


WELCOMING, SAFE, AND INCLUSIVE

# 2036 COMMUNITY STRATEGY





We would like to acknowledge this land is the Traditional Lands for the Kurna people and that we respect their spiritual relationship with their country.

We also acknowledge the Kurna people as the Traditional Custodians of the Adelaide region and that their cultural and heritage beliefs are still as important to the living Kurna people today.

Ngadlurlu tampintheta,  
ngadlu Kurna yartangka  
inparrintheta. Ngadlurlu  
parnuku tuwila yartangka  
tampintheta.

Ngadlurlu Kurna Miyurna  
yaitya yarta mathanya  
Wama Tarntanyaku  
tampintheta.

Parnuku yailtya, parnuku  
tapa purruna yalarra  
puru purruna.

\*Kurna Translation provided by  
Kurna Warra Karrpantheta

# INTRODUCTION



This Community Strategy outlines our commitments over the next 10 years to support a community that is welcoming, safe and inclusive – a City that offers an excellent quality of life and supports all people to thrive.

Council is proud of the proactive steps we have already taken in recent years towards this aim, including:

- Delivered safe, welcoming and inclusive community spaces, with record participation in community centres, libraries and events across all ages and backgrounds.
- Strengthened Unley’s history, heritage and identity, progressing the Unley Museum expansion and delivering cultural programs that celebrate local stories and Kurna Country.
- Supported healthy, active and connected lives, through upgrades to parks, ovals and shared paths and expanded active ageing, recreation and wellbeing programs.
- Expanded creativity, culture and lifelong learning, with growing library use, arts participation and contemporary programs supporting learning and digital literacy.
- Enabled meaningful community and civic participation, through innovative engagement, modernised access to facilities and increased opportunities for volunteering and co-design.



In preparing the Community Strategy we have considered the changes and challenges we can expect in our City as 2036 approaches, how we can leverage the strengths of our community, and what we will need to do differently to meet our long-term goals.

The commitments we make in this Community Strategy reflect what we have heard from our community – people who share a connection with our City – about what is important to them. These community priorities were gathered from community surveys and the engagement processes undertaken to develop our Community Plan.

We heard about the importance of community facilities and programs being inclusive and welcoming for people of all ages and abilities. We know our community values the liveability of our City and being a highly desirable, accessible and safe place. We heard about the importance of programs and events that build community connections, and providing meaningful and transparent ways for everyone to engage in local decision making.

On the following pages you will find our 10-year commitments to progressing the Community goal and objectives in our Community Plan.

This is one of Council’s four lead strategies that will guide the decisions we make, the services and facilities we deliver, and how we allocate resources responsibly to serve the needs of a diverse community. Together, these strategies provide a clear roadmap for how we will deliver and measure our vision of **a connected, progressive, and resilient City.**

# CITY OF UNLEY

Located on traditional lands of the Kurna people just three kilometres south of Adelaide's CBD, the City of Unley is an inner-urban community known for its high-quality lifestyle and cosmopolitan atmosphere.

Our neighbourhoods are characterised by well laid out leafy green streets, which frame historic homes, open spaces, recreation reserves and community gardens.

Unley's four village-style mainstreet precincts - King William Road, Goodwood Road, Fullarton Road, and Unley Road - and a growing number of business precincts provide an exciting mix of retail, hospitality, and services to residents and visitors.

Our civic precincts, including our libraries, museum, community centres and swimming pool, offer spaces for connection, culture and learning. Unley's public spaces and streetscapes are designed to be welcoming and accessible for all.

The natural beauty and historic character of our City, along with our strong and flourishing community life make Unley a desirable place to work, visit or call home.

## WE HAVE

4

Community Centres

2

Public Libraries

1

Swimming Centre

1

Museum



**5,308**  
additional people  
projected to call Unley  
home by 2041

**194**  
of us are First  
Nations people

**40,327**  
Residents

**43 years**  
is the median age  
of our people

We have  
more residents aged  
**65+**  
and less children under  
10 since 2016

