

# Community Plan 2021-2025



Incorporating the Council Plan, Public Health  
and Wellbeing Plan, Pandemic Recovery  
Actions and Disability Action Plan



City of  
Whittlesea

## Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

The City of Whittlesea recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Willum Clan as the Traditional Owners of this place.

About 50,000 years before colonisation, a diversity of Wurundjeri people, families and communities managed the land that the City of Whittlesea now occupies. Throughout this time the Plenty River and other local natural features provided an abundance of flora and fauna as both a source of food and shelter.

The Wurundjeri Willum Clan is part of the Wurundjeri tribe and Woi Wurrung language group – one of the many language groups that make up the Kulin Nation. The people of the Kulin Nation were both Waang (the Australian raven) and Bunjil (wedge-tailed eagle – the creator) people who shared the same religion and language and lived in what is now metropolitan and greater Melbourne.

The pre-colonial legacy of the Wurundjeri people can still be seen today as the Whittlesea area is home to a number of protected and sacred 'scarred' trees. These trees were used for making bark canoes or as boundary markers for distinct tribal groups. Today the scarred river-red gum trees serve as a reminder that Aboriginal people have always been, and will always be, central to the social, economic and cultural prosperity of the City of Whittlesea.

*Throughout this document, the term 'Aboriginal' is taken to include people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent. 'Aboriginal' is used in preference to 'Indigenous', 'First Nations', and 'Koori'.*





# Contents

<b>Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Administrator message</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Your Council</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Our city</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Community engagement</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>About our Community Plan 2021-2025</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Our community's ideas</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Priorities, initiatives and actions</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Goal 1: Connected community</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Goal 2: Liveable neighbourhoods</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Goal 3: Strong local economy</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Goal 4: Sustainable environment</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Goal 5: High performing organisation</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Council services</b>	<b>30</b>

# Administrator message

**It is my great pleasure to present the *Community Plan 2021-2025*, which for the first time incorporates *Council's Health and Wellbeing Plan*, *Disability Action Plan* and the *Pandemic Recovery Actions*.**

In preparing this Community Plan, we engaged with our diverse community in many ways over a period of eight months to gain input into what our residents and businesses see as important to them.

I was very proud to participate in a number of these conversations and more recent consultation activities along with Administrators Ms Peita Duncan and Mr Chris Eddy, our CEO Mr Craig Lloyd and Council officers.

It is extremely pleasing to know that almost 5,800 pieces of feedback have been considered in the development of this four-year plan, and that the voice of our community will help shape the future of the City of Whittlesea.

In this Community Plan, we have developed 60 initiatives under our *Whittlesea 2040* goals, which will be delivered between 2021 and 2025, and which respond to community priorities.

The Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan has been incorporated to protect and enhance the health and wellbeing of our community. Some of the areas we will focus on will be public health and safety actions; some will focus on activating our community through art and events following the pandemic. Others include mental health and wellbeing activities, and inclusion initiatives that will ensure the City of Whittlesea is truly a place for all.

We have also integrated our *Disability Action Plan* into the Community Plan to clearly demonstrate how we are building an inclusive community for all, including people with a disability and their carers.

In 2020/21, as the COVID-19 pandemic was still emerging, the City of Whittlesea allocated \$2 million to a COVID Community Recovery Fund. It is only now that we can see 'recovery' in our sights and this fund is helping our community and businesses recover from the significant impacts the pandemic has caused. The recovery initiatives were determined by a group of 26 community members who were invited to participate in a COVID Recovery Budget Working Group and we thank them for their significant guidance and input.

The delivery of our *Community Plan 2021-2025* will be overseen by the Panel of Administrators (the Council). We are firmly committed to continuing to listen to our community and serving the City of Whittlesea until October 2024 in partnership with Council officers who will deliver on the key initiatives and actions included in this Plan and the annual Action Plans.

**Lydia Wilson**  
Chair of Administrators



## Your Council



**Lydia Wilson**  
Chair of Administrators



**Chris Eddy**  
Administrator



**Peita Duncan**  
Administrator

## Your Executive



**Craig Lloyd**  
Chief Executive Officer



**Frank Joyce**  
Executive Manager  
Governance & Strategy



**Kate McCaughey**  
Director Community Wellbeing



**Amy Montalti**  
Director Corporate Services



**Janine Morgan**  
Executive Manager  
Public Affairs



**Justin O'Meara**  
Director Planning &  
Development



**Debbie Wood**  
Director Infrastructure &  
Environment

# Our city

The City of Whittlesea is one of Melbourne’s largest municipalities and is the proud home to a fast-growing and diverse community.

Located in the north of Melbourne, our municipality spans approximately 490 square kilometres with a mix of established suburbs, growth areas and rural communities.

By 2040, the City of Whittlesea’s population is expected to increase by more than 60 per cent as we welcome around 8,000 new residents each year.

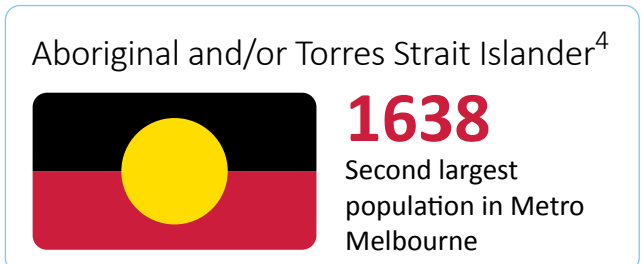
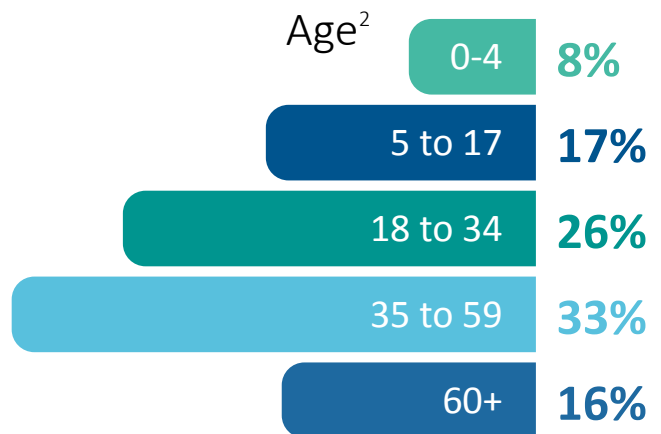
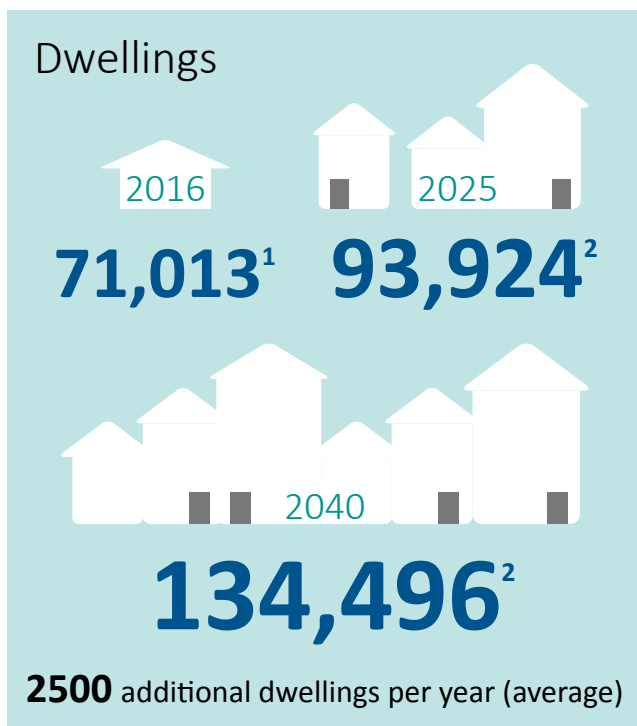
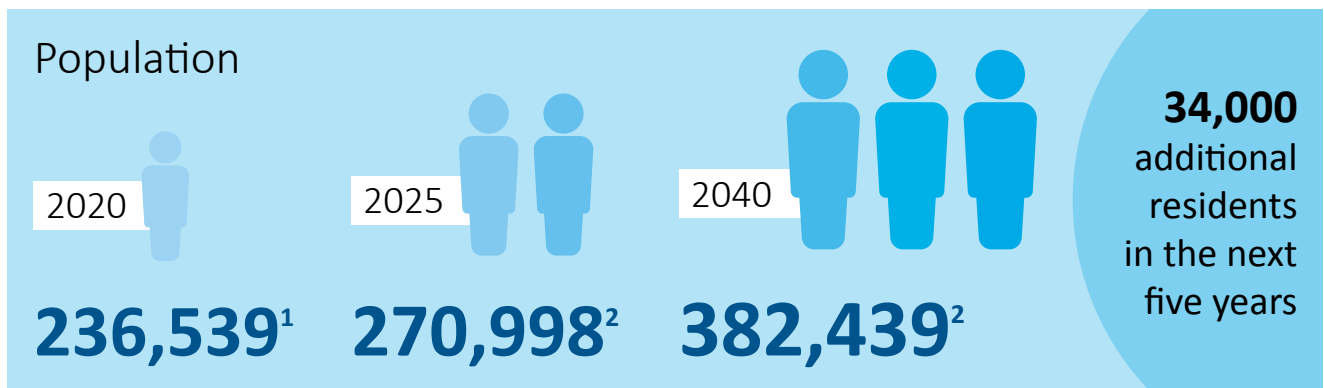
To accommodate our new residents, the City of Whittlesea will see around 56,000 new homes built across the municipality. These will be made up of a mix of new housing types to meet our community’s growing and diverse needs.

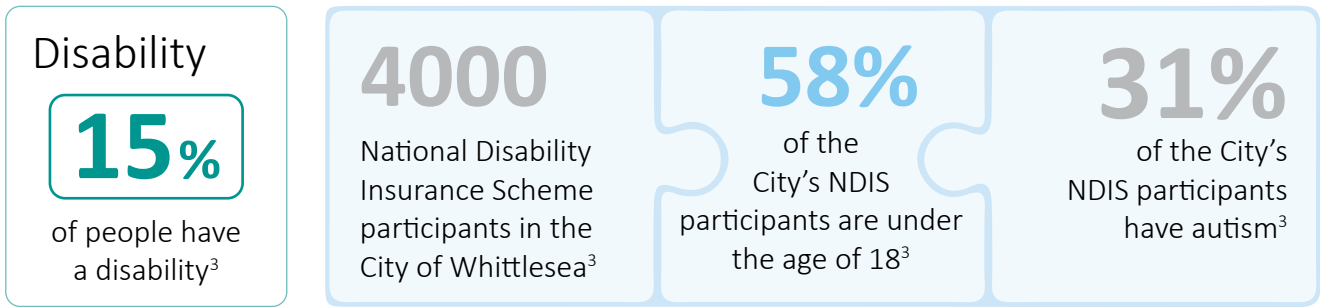
Our community is proud of its diversity. We have the second largest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in metropolitan Melbourne.

Adding to the rich culture and heritage of our municipality is a multicultural community so diverse that almost half of our residents speak a language other than English at home.

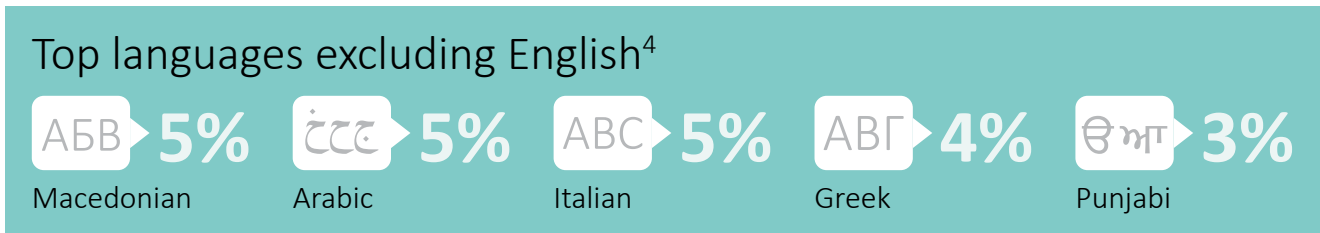
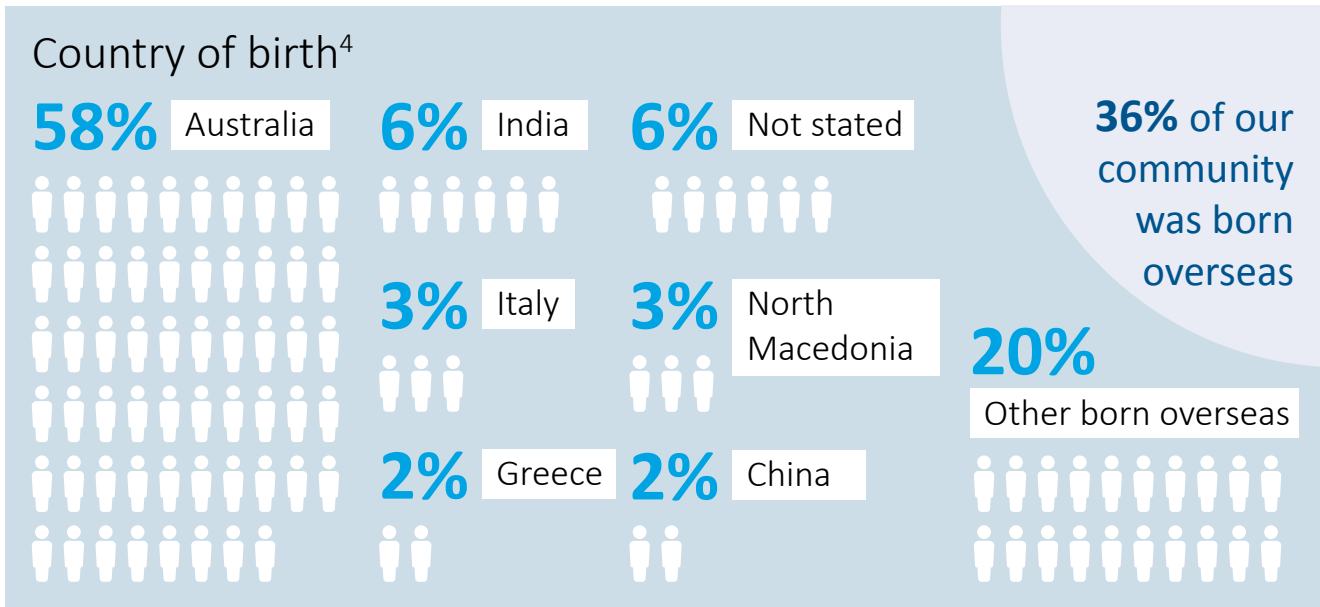
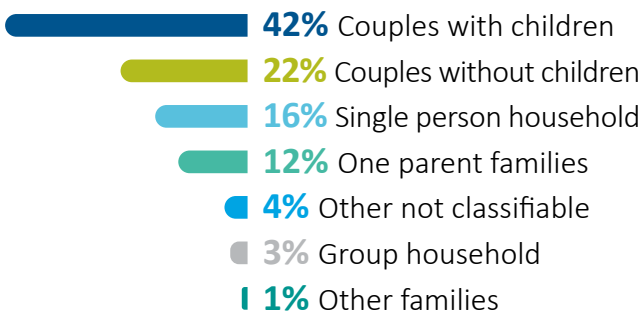
More and more families are calling the City of Whittlesea home with more than half of our households comprising of families with children. Every week, 62 babies are born into families living in the City of Whittlesea.

Our community’s largest age group is aged 35-59 followed by 18-34 year olds. People aged over 60 years make up 16 per cent of our population.





## Household structure<sup>2</sup>

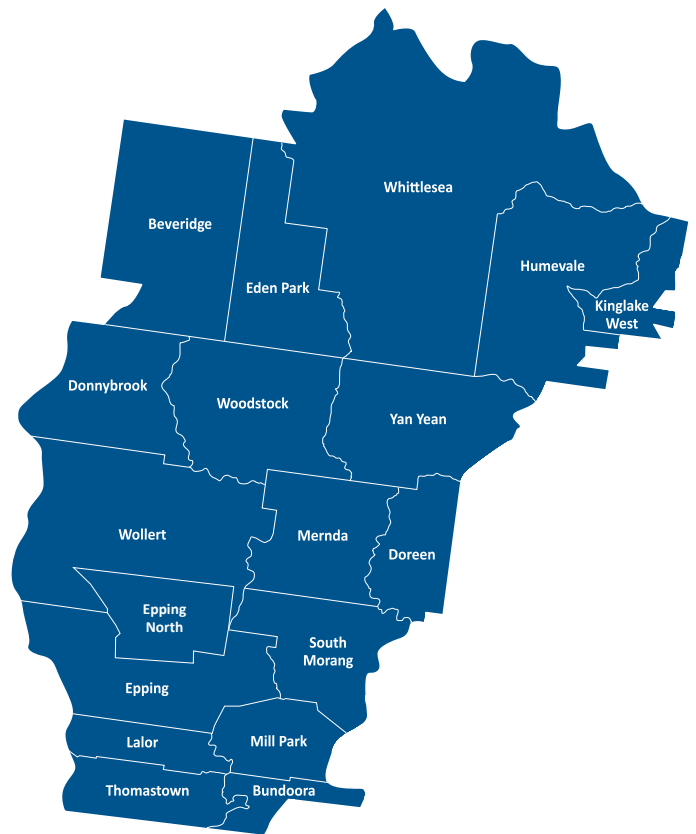


Data from

1. 2020 ABS Estimated Resident Population: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021, Regional Population Growth, Australia (3218.0)
2. 2025 and 2040 forecast population and dwellings: Population and household forecasts, 2016 to 2041, prepared by .id (informed decisions)
3. Figures for people with disability and carers: City of Whittlesea 2019, Annual Household Survey
4. All other demographic data: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2016

## Our municipality

Council has captured the priorities and values of people living in the City of Whittlesea's established, growth and rural areas based on almost 5,800 pieces of feedback from people across the municipality. Council also considered relevant health and demographic data about our community and other feedback received through broader engagement. Priorities differ across areas and precincts and reflect the wide-ranging community aspirations addressed in this Community Plan 2021-2025.



**Bundoora** – Owing to its two universities, Bundoora has a high number of people aged in their 20s who are renting alone or living in group households. Students share the suburb with older families and couples, many of whom have called Bundoora home for several decades. During consultation Bundoora residents told us they would like to see better waste management, more well-maintained green spaces and improved public transport options close to home.

**Donnybrook** – Propelled by a recent surge in greenfield housing development, Donnybrook is transforming from a small rural town into a community that will grow to a population of more than 25,000 people by 2031. Young families living in Donnybrook value social and community connections, with access to groups and activities for young children. As part of our engagement, Donnybrook residents told us they expect safe roads and essential infrastructure to be delivered at the right time to meet the community's needs.

**Doreen** – With 28,000 residents now calling Doreen home, families in this community during consultation advocated for access to recreational facilities including leisure centres and swimming pools. The community values public open spaces and residents are avid supporters of maintaining our local natural environment.





**Epping** – This vibrant precinct plays a critical role in the City of Whittlesea’s economy and will continue to attract investment into the future. During consultation, people who live in Epping told us they value the natural environment and outdoor spaces. These residents are seeking well maintained spaces to meet and exercise along with better footpaths and natural shade.

**Epping North** – Epping North is the largest precinct in the City of Whittlesea with a population of around 38,000 people and 15,000 more people expected in the next two decades. The young, and culturally diverse residents of Epping North told us they support local businesses to strengthen the economy and create more employment opportunities and value places to play and be active.

**Lalor** – This well-located precinct has a growing community of residents aged in their 70s and 80s but is also popular with young couples and families, many of whom were born overseas from countries including India, Iran and Iraq. Through our engagement residents of Lalor told us they value local shopping and being connected to neighbours. These residents seek more local events such as festivals and markets to build relationships and experience other cultures.

The young, and culturally diverse residents of Epping North support local businesses to strengthen the economy and create more employment opportunities and value places to play and be active.



**Mernda** – Having experienced rapid population growth in the last decade, Mernda continues to attract young couples and families to the area with a further 6000 people forecast to call Mernda home before 2030. Mernda residents advised they seek improved road and transport networks to connect them to employment, schools and services, and understand the importance of supporting local businesses.

**Mill Park** – This community is characterised by mature families and empty nester couples aged in their 50s and 60s. This established area has limited opportunity for new housing growth. The community told us they value its local vibrant businesses and seek safer and better-connected roads and bike paths. Residents also seek access to green spaces where they can play, exercise and meet with friends and family.

**Rural north (including Beveridge, Eden Park, Humevale, Kinglake West, Woodstock and Yan Yean)**

– The City of Whittlesea’s rural north, containing a mix of natural biodiversity, agricultural businesses and rural residential properties, is home to older families and retirees. Through the consultation process, the community advised they are passionate about growing the local economy by encouraging small business ventures, supporting agribusiness and providing opportunities for new social enterprises.

**South Morang** – This community is largely made up of families who have lived in the area for more than 10 years, with children who are at, or approaching, secondary school age. During consultation South Morang residents told us they are seeking more parks and upgrades and better maintenance of existing open spaces. The community would also like to see a diverse range of festivals and events to experience culture and connect with their neighbours.



The City of Whittlesea has a large rural area including farmland that boasts spectacular natural wildlife and biodiversity.

**Thomastown** – Our most culturally diverse community, more than half of Thomastown’s residents were born overseas. One in five residents are aged over 65 years, making it an ageing community. Through consultation we were advised that feeling safe and secure in their neighbourhoods is important to people in Thomastown. Better waste management practices, recycling and access to more public transport also rank highly.

**Whittlesea Township** – This township in the City’s north has a population of 5,500, which is largely made up of maturing families with teenage children, empty nester couples and retirees. The community advised they value improved access to services such as health, disability services and employment support. Whittlesea Township residents support small businesses and seek meaningful work opportunities close to home.

**Wollert** – A booming population located in the west of the municipality, Wollert is set to welcome 5,500 households in the next 10 years. The diverse community of first home buyers and young families let us know that they value community spaces where they can meet and host events, as well as parks and playgrounds. The community likes to make new social connections and seeks better quality roads to support its growing population.



# Community engagement

**The City of Whittlesea invited the community to share its ideas and priorities for Council to focus on delivering over the next four years.**

More than 1,500 people joined the conversation to give Council a clear understanding of the community's priorities that has helped inform the Community Plan 2021-2025.

Council asked the community two key questions to consider when forming their views and ideas:

- **What should Council focus on over the next 4-10 years** to make sure the City of Whittlesea is a connected community, with liveable neighbourhoods, a vibrant local economy and sustainable environment?
- **How should Council's \$2m Community Recovery Fund be spent** to help our community recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic?

5,771

**comments from 1,394 people helped shape the Community Plan 2021-2025**

**Of those who responded:**

- **77%** live in the City of Whittlesea
- **10%** work in the City of Whittlesea
- **12%** are Council employees
- **6%** are visitors
- **3%** are business owners
- **1%** study locally
- **26** community service organisations provided input.



**50%** of participants live in established areas



**38%** of participants live in growth areas



**11%** live in rural areas



## How we engaged



**40** events and activities (online and face-to-face)



**492** surveys completed online



**212** people participated in 17 focus groups for diverse communities (children, young people, multicultural, LGBTIQ+, people with disabilities and carers, and Aboriginal communities)



**42** people provided feedback on the proposed Plan via [www.engage.vic.gov.au](http://www.engage.vic.gov.au)



**276** survey postcards were completed



**12** pop-up stalls at shopping centres, playgrounds and community centres



**26** people joined our participatory budgeting workshops to develop recommendations for the \$2m Community Recovery Fund



**180** people participated in 7 online engagement sessions following publication of the proposed Plan



**2** written submissions were provided

For more information about how Council engages with the community and for information about current consultations please visit [www.engage.whittlesea.vic.gov.au](http://www.engage.whittlesea.vic.gov.au)

# About Our Community Plan 2021-2025



The City of Whittlesea's Community Plan 2021-2025 shapes the future for the City of Whittlesea and has been informed by extensive community engagement.

It clearly articulates what Council plans to achieve between 2021 and 2025, how it will prioritise its resources and effort, and how it will measure success by meeting the needs of its community.

This includes Council's planning to achieve key health and inclusion outcomes such as family violence prevention, climate change, gender equality, reducing barriers to goods, services and facilities access, participation in employment, inclusive communications and preventing discrimination against persons with a disability.

In developing the Community Plan, Council considered the community's goals and aspirations set out in *Whittlesea 2040*, which was developed in 2018 with significant input from people who live, work, study, visit and those who do business in the City of Whittlesea.

## Integrated Planning Framework

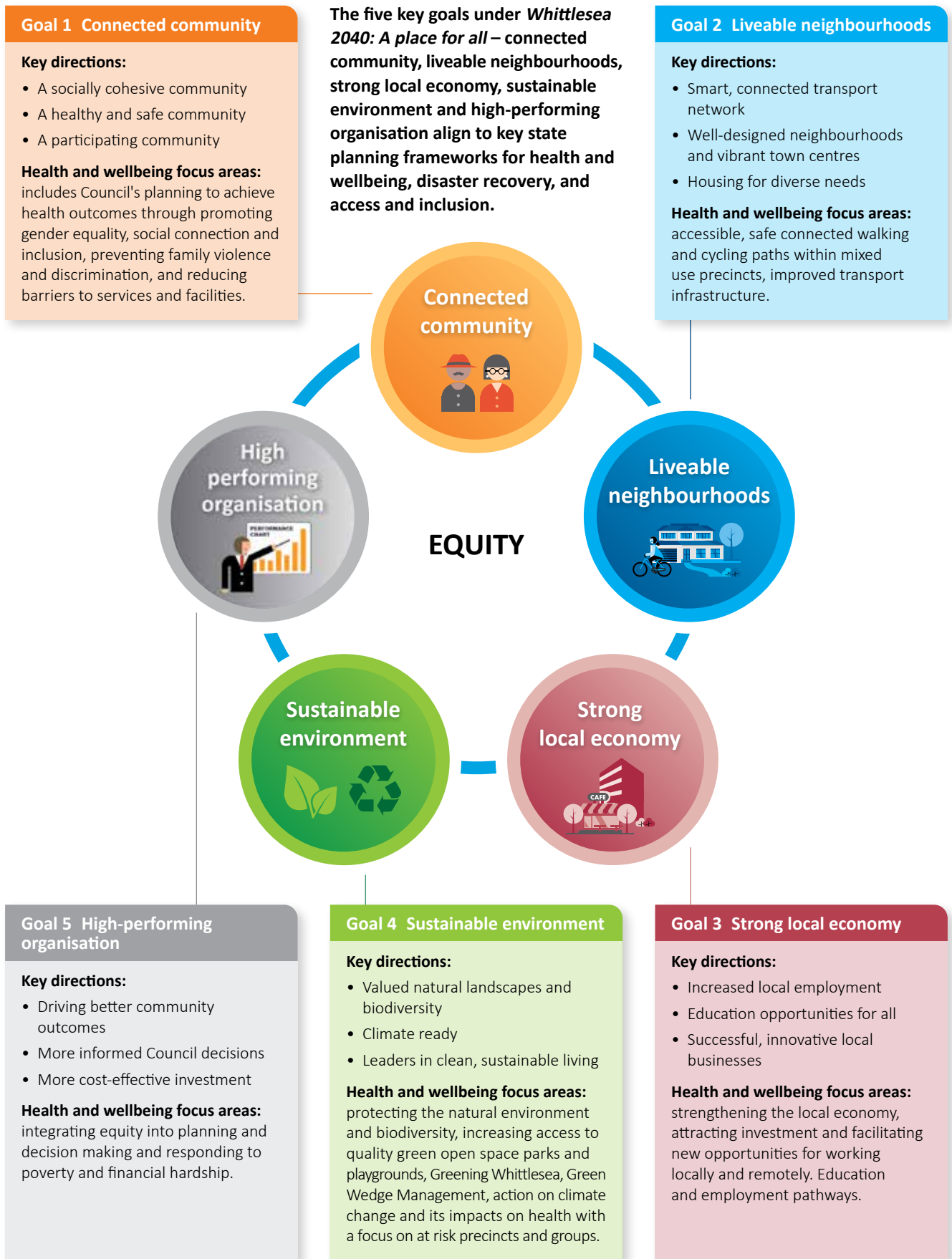
This Community Plan is the City of Whittlesea's main medium-term strategic planning document. It expands on the long-term 20-year community vision, *Whittlesea 2040: A place for all*, to include key outcome priorities, services and initiatives over the next four years. It plays a central role in Council's overall strategic planning and reporting framework.



Incorporating the Council Plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, Disability Action Plan and Pandemic Recovery Actions



# Our goals, key directions and health and wellbeing focus areas





**A fast-growing community on the urban fringe presents opportunities but also challenges for our community.**

## Planning for a healthy city

### Planning in extraordinary times

A fast-growing community on the urban fringe presents opportunities but also challenges for our community.

The pace of growth can make it difficult to deliver timely infrastructure and services, causing challenges like limited access to public transport, health services and educational opportunities, unemployment and insecure employment, long commutes and traffic congestion, financial vulnerability, rental and mortgage stress, and social isolation. This contributes to more sedentary lifestyles, unhealthy weight and poorer mental health outcomes.

The City of Whittlesea continues to listen to what our community needs and responds as effectively and efficiently as it can through community-driven decision-making.

We also advocate to other levels of government and stakeholders to partner with Council so that we can deliver the infrastructure and services our community deserves.

There is no doubt that we are now living in extraordinary times with the global COVID-19 pandemic impacting significantly on local employment, the viability of local businesses, community connections and mental health.

