



Community Health & Wellbeing Plan

2025-2029



Mildura Rural City Council

Front Cover Artwork

Community consultation for the development of this plan revealed a deep appreciation for the role of the arts in promoting health and wellbeing.

Community arts have a unique ability to bring people together across cultures, generations, and lived experiences. The arts nurture learning, create a sense of belonging and pathways for healing – fundamental for building a healthy and thriving community.

To reflect this important connection, Mildura Rural City Council invited **Arts Mildura**, a key partner in this strategy to curate the front cover artwork for this plan.

We appreciate and respectfully acknowledge the cultural significance of the cover artwork:

Uncle Col (Marra) Clark

Barkindji Ngayampaa

Lands and Waters

2018

synthetic polymer paint on canvas

collection of the artist

600 x 750 x 15 mm

Photo by Christian Capurro

"I started this a long time back. The tracks are ducks with the three dots which are water birds and the emu tracks don't have dots. With the brown and the orange of sand Country, when it gets hard but everything still flows through it. It is highly nutritious soil for growing. I wanted to highlight Country and the water holes within the river system, it starts off large and gets smaller, the animals come to the edge of the river to feed and drink. I do this to remember how good and rich the land and water was back in my day, it supplied huge resources of food to the animals." - Uncle (Marra) Col Clark, 2025

Used with permission and remains part of the artist's personal collection.

Table of Contents

3	A Word from the Mayor
4	Our Community Health and Wellbeing Partners
8	Background
13	Our Community Vision Themes
14	Our liveable people-friendly region
22	How the plan was developed
26	The Role of Local Government in Health and Wellbeing
28	Enablers For Improving Health Equity
29	Domains, Priorities and Actions
30	Domain 1 - Our Community Members are Healthy and Well
37	Domain 2 - Our Community Members are Safe and Secure
40	Domain 3 - Our Community Members Have the Capabilities to Participate
44	Domain 4 - Our Community Members are Connected to Culture and Community
48	Domain 5 - Our Community is Liveable
52	Community Health and Wellbeing Steering Committee
53	Monitoring, reporting and evaluation
54	Sources of Information

Acknowledgment of country

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land, which now comprises the Mildura Rural City Council municipality. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and celebrate and respect their continuing cultures and acknowledge the memories of their ancestors.

We express our gratitude in the sharing of this land, our sorrow for the personal, spiritual and cultural costs of that sharing, and our hope is that we can walk together in harmony and in the spirit of healing.





Mayor's message

I am pleased to present the Community Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029. This is a guiding document that reflects our community's aspirations to live well, feel safe and supported and thrive across every stage of life.

We want our community to be a place where everyone can reach their full potential physically, mentally, socially and culturally. This plan is our commitment to creating the best opportunities for wellbeing for all members of our community.

The Plan addresses the diverse and often complex factors that influence health. From access to healthcare and mental wellbeing, to safe environments, education, equity and belonging.

It also highlights the preventative work Council undertakes every day, including health inspections, immunisations, support for the arts and sports, public infrastructure and initiatives that promote safety, equity and inclusion.

We know that not everyone experiences the same level of health or access to opportunity and that's why equity is a central theme of this plan. We are committed to ensuring no one is left behind, with targeted actions that support the people in our community who need it most.

Developed through extensive consultation with community and key stakeholders, this plan gives Council and its partners a clear direction over the next four years. It aligns with the five domains of health identified in the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes and Framework:

- Healthy and Well
- Safe and Secure
- Able to Participate
- Connected to Culture and Community
- Our community is liveable

On behalf of Council, I would like to thank every person and organisation who contributed their voice to this plan. It reflects your lived experiences, ideas and hopes for a healthier future.

Council looks forward to working with our community, partners and service providers as we continue building a place where everyone has the chance to live a full, connected and healthy life.

Cr Helen Healy
Mayor
Mildura Rural City Council

Our Community Health and Wellbeing Partners

A collaborative partnership approach has shaped the development of this Plan and will continue to shape its delivery. While the health, wellbeing, and liveability of our community are at the heart of the services and initiatives Council provides every day, lasting and meaningful change cannot be achieved by Council alone. It relies on the combined efforts of community leaders, service providers, and partner organisations.

Many of the actions in this Plan are led or supported by organisations outside Council which reflects the shared responsibility for improving the health and wellbeing of our community. The Plan has been developed in close collaboration with local partners and community members to identify key priorities that require joint advocacy, strategic leadership, and a shared commitment to collective impact.