**94%**  
of our young  
people are engaged  
in education or  
employment

**22%**  
of us speak a language  
other than English at home

**2.1%**  
of us do not speak English  
well or at all

**6.2%**  
of us live with a  
disability and require  
assistance with  
core duties

**27%**  
of us were  
born overseas

**34.9%**  
of us have moved  
here since 2019

**6,963**  
Volunteers  
(21.3% of population,  
15 years or older)

**1,455**  
households are  
experiencing housing  
stress





# OUR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

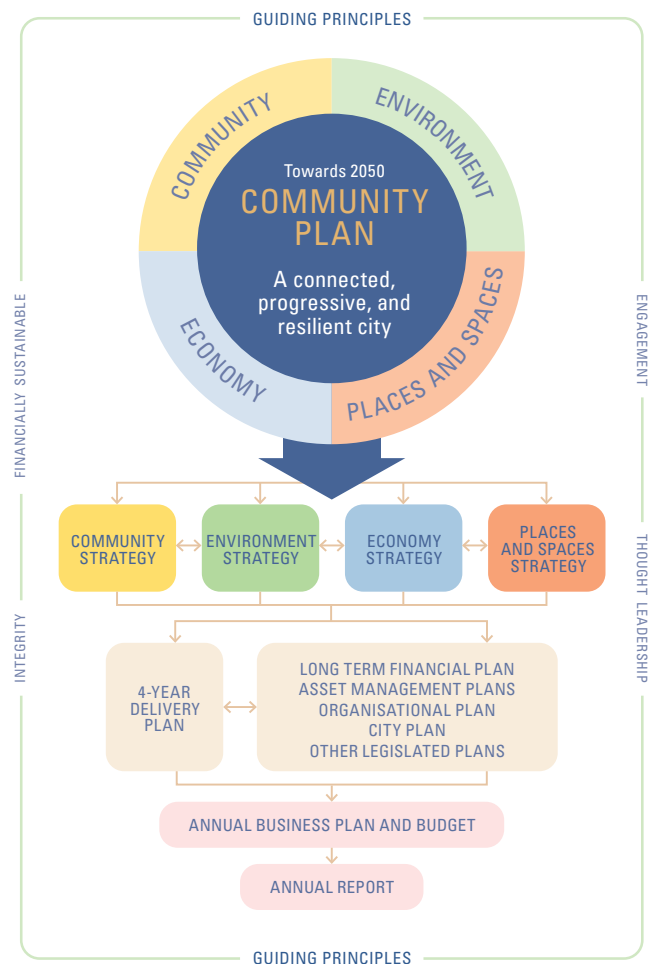
Our Strategic Planning Framework reflects how our organisational strategies and plans support the delivery of our Community Plan 'Towards 2050'.

Our Community Plan sets our strategic direction for the next 25 years, outlining key goals and objectives. It serves as the foundational structure for guiding our detailed strategies and plans.

Our four lead strategies define our strategic priorities for the next 10 years, identifying key opportunities and addressing potential challenges for our City. By providing a clear and cohesive direction, these strategies guide decision-making, resource allocation, and program development, ensuring that our efforts are effectively aligned with the long-term vision and aspirations of our community.

Our 4-Year Delivery Plan translates the Community Plan vision and lead strategies into action, outlining the steps we will take to achieve our objectives in the short to medium term.

Our Strategic Management Framework is supported by a number of theme-based plans that have been developed over the years to provide additional guidance about how we will achieve our goals. These plans will be progressively reviewed, updated or retired throughout the life of this lead strategy.



We will deliver our strategies and plans through prudent financial management, guided by our Long-Term Financial Plan, which will ensure resources are allocated effectively and efficiently. Our Annual Business Plan and Budget will set priorities, activities, and budgets each year to demonstrate how your rates support community services, programs and infrastructure, whilst also being innovative to deliver best community outcomes.

Regular monitoring and reporting against our outcome indicators will be undertaken to keep us accountable, ensuring we meet our commitments and demonstrate the value we deliver to our community.



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# COMMUNITY STRATEGY

Welcoming, Safe, and Inclusive

## GOAL

Our City offers an excellent quality of life and supports all people to thrive.

## OBJECTIVES

- 1 We foster a community where all people can feel safe welcome and included.
- 2 We embrace and celebrate the history, heritage, and identity of our people, places, and Country.
- 3 We support and encourage all people to be healthy, active and socially connected.
- 4 We support creativity, cultural expression, and learning.
- 5 We foster meaningful opportunities for people to participate in community and civic life.



## Highlights of our ten-year strategy include our commitments to:

- Building a community where all people feel safe, welcome and connected, by reducing barriers to participation and strengthening everyday connections between neighbours.
- Making the most of our places and spaces – libraries, community centres, museum, swimming centre, parks and streets – so they support wellbeing, inclusion, learning and social connection at all stages of life.
- Supporting health, wellbeing and ageing well, by encouraging active lifestyles, social connection, and accessible environments that help people remain independent and connected in our community.
- Creating opportunities for all people to be heard and involved, recognising that their safety, wellbeing and participation are important for Unley's future.
- Celebrating our history, culture and identity, including Kurna Country, diverse stories and creative expression, to strengthen belonging and local pride.
- Encouraging people to participate in community and civic life, through volunteering, leadership, engagement and community-led action.
- Working with others to deliver better outcomes, by partnering with community organisations, service providers, neighbouring councils and other levels of government.
- Making informed, responsible decisions, using data and community feedback to balance needs, affordability and sustainability.



# CURRENT AND EMERGING TRENDS



Over the next decade, our community will be shaped by growing diversity, rising living costs, deepening health and wellbeing needs, digital transformation and increasing climate impacts.

Shifts in volunteering, civic participation and state policy directions will also influence how we plan and deliver for and with our community.

Our community is seeking stronger connection, cultural expression and local identity, and looks to the City of Unley as a provider of safe, inclusive and engaging places.

These insights have informed the commitments we have made within this strategy about how we will achieve our long-term Community goals and objectives.

## Ageing Population

Unley remains one of South Australia's older metropolitan communities, with a median age of 43 years and further growth projected in residents aged 65+.

As the population grows older, this will increase demand for accessible public spaces, healthy ageing programs, volunteer opportunities and community safety.

## Cultural Diversity

27% of our residents were born overseas and 22% of us speak a language other than English at home.

Growing cultural diversity in Greater Adelaide will continue to enrich community life and increase the need for culturally responsive services and engagement approaches.

## Housing Affordability

64% of our community are either renting or paying a mortgage. Cost-of-living pressures and rising rents are increasing financial stress, reducing discretionary spending and challenging community wellbeing.

Demand for affordable, appropriate housing is rising across the Greater Adelaide region and those experiencing housing stress are more likely to rely on community spaces, services and supports.



|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Social Health</b></p>             | <p>Unley has more older residents and single person households than other areas of Greater Adelaide, which increases the risk of people experiencing social isolation and loneliness.</p> <p>These issues affect participation, wellbeing, and local resilience, and are expected to grow as our population changes and economic pressures continue.</p> <p>While councils are not health service providers, they are often closest to emerging community needs and can facilitate neighbourly connections and foster participation in community spaces and places.</p> |
| <p><b>Public Health</b></p>             | <p>Heatwaves and climate-related illness are becoming an increasing public health risk, with Unley’s older population especially vulnerable.</p>  |
| <p><b>Neighbourhood Relations</b></p>   | <p>Increasing infill development can mean residents more frequently encounter noise, construction impacts, overshadowing, privacy concerns, and increased traffic and parking issues.</p> <p>These pressures can strain community relationships and place greater demand on councils for mediation, regulation, and compliance support.</p>   |
| <p><b>Living Locally principles</b></p> | <p>The Greater Adelaide Regional Plan embeds ‘Living Locally’ principles, which means locating housing, jobs and services closer together so people can meet most of their daily needs within a comfortable walk, ride or public transport journey from home.</p> <p>For councils, this means planning and delivering community services and multi-functional facilities at a neighbourhood scale and ensuring they are easily accessible for all users.</p>  |
| <p><b>Cultural Connection</b></p>       | <p>There is momentum within the community for deeper cultural storytelling, public art, heritage preservation, and celebration of Unley’s traditional and evolving identity.</p> <p>As parts of our City’s built form changes, there is greater community value placed on neighbourhood identity, heritage, and character.</p> <p>There is also stronger public interest in First Nations history, truth-telling and cultural recognition, consistent with statewide commitments and Kurna partnerships.</p>  |
| <p><b>Volunteering</b></p>              | <p>Unley has a higher volunteering rate (21%) than other areas of Greater Adelaide. However, traditional volunteering continues to decline nationally, especially long-term and structured roles. This places many community organisations, clubs, and groups at risk.</p> <p>Preferences are shifting towards short-term, flexible, skills-based volunteering, including event-based roles and digital contributions. This trend is driving growing interest in community-led projects, neighbourhood placemaking, and co-design.</p>                                  |
| <p><b>Digital Change</b></p>            | <p>Growth in AI, e-learning, online events and digital wellbeing tools are shaping how people learn, create and connect. More people want seamless online access to information, programs, bookings and participation.</p> <p>While Unley’s digital access score sits above the state and national average, digital exclusion remains a concern for older people, lower-income households, and culturally diverse communities.</p>  |

# FOCUS AREAS



The following chapters outline the five key focus areas that will guide the City of Unley towards its long-term Community goal.

Each focus area directly aligns with the Community objectives of the Towards 2050: Community Plan:

- 1 Safe & Welcoming
- 2 History & Identity
- 3 Active & Connected
- 4 Creativity, Culture & Learning
- 5 Civic Participation

Each of the focus areas is closely interconnected, and delivering on our other lead strategies – Environment, Economy, Places and Spaces - will also play a key role in progressing our Community objectives. The strategic connections between each focus area have been highlighted.

While we have grouped our 10-year commitments into key focus areas to make the information easier to navigate, they will not be delivered in isolation. Our Strategic Management Framework is planned, implemented, monitored, and reported on as one cohesive and connected set of strategies - reflecting the way our community, services, and priorities are linked in everyday life.





# FOCUS AREA 1: SAFE & WELCOMING

Feeling safe, welcomed and included is fundamental to quality of life and to a strong, connected community. Our programs, services and spaces need to reflect and respect the needs of all people – including young people, families, older residents, people with disability, culturally diverse communities, LGBTQIA+ people, and First Nations peoples.

When people feel they belong, they are more likely to participate in community life, build relationships and support one another. This Focus Area recognises that safety is not only about physical environments, but also about social connection, respect, accessibility and trust.

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| <b>Our 2050 Objective</b>              | We foster a community where all people can feel safe welcome and included.  |
| <b>Our 2036 Commitments</b>            | <p>We will:</p> <p>1.1 Reduce physical, cultural, financial and digital barriers so everyone can easily access and participate in community life.</p> <p>1.2 Strengthen neighbourhood-level connections through place-based initiatives that build trust, belonging and everyday inclusion.</p> <p>1.3 Work in partnership with service providers and community organisations to support wellbeing and respond effectively to local safety issues through place-based and community-led approaches.</p>                                   |
| <b>What Success Looks Like in 2036</b> | <p>People in Unley feel safe, welcome and included in community life, with services, programs and spaces that are accessible, respectful and responsive to different needs and identities.</p> <p>Neighbourhoods feel connected and supportive, with opportunities for people to meet and participate in social, cultural, economic and civic life.</p> <p>Loneliness and social isolation are better recognised and addressed within the community, with local programs and partnerships available to help people when they need it.</p> |
| <b>Related Plans</b>                   | Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (2026), Public Health Plan (2026), Dog and Cat Management Plan (2026)  |

## Strategic Connections

### COMMUNITY

- **Safe & Welcoming**
- History & Identity
- Active & Connected
- Creativity, Culture & Learning
- Civic Participation

### ECONOMY

- Thriving Precincts
- Local Advantage
- Strategic Investment

### ENVIRONMENT

- Urban Forest & Biodiversity

### PLACES AND SPACES

- Open Space & Recreation
- Activated Spaces

# FOCUS AREA 2: HISTORY & IDENTITY

History and heritage shape who we are as a community and how we understand our place in the world. Embracing and celebrating the identity of our people, places and Country strengthens belonging, fosters respect and deepens connections across generations and cultures.

In Unley, this includes recognising Kurna Country, valuing diverse stories and lived experiences, and creating opportunities to share, learn and reflect together. By honouring our cultural past while engaging contemporary voices, we help ensure Unley’s identity remains inclusive, meaningful and alive for current and future generations.

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| <b>Our 2050 Objective</b>              | We embrace and celebrate the history, heritage and identity of our people, places and Country  |
| <b>Our 2036 Commitments</b>            | <p>We will:</p> <p>2.1 Create places and opportunities for diverse stories, cultures and lived experiences of our community to be visible, valued and shared across cultures and generations.</p> <p>2.2 Support partnerships and community-led initiatives that celebrate local histories, cultural diversity, and evolving identities.</p> <p>2.3 Embed understanding and respect for Kurna Country, culture and living heritage into everyday civic life and community experiences.</p>     |
| <b>What Success Looks Like in 2036</b> | <p>People in Unley feel a strong sense of identity and belonging and there is strong participation in community events, programs and activities.</p> <p>Community-led initiatives and partnerships help keep Unley’s history and identity alive, creating opportunities to share stories, learn together and connect across generations and cultures.</p> <p>Kurna Country, culture and living heritage are meaningfully recognised across civic spaces, events and community experiences.</p> |
| <b>Related Plans</b>                   | Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (2024)  |

## Strategic Connections

### COMMUNITY

- Safe & Welcoming
- **History & Identity**
- Active & Connected
- Creativity, Culture, & Learning
- Civic Participation

### ECONOMY

- Igniting Innovation
- Thriving Precincts
- Collaborative Growth
- Strategic Investment

### ENVIRONMENT

- Urban Forest & Biodiversity
- Sustainable Natural Resources
- Partner & Advocate

### PLACES AND SPACES

- Open Space & Recreation
- Activated Spaces
- Local Streets

# FOCUS AREA 3: ACTIVE & CONNECTED

Being healthy and active is about physical fitness, social connection, mental wellbeing and feeling supported through life’s challenges and changes. Strong social networks, access to information and preventative public health initiatives help people stay connected, resilient and able to participate in community life.

This focus area recognises the role Council plays in supporting wellbeing through inclusive programs, partnerships and public health initiatives that strengthen social connections, promote mental wellbeing and encourage healthy lifestyles for people of all ages and backgrounds.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Our 2050 Objective</b>              | We encourage all people to be healthy, active and connected.   |
| <b>Our 2036 Commitments</b>            | <p>We will:</p> <p>3.1 Plan for social infrastructure that responds to changing community needs and strengthens social connection, wellbeing and quality of life across all stages of life.</p> <p>3.2 Strengthen wellbeing and resilience through partnerships, supporting mental health initiatives, and promoting responsible pet ownership.</p> <p>3.3 Promote physical wellbeing through accessible public health initiatives that encourage healthy behaviours and everyday activity.</p> <p>3.4 Support people to age well in Unley by fostering community life that promotes independence, wellbeing and participation at every stage of life.</p> |
| <b>What Success Looks Like in 2036</b> | <p>People in Unley feel supported to live healthy, active lives and have good awareness of local programs, services and facilities.</p> <p>Strong social networks help people stay connected and resilient with support available for life’s changes and challenges.</p> <p>People of all ages and abilities can participate in health and wellbeing programs.</p>   |
| <b>Related Plans</b>                   | Dog and Cat Management Plan (2026), Public Health Plan (2026), Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (2026), Community Infrastructure Plan (2026)   |

## Strategic Connections

### COMMUNITY

- Safe & Welcoming
- History & Identity
- **Active & Connected**
- Creativity, Culture & Learning
- Civic Participation

### ECONOMY

- Igniting Innovation
- Thriving Precincts
- Collaborative Growth
- Strategic Investment

### ENVIRONMENT

- Urban Forest & Biodiversity
- Sustainable Natural Resources
- Partner & Advocate

### PLACES AND SPACES

- Open Space & Recreation
- Activated Spaces
- Advocacy

# FOCUS AREA 4: CREATIVITY, CULTURE & LEARNING

Creativity, cultural expression, and learning enrich community life, support lifelong development and contribute to a vibrant, connected city. Access to the arts, in all forms, creates opportunities for people to explore ideas, share perspectives and expand horizons and develop new skills. This focus area recognises the role of Council in supporting creative practice, participation and learning through inclusive programs, facilities and partnerships that nurture talent, encourage expression and make creativity part of everyday life in Unley.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Our 2050 Objective</b>              | We support creativity, cultural expression, and learning.  |
| <b>Our 2036 Commitments</b>            | <p>We will:</p> <p>4.1 Support creativity and cultural expression through inclusive programs and initiatives that encourage participation across all ages and backgrounds.</p> <p>4.2 Host and support community events that celebrate creativity, culture and local identity, and create opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to connect and participate.</p> <p>4.3 Champion lifelong learning by ensuring library programs remain contemporary, accessible and responsive to community needs, supporting literacy, digital literacy, and personal development.</p> <p>4.4 Partner with creative, educational, and community organisations to expand access to creative learning and cultural participation.</p> |
| <b>What Success Looks Like in 2036</b> | <p>Creativity and cultural expression are part of everyday life in Unley, with people of all ages able to participate in activities that reflect diverse interests and backgrounds.</p> <p>Libraries and community centres are lively, welcoming places for lifelong learning, skill development and connection.</p> <p>Community events and partnerships celebrate local talent and culture, creating shared experiences that strengthen connection, identity and participation across the city.</p>  |
| <b>Related Plans</b>                   | Living Young Action Plan (2023), Cultural Plan (2021)  |

## Strategic Connections

### COMMUNITY

- Safe & Welcoming
- History & Identity
- Active & Connected
- **Creativity, Culture & Learning**
- Civic Participation

### ECONOMY

- Igniting Innovation
- Thriving Precincts
- Local Advantage
- Collaborative Growth

### ENVIRONMENT

- Climate Resilient
- Sustainable Waste Management
- Partner & Advocate

### PLACES AND SPACES

- Open Space & Recreation
- Activated Spaces
- Local Streets

# FOCUS AREA 5: CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Civic participation builds trust, strengthens local leadership and ensures diverse voices are reflected in community life and decision-making. People of all ages and backgrounds must have opportunities to be involved, heard and empowered to contribute to Unley’s future

This focus area recognises the role of Council in creating accessible pathways for participation through engagement, volunteering, leadership development and collaboration.

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Our 2050 Objective</b>              | We foster meaningful opportunities for people to participate in community and civic life.   |
| <b>Our 2036 Commitments</b>            | <p>We will:</p> <p>5.1 Support the development of community leaders by building skills, confidence and pathways for all people to participate in civic life.</p> <p>5.2 Create opportunities for our identified populations to thrive and participate in shaping their community.</p> <p>5.3 Continue supporting volunteering by expanding modern, flexible and meaningful opportunities for people to contribute their time and skills.</p> <p>5.4 Build community confidence, capability and opportunities to influence decisions and take collective action on local issues.</p> |
| <b>What Success Looks Like in 2036</b> | <p>People in Unley feel informed, confident and able to have a say and participate in civic and community life.</p> <p>A diverse range of people are involved in shaping local decisions reflecting the community’s lived experience and aspirations.</p> <p>Volunteering and local leadership are valued and supported, with flexible opportunities for people to contribute their time, skills and ideas to their community.</p>  |
| <b>Related Plans</b>                   | Communication and Engagement Strategy (2023)  |

## Strategic Connections

### COMMUNITY

- Safe & Welcoming
- History & Identity
- Active & Connected
- Creativity, Culture & Learning
- **Civic Participation**

### ECONOMY

- Igniting Innovation
- Thriving Precincts
- Collaborative Growth

### ENVIRONMENT

- Climate Resilient
- Sustainable Waste Management

### PLACES AND SPACES

- Activated Spaces
- Advocacy

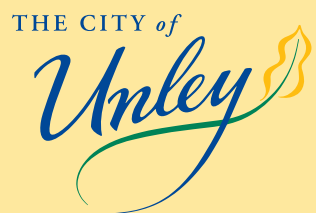
# MONITORING OUR PERFORMANCE



To ensure we remain accountable and focused on the outcomes that matter most to our community, Council will monitor progress against this set of high-level outcome indicators over the life of this strategy.

Baseline data will be established, and progress will be reported regularly. These outcome indicators will be used to inform Council’s decision-making, priority setting and continuous improvement.

| OUTCOME INDICATOR   | BASELINE                                | 2036 TARGET  | PRIMARY DATA SOURCE   | REPORTING FREQUENCY |
|---|---|--|---|---------------------|
| Residents who feel safe, welcomed and included in their local neighbourhood                         | Community Survey Baseline (2025)        | Maintain or increase % feel safe and included      | Community Survey  | Biennial            |
| Residents who feel a sense of belonging and connection to their local community                     | Community Survey Baseline (2025)        | Maintain or increase % feel connected              | Community Survey  | Biennial            |
| Participation in Council-led community programs, events, libraries, galleries and community centres | Total Annual Participation Count (2025) | Maintain or increase from baseline                 | Council service usage data; library and community centre statistics | Annual              |
| Older residents who feel supported to remain active, connected and independent                      | Community Survey (2025)                 | Maintain or increase % feel supported to age well  | Community Survey (age cohort)                                       | Biennial            |
| Residents satisfied with Council engagement and ability to influence decisions                      | Community Survey Baseline (2025)        | Increase % satisfied with engagement opportunities | Community Survey; engagement evaluation data                        | Biennial            |



## CIVIC CENTRE

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