Council is committed to helping guide our community through its recovery phase with new initiatives and grants that will directly impact on improving the lives of those who live and work in the City of Whittlesea.

There have also been some positive changes through the pandemic like a greater willingness for our community to explore and connect with local neighbourhoods, reduced time and costs in commuting to work, leaving more time for family and increased opportunity for flexible and remote work. It has enabled a greater use of our local open spaces, and taking up new hobbies and interests such as gardening, walking or cycling. Council will pursue strategies to retain these positive effects.

Climate change is also a global public health challenge, reinforcing the need for Council to take a leadership role at the local level to minimise health impacts by enhancing tree coverage, greening and cooling urban areas and ensuring equitable access to quality parks where people can connect with nature.

For more information about the health of the community and contributing factors please visit the City of Whittlesea Health Profile at [whittlesea.vic.gov.au/healthprofile](http://whittlesea.vic.gov.au/healthprofile)





# Our community's ideas

**Council engaged with people across the City of Whittlesea. From every suburb and across a mix of diverse groups, Council has used the ideas from our residents and businesses to help shape the next four years.**

Across all of our engagement activities (see pages 12 and 13), people were strongly in favour of:

1. **More parks and playgrounds** and improving the maintenance of those we already have
2. **Roads as a priority**, including safety, roadworks and maintenance
3. **Support for local business**, helping them grow with grants, incentives and marketing assistance
4. **Biodiversity**, including planting more trees, conserving habitats and looking after wildlife
5. **Improving waste management**, especially promoting recycling and practical systems for hard rubbish and green waste.
6. **Presentation of the City**, including clean streets and addressing dumped rubbish.

## Pandemic Community Recovery Fund

In the 2020/21 Annual Budget, Council committed \$2 million for COVID-19 recovery. The pandemic extended longer than expected and most of the 'recovery' will fall into 2021/22.

Funding for this initiative will be expended in 2021/22 and includes recommendations made to Council via a

Other key priorities included focusing on local employment, shops and neighbourhoods, maintaining public safety, and increasing community facilities and activities like festivals.

To help recovery from COVID-19, the community asked Council to focus on:

- **Economic support**, particularly by helping small businesses and creating employment opportunities
- **Community connections**, including supporting vulnerable people and providing facilities and spaces for groups of people to meet
- **Health promotion**, emphasising mental health and wellbeing; natural environments and green open space; connected walking and cycling paths and trails, safety in public places and opportunities for social connection and exercise.

participatory budget workshop program that included 26 people from our community. This group was selected to demonstrate diversity in our municipality and, together, participants considered the evidence and impacts of the pandemic and developed recommendations to help our community recover.

## Recommendations for the \$2 million Pandemic Community Recovery Fund



### Whittlesea 2040 goal **Connected community**

#### Recommended action

- Coordinate recovery efforts across the municipality including COVID-19 safe messaging and mass vaccinations
- Grants program to support community service organisations as well as emergency relief
- Strengthen multichannel communications with community and local businesses
- Establish local community hubs to increase community connections



### Whittlesea 2040 goal **Liveable neighbourhoods**

#### Recommended action

- Create more community gardens and support local events
- Advocate for better public transport
- Build health and recreational facilities
- Provide more public amenities



### Whittlesea 2040 goal **Strong local economy**

#### Recommended action

- Business support program and incentives to buy local
- Enhanced learning and job-ready opportunities for young people
- Increased training and support for unemployed and underemployed residents



### Whittlesea 2040 goal **Sustainable environment**

#### Recommended action

- Pilot Environmental Upgrades Program to support uptake of renewable energy
- Continue solar panel and battery scheme for council buildings to reduce running costs to community groups

Many of these recommendations have been included in the Community Plan 2021-2025 and others have been included in Council's planned activities and programs.

# Community Plan 2021-2025: Priorities, initiatives and actions

## Council has heard what is most important to our community.

We have listened to the ideas presented during the consultation about how best to support our community to recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and through to 2025.

Council has prioritised initiatives across each of the goals from our shared community vision – *Whittlesea 2040: A place for all*. An annual action plan will be developed and shared with our community to confirm what initiatives will be actioned by Council each year.

Delivering on these actions will ensure our decisions over the four-year cycle of this Community Plan are shared priorities with our residents and local businesses.

The City of Whittlesea's Community Plan 2021-2025 constitutes the Council Plan under section 90 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic). It integrates Council's:

- Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan under section 26 of the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* (Vic), subject to Secretary of Health approval under section 27 of the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* (Vic)
- COVID-19 pandemic recovery actions under section 60AE of the *Emergency Management Act 2013* (Vic)
- Disability Action Plan under section 38 of the *Disability Act 2006* (Vic).




The Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP) is a strategic plan that identifies evidence-based goals and strategies to help the community achieve optimum health outcomes and is informed by the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023.

There are a range of legislative requirements for Local Government in health planning:

- In line with Recommendation 94 of the Royal Commission into Family Violence, the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* requires council to specify measures to prevent family violence and respond to the needs of victims of family violence in the local community
- The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires council to undertake a Gender Impact Assessment when developing or reviewing any policy, program or service that has a direct and significant impact on the public.
- The *Climate Change Act 2017* requires a focus on tackling climate change and its impact on health.



## Community Plan legend:

-  Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan
-  Disability Action Plan
-  Pandemic Recovery Action

# Goal 1: Connected community

Connected  
community



Over the next four years we will continue to work to foster an inclusive, healthy, safe and welcoming community where all ways of life are celebrated and supported. Our community priorities are: Public safety, festivals, events, arts, culture, heritage and markets, social connection: access and inclusion, sports facilities and infrastructure and community groups and community infrastructure.