Council has taken a leadership role in coordinating the development of the Plan and will continue to provide strategic support throughout its implementation and in monitoring outcomes. This work will be guided by the Community Health and Wellbeing Steering Committee, which brings together the expertise, resources, and collaborative strength of our partnership organisations. This coordinated approach has proven to drive positive change, commitment and deliver long-term outcomes for the community.

The following partners, on behalf of their respective departments and organisations, have formally endorsed the Community Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 and these organisations will be represented on the Steering Committee, alongside key Council staff.



**Ambulance
Victoria**

Ambulance Victoria has 3 branches within the Mildura LGA (Mildura, Irymple and Ouyen), providing emergency response to acute medical and traumatic incidents across the local community.

Bronwyn Lambert
Senior Team Manager – Mildura 1



Anglicare[®]
Victoria

At Anglicare Victoria, we create opportunities to transform futures. Everything we do is to prevent, protect & empower disadvantaged Victorian children, young people and families.

Paul McDonald
Chief Executive Officer

**ARTS
MILDURA**

Arts Mildura strives to create and deliver sustainable arts programming that reinvests in the well-being of our community and local businesses through visual art, performance, music, literature and cultural development.

Stedman Watts
Director



Christie Centre Inc is a National Disability Insurance Scheme registered disability provider offering individual, group and employment support for individuals with a disability.

Nadiene Lynch
Executive Officer



Centre for Excellence in Rural Sexual Health works across the Loddon Mallee and Hume regions to ensure all rural Victorians have access to quality sexual health care by designing, implementing, and evaluating programs that provide practical solutions for the improvement of sexual health.

Anne-Marie Kelly
Deputy Director



Department of Families, Fairness and Housing is a Victorian state government department focused on child protection, housing, disability, the prevention of family violence, multicultural affairs, LGBTIQ+ equality, veterans, women and youth.

Teresa Cavallo
Executive Director, Mallee Area, North Division



The Family & Child Hub in Mildura is a welcoming space for families - from pregnancy through to the pre-teen years - offering a range of family-focused health services, parenting education, playgroups, and opportunities for connection, as well as facilities including feeding and changing areas.

Rachel Fuller
Manager



A nationally respected rural heart health advocate and community leader based in Mildura. Driven by lived experience following the sudden loss of her husband to a heart attack in 2019, she is dedicated to preventing avoidable deaths from heart disease through improved access to early diagnosis and care in regional communities.

Katrina Umback
Community Heart Health Advocate



HANDS UP MALLEE

Hands Up Mallee is a Social Impact Initiative which brings local leaders and community together to address social issues and improve health and wellbeing outcomes for children, young people and their families.

Jane McCracken
Executive Officer



Intereach in Mildura is a not-for-profit organisation supporting people with disability, children and families, older people and multicultural communities.

Yvette Buhagiar
Michelle Tai
Co-Chief Executive Officer



La Trobe University, with a campus located in Mildura, is a university where inclusion and innovation produce real world impact through world class research, strong industry partnerships, expanding access to higher education and a focus on student success and career outcomes.

Simon Egerton
Associate Professor



The Loddon Mallee Integrated Cancer Service (LMICS) is a partnership of 23 health services, serving people affected by cancer in 10 Local Government Areas in the Central and Northwest of Victoria. LMICS is one of nine integrated cancer services as part of the Victorian Integrated Cancer Services (VICs). The work drives best practice to improve patient experience and outcomes.

Cheryl Martin
Strategic Manager



The Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit works with local partners to keep our regional community healthy, safe and well. Working with the Department of Health we tailor and deliver place based public health initiatives to strengthen the health prevention system.

Haley Sheriff
Manager – Mallee Prevention and Population Health



Mallee Accommodation & Support Program is a service provider and co-ordinator of NDIS & Disability Services, Homelessness Support, Family and Youth Services, Youth Mentoring and Foster Care.

Charmaine Calis
Chief Executive Officer



Mallee Family Care in Mildura is a not-for-profit providing services including family support, disability assistance, mental health, housing, and legal aid across the Mallee region.

Teresa Jayet
Chief Executive Officer



The Mallee Sports Assembly works with communities in the Mallee to promote and encourage healthier lifestyles, wellbeing and active recreation through inclusion of all.

Carmel Mackay
Executive Officer



Mallee Track Health and Community Services is a health and community service dedicated to improving the health of residents of all ages in the Mallee Track area.

Dr Frances Peart
Chief Executive Officer



MILDURA COMMUNITY HOUSE

Mildura Community House offers a wide range of programs with a focus is on enhancing the skills, knowledge and the experiences of individuals and families, to strengthen the capacity of communities in the wider rural city of Mildura.

Flora Walