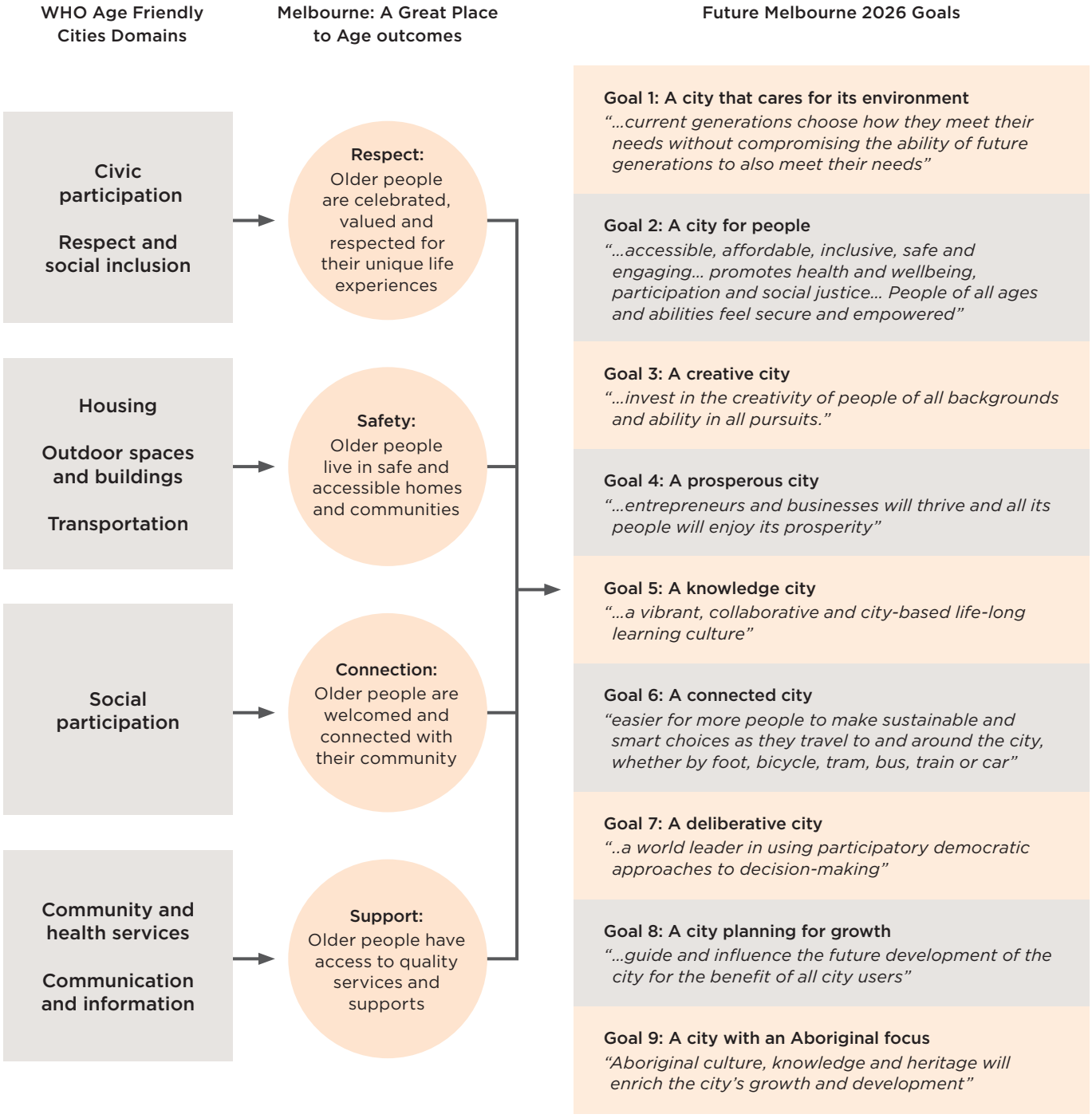
In addition, COVID-19 recovery is an opportunity to set the stage for a more inclusive and age-friendly community. Efforts to protect older people during the COVID-19 pandemic should not overlook the incredible resilience, positivity and important contribution of older people in the crisis response, including as paid and unpaid caregivers, health care workers, volunteers and community leaders.[7]



7 (United Nations 2020).

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Melbourne: A Great Place to Age identifies actions in four outcome areas which align with the domains of the internationally recognised World Health Organization (WHO) Age Friendly Cities framework. The strategic plan contributes to all of the Future Melbourne 2026 goals.




RAIDER

MELBOURNE: A GREAT PLACE TO AGE

Our Vision

Melbourne is a great place to age.

Our Purpose

- To challenge ageism and promote respect for all older people
- To enable older people to contribute to deliberative democracy
- To recognise and utilise older people's knowledge, wisdom and diverse life experience
- To design, develop and support services, activities and community infrastructure that embrace ageing and reduce loneliness and social isolation

Outcomes

Melbourne: A Great Place to Age presents priorities for four outcome areas:

1. **Respect:** Older people are celebrated, valued and respected for their unique life experiences
2. **Safety:** Older people live in safe and accessible homes and communities
3. **Connection:** Older people are welcomed and connected with their community
4. **Support:** Older people have access to quality services and supports

Principles - How We Will Work

The following principles will guide how the City of Melbourne fulfils its role as provider, facilitator, partner or advocate to improve outcomes for older people:

- **Primary prevention** - through information, health promotion, linkage, advocacy and system navigation to address loneliness, racism, elder abuse, life transitions and end of life
- **Precinct and place-based approaches** - through planning, advocacy and delivery of local solutions with community
- **Genuine ongoing engagement -** through listening, learning, volunteering, employment, technology and innovation
- **Community development and partnerships -** with community, service systems, government and industry, to support network and market development

Actions

Actions for the strategic plan were determined through demographic analysis, policy scan, literature review and stakeholder and community engagement.

Community engagement focused on key priority areas including initiatives to:

- prevent ageism, elder abuse and racism;
- reduce loneliness and social isolation; and
- support life transitions including people living with dementia and at end of life

In addition, the actions address the impacts of COVID-19 on older people across three key priority areas for action:

- Addressing loneliness and social isolation, particularly with the COVID-19 physical distancing requirements, through providing targeted programs in local neighbourhoods to increase access to the internet, technology, training and support to reduce the digital divide;
- Providing outreach to vulnerable older people to support social participation with a priority on building community in high-rise developments and in local neighbourhoods; and
- Providing outreach, individual advocacy and individual navigation support to connect older people with services and programs, in particular vulnerable groups facing barriers to accessing services.



STRATEGIC PLAN ON A PAGE

VISION: Melbourne is great place to age

PURPOSE

To challenge ageism and promote respect for all older people

To enable older people to contribute to deliberative democracy

To recognise and utilise older people's knowledge, wisdom and diverse life experience

To design, develop and support services, activities and community infrastructure that embrace ageing and reduce loneliness and social isolation

PRINCIPLES

Primary prevention – through information, health promotion, linkage, advocacy and system navigation

Precinct and place-based approaches – through planning, advocacy and delivery of local solutions with community

Genuine ongoing engagement – through listening and learning

Community development and partnerships – with community, service systems, government and industry

OUTCOMES

Respect: Older people are celebrated, valued and respected for their unique life experiences	**Safety:** Older people live in safe and accessible homes and communities	**Connection:** Older people are welcomed and connected with their community	**Support:** Older people have access to quality services and supports
ACTIONS			
1 We will engage older people in neighbourhood forums	6 We will deliver a dementia-friendly 'demonstration project'	11 We will provide information on social connection programs	16 We will educate on and support life transitions
2 We will encourage participation in consultation	7 We will reduce barriers to access buildings and outdoor spaces	12 We will help community organisations facilitate social connection	17 We will provide carer support programs
3 We will develop programs to address ageism	8 We will support older people's transport needs	13 We will help reduce loneliness, social isolation and the digital divide	18 We will help connect older people with services
4 We will support multicultural connections	9 We will support ageing in place	14 We will provide outreach to support social participation	19 We will advocate for high quality services
5 We will encourage older people's economic participation	10 We will help minimise the impact of climate change for older people	15 We will encourage volunteer activities	20 We will educate on end of life