## Our key initiatives:

What we will deliver in 2021-2025

We will:

- Improve safety and perceptions of community safety in public spaces including for people with disabilities and their carers, women, girls and gender diverse people 🇺🇦 ♿
- Prevent and respond to family and gender-based violence by working with local service providers and the community 🇺🇦 ♿
- Increase responsible pet ownership and reduce the adverse impact of domestic animals on wildlife 🇺🇦 ♿ 🌱
- Support our community to be safer, better prepared and more resilient to emergency events and disasters through increased access to information and education 🇺🇦 ♿ 🌱
- Continue to work with partners to lead recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic including vaccinations and COVID-19 safe health messaging as well as early years, school, cultural and linguistically diverse communities, refugee, asylum seekers and workplace immunisation programs 🇺🇦 ♿ 🌱
- Deliver a Connected Communities Strategy that will enhance social inclusion, civic participation, health, wellbeing and safety and reflect and celebrate the diversity of religions, cultures, heritages, abilities, ages, gender and sexual orientation which make City of Whittlesea a place for all 🇺🇦 ♿
- Strengthen community connections through a vibrant arts and events scene celebrating our diverse culture and heritage, activated open spaces and facilities and local markets 🇺🇦 ♿ 🌱
- Establish a Gathering Place to increase connections to culture, heritage, land and healing for Aboriginal people 🇺🇦 ♿
- Implement a new community grants program to support our community and businesses, encourage festivals and events as well as helping our community and vulnerable residents recover from the pandemic 🇺🇦 ♿ 🌱
- Deliver an inclusive leadership program to support community members to develop their leadership skills and potential 🇺🇦 ♿
- Advocate for more mental health services and prevention programs for our community including young people 🇺🇦 ♿
- Work with our community and partner organisations to support older residents to access quality local services 🇺🇦 ♿
- Commence construction of a leisure and wellbeing facility in Mernda 🇺🇦 ♿
- Build additional outdoor netball courts in a number of neighbourhoods including Epping, Doreen, Mill Park, Whittlesea, South Morang, Mernda 🇺🇦 ♿
- Improve access to physical activity and social connection by providing accessible, multiuse sports infrastructure which meets the diverse needs of our community 🇺🇦 ♿
- Enhance our network of vibrant and welcoming community centres at the heart of our neighbourhoods - including building new centres at Mernda, Wollert, and Donnybrook 🇺🇦 ♿
- Strengthen engagement with community through supporting or developing advisory groups and networks across our diverse community including young people, business, sustainability, people with a disability and Aboriginal people 🇺🇦 ♿
- Transition the Youth Advisory Committee to a Whittlesea Youth Council. ♿
- Deliver a new Whittlesea Reconciliation Action Plan



🇺🇦 Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan ♿ Disability Action Plan 🌱 Pandemic Recovery Action

# Goal 2:

## Liveable neighbourhoods

Liveable  
neighbourhoods



Over the next four years we will ensure our City is well planned and that our neighbourhoods and town centres are convenient and vibrant places to live, work and play. Our community priorities are: new and upgraded parks and playgrounds, transport improvements, local shops, social and affordable housing, clean streets and spaces, traffic management and road safety.

## Our key initiatives:

What we will deliver in 2021-2025

We will:

- Increase the quality, access, safety and amount of public open space in the municipality, including additional dog parks and a local park improvement program 🇨🇦 🇨🇦
- Develop and implement a plan to improve public toilets making them accessible, useable and safe 🇨🇦 🇨🇦 🇨🇦
- Implement the Quarry Hills Regional Park master plan to increase accessibility, useability and activation 🇨🇦 🇨🇦
- Increase safety and accessibility of transport with a focus on major corridor improvements, public transport usage and safe connected cycling and walking networks 🇨🇦 🇨🇦
- Advocate for new or upgraded roads including Epping Road, Bridge Inn Road, E6, Yan Yean Road, Findon Road and Donnybrook Road 🇨🇦
- Improve disability access to public transport including installation of bus shelters across the municipality 🇨🇦 🇨🇦
- Advocate for better public transport, including better rail, tram and bus infrastructure and services and lead the public transport strategy under the Northern Council's Alliance 🇨🇦 🇨🇦 🇨🇦
- Design and upgrade local streetscapes and shopping precincts to make it easier to move about, celebrate local culture, heritage and character, and connect people to the natural environment 🇨🇦 🇨🇦
- Deliver more affordable and accessible homes in the municipality 🇨🇦 🇨🇦
- Increase the number of waste and recycling bins in public spaces and parks
- Implement the Safe Routes to Schools program to improve the safety of school children. 🇨🇦 🇨🇦



# Goal 3: Strong local economy

Strong  
local economy
















Over the next four years we will seek to make our City a smart choice for innovation, business growth and industry investment as well as supporting local businesses to be successful, enabling opportunities for local work and education. Our community priorities are: supporting local business, local employment, economic development, delivering libraries, schools and early years education, technology and innovation and creating employment pathways.

## Our key initiatives:

What we will deliver in 2021-2025

We will:

- Strengthen the visitor and agri-tourism economies by implementing a new Destination Tourism Plan
- As part of COVID recovery, deliver a 'support local' campaign and incentive program to support the community and local businesses  
- Work with partners to increase opportunities for local work, training, apprenticeships and programs with a focus on young people and groups who experience significant barriers to employment   
- Implement the Investment Attraction Plan to attract investment, strengthen the local economy and increase the number and diversity of local jobs 
- Work with the Victorian Government and key stakeholders to progress planning for key employment precincts such as Epping central, the Beveridge Intermodal Freight Terminal, the Melbourne Food Innovation and Export Hub and the Vearings Road employment precinct
- Implement the Victorian Government-funded 3-year-old kindergarten service together with the early childhood sector and deliver infrastructure projects at key sites across the city  
- Work with the Yarra Plenty Regional Library corporation to continue improving our library services around accessibility, innovation and community learning  
- Advocate for improved mobile phone coverage in rural areas
- Encourage employment pathways and sustainable land management practices at the Whittlesea Community Farm and Food Collective 
- Support local agribusinesses to be sustainable, grow and be prepared for climate change.



# Goal 4: Sustainable environment

Sustainable  
environment



Over the next four years we will prioritise our environment and take action to reduce waste, preserve local biodiversity, protect waterways and green spaces and address climate change. Our community priorities are: waste management, biodiversity, community education and awareness, maintaining and increasing the number of trees, sustainable energy and infrastructure, water quality and security and climate change action and awareness.