DETAILED ACTION PLAN

VISION: Melbourne is a great place to age	
OUTCOME	ACTIONS
Respect: Older people are valued and respected for their unique life experiences	1. Undertake neighbourhood based community forums and reference groups that include older people to identify, prioritise and take action on local issues
	2. Expand consultation with older people to ensure their full inclusion in City of Melbourne consultative and decision-making mechanisms, ensuring diverse voices are heard, including Aboriginal Elders and community-controlled organisations
	3. Develop partnerships and programs to address ageism through highlighting the value, diversity and wisdom of older people's experience
	4. Support innovative community-led initiatives to address ageism and racism including opportunities that enable intergenerational and multicultural connections, activities and learning
	5. Develop partnerships to provide information and support to older people, industry and business on opportunities for economic participation, including employment, start-ups, mentoring, board directorships and social enterprises
Safety: Older people live in safe and accessible homes and communities	6. Deliver a dementia-friendly neighbourhood 'demonstration project' which includes community education, design of the built environment and partnerships with peak bodies, community organisations, and people living with dementia and their families
	7. Reduce barriers to enable older people to use Council buildings and outdoor spaces (eg. pedestrian friendly footpaths, crossings, seating, shade, lighting and toilets at appropriate distances)
	8. Ensure that older people's mobility, access and transport needs are identified and considered in the implementation of the Transport Strategy 2030
	9. Support ageing in place including facilitating accessible and affordable housing for older people through the Affordable Housing Strategy
	10. Support older people to minimise the impact of climate change and extreme weather events on health and wellbeing aligned with the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy Refresh 2017
Connection: Older people are welcomed and connected with their community	11. Provide information to promote awareness of opportunities for social connection
	12. Provide support to community organisations to promote more opportunities for social connection by older people (including venue use, grants and subsidies)
	13. Provide targeted programs in local neighbourhoods to increase access to the internet, technology, training and support to reduce the digital divide and address loneliness and social isolation
	14. Provide outreach to vulnerable older people to support social participation, with a priority on building community in high-rise developments and in local neighbourhoods
	15. Create place-based opportunities to increase the range of City of Melbourne volunteer activities
Support: Older people have access to quality services and supports	16. Provide a program of community education and information in a range of formats related to life transitions (including retirement, onset of health conditions, becoming a carer, loss of driver's licence, loss of a partner, entry into aged care), dementia and elder abuse
	17. Provide carer support programs to meet the diverse needs of the community
	18. Provide outreach, individual advocacy and individual navigation support to connect older people with services and programs, in particular vulnerable groups facing barriers to accessing services
	19. Work with the local service system and advocate for consumer choice and availability of high-quality local services that meet the needs of diverse older communities
	20. Develop partnerships and programs to improve the community's understanding of death and dying and develop practical responses with local communities to support people at end of life


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REFERENCES

The following documents were reviewed and provided inspiration for the development of Melbourne: A Great Place to Age.

International

- United Nations 2020 Policy brief: The impact of COVID-19 on older persons
- WHO 2002 Active Ageing: A Policy Framework
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- WHO 2015 World Report on Ageing and Health
- WHO 2016 Global strategy and action plan on ageing and health
- WHO 2017 Age-friendly environments in Europe: A handbook of domains for policy action
- WHO 2018 The Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities: Looking back over the last decade, looking forward to the next

Age Friendly Cities Network

- Barcelona – Municipal Plan for the Elderly 2013-2016
- Age Friendly Belfast: A City Where Older People Live to the Full 2014-2017
- Dublin City Age Friendly Strategy 2014-2019
- Age Friendly Leeds Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2022
- Age Friendly Madrid Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2022
- Greater Manchester Age Friendly Strategy
- New York City: Age Friendly NYC: Enhancing Our City's Liveability for Older New Yorkers
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- Washington: Age Friendly DC – Strategic Plan 2014-2017

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- Australian Government Department of Health 2019 Actions to Support Older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People: A guide for aged care providers
- Australian Government Department of Health 2019 Actions to Support Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Gender Diverse and Intersex Elders: A guide for aged care providers
- Australian Human Rights Commission 2013 Fact or Fiction. Stereotypes of Older Australians Report

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- Australian Capital Territory: Strategic Plan for Positive Ageing 2010-2014
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Local Governments

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- City of Boroondara: Creating an Age-Friendly Boroondara 2009-2014
- City of Darebin: Towards an Age Friendly Darebin
- City of Knox: Key Life Stages Plan 2017-2021
- City of Maroondah: Active and Healthy Ageing Initiative: Towards an Age Friendly Maroondah
- City of Monash: Age Friendly Monash: A Positive Ageing Plan 2015-2019

Peak bodies

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- COTA Vic 2016 Age-friendly Cities and Communities Information Kit for Local Government Councillors and Senior Management
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