## Our key initiatives:

What we will deliver in 2021-2025

We will:

- Deliver key actions from our Rethinking Waste Plan, including introducing residential glass recycling, extending food and garden waste services, protecting the environment from litter and increasing sustainable procurement 🔄
- Improve the quality and activation of our water networks, source more water from alternative water supplies and use less water through water efficiency upgrades 💧
- Finalise and implement the new Green Wedge Management Plan and 10 year action plan in consultation with the community
- Deliver on our Greening Whittlesea Strategy including increasing tree canopy along main road residential streets and in conservation reserves, park and major facilities 🌳 🔄
- Finalise and implement the Climate Change Plan, with a focus of reducing potable water use, reducing carbon emissions and transitioning to more sustainable resources 💧 🔄 🌱
- Use less energy by investing in energy efficiency programs including energy efficient street lighting
- Introduce new local recycling drop off points including a resource recovery shop
- To protect and enhance Whittlesea’s environmental and sustainable future, we will undertake advocacy on behalf of our community, on climate change, water security and quality, vulnerable flora and fauna and waste reduction and reuse 🌱
- Undertake analysis of extreme heat on the health and wellbeing of our community to inform future planning to protect residents and precincts most vulnerable to heatwaves. 🌡️



# Goal 5: High-performing organisation

High  
performing  
organisation



Over the next four years we will work to ensure Council engages effectively with the community, delivers efficient and effective services and initiatives, makes decision in the best interest of the community and delivers value to the community. Our community priorities are: customer service and responsiveness, communication and engagement with our community, service quality and Council performance.

## Our key initiatives:

What we will deliver in 2021-2025

We will:

- Improve customer service through investing in technology, systems and Council staff and make it easier for our community to interact with Council 
  - Continue to implement our Advocacy Plan for infrastructure and services to support the diverse needs of our community  
  - Continue to be an employer of choice through developing and implementing a new Workforce Plan to attract and retain high quality and skilled staff to support our community 
  - Establish a place-based approach to Council planning, service and infrastructure delivery that is responsive to the distinct needs and aspirations of local communities   
  - Continue to implement the *Local Government Act 2020* and publicly report on an action plan to embed good governance at the Council 
  - Develop a long term community infrastructure plan responding to community service and infrastructure needs for sport, leisure, recreation, arts, heritage and culture, youth, older adults, families and children and libraries  
  - Continue to strengthen local community engagement in line with Council's Community Engagement Policy to inform Council programs and decision-making 
  - Maintain strong communications with our community to promote access to services including multilingual , accessible for all and mobile friendly communications and website  
  - Implement, communicate and promote our Financial Hardship Policy 2021 to support our financially vulnerable residents   
  - Introduce regular reporting on Council's performance including the Community Action Plan and customer service performance 
- Seek further opportunities to collaborate with surrounding municipalities and other partners including shared services and collaborative procurement
  - Undertake service planning to drive innovation, improvement, equity, efficiency and service excellence with a focus on customer experience. 



# Council services

Council provides a range of important and valued services to support the community to be a *place for all*. Our services have been grouped under 26 service headings as outlined below. For each service we ensure the work that is undertaken is aligned to deliver the Community Plan and that the services adapt to the changing needs of our growing community. Our services may be further refined as we continue to improve our services.

 Connected community	 Animal management	 Ageing well	 Arts, heritage and events	 Community facilities
 Aboriginal reconciliation	 Customer service, communications and civic participation	 Children and family services	 Community strengthening	
 Youth services	 Public health and safety	 Leisure and recreation		
 Liveable neighbourhoods	 Traffic management	 Roads, public transport and footpaths	 Planning and building	 Parks and open spaces
 Strong local economy	 Local business support	 Libraries	 Investment attraction	
 Sustainable environment	 Biodiversity and land management	 Water management	 Waste and recycling	 Climate change action
 High performing organisation	 Our systems and knowledge	 Our people	 Our governance	 Our finance and assets

## How we will measure our progress

We will use the Community Vision: *Whittlesea 2040 A place for all* indicators to measure our progress on the Community Plan. We will report on these annually to the Community. We reviewed the indicators to increase Council's capacity to respond to changing priorities as they arise and allocate resources where they are most needed.

### Goal 1 Connected community

- Social cohesion
- Physical activity
- Mental health
- Safety in public areas
- Civic participation

### Goal 2 Liveable neighbourhoods

- Commuter travel time
- Ease of walking and cycling
- Access to open space
- Access to services and facilities
- Housing affordability

### Goal 3 Strong local economy

- Local jobs
- Access to education
- Gross regional product

### Goal 4 Sustainable environment

- Biodiversity protection
- Tree canopy coverage
- Carbon emissions
- Waste diversion

### Goal 5 High-performing organisation

- Community satisfaction with Council decision making
- Customer satisfaction
- Community engagement
- Financial sustainability



Data from

1. 2020 ABS Estimated Resident Population: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021, Regional Population Growth, Australia (3218.0)
2. 2025 and 2040 forecast population and dwellings: Population and household forecasts, 2016 to 2041, prepared by .id (informed decisions)
3. Figures for people with disability and carers: City of Whittlesea 2019, Annual Household Survey
4. All other demographic data: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2016



**City of  
Whittlesea**

**You can contact the Administrators**  
on 9217 2500 or email  
[panel@whittlesea.vic.gov.au](mailto:panel@whittlesea.vic.gov.au)

**Street address**

Council Offices  
25 Ferres Boulevard  
South Morang VIC 3752

**Email us**

[info@whittlesea.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@whittlesea.vic.gov.au)

**Visit our website**

[whittlesea.vic.gov.au](http://whittlesea.vic.gov.au)

**Postal address**

City of Whittlesea  
Locked Bag 1  
Bundoora MDC VIC 3083

**Call us**

Phone: 9217 2170  
National Relay Service: 133 677  
(ask for 9217 2170)

Free telephone interpreter service:  
If you speak a language other than  
English, please call 131 450

**Free telephone interpreter service**



**131 450**

September 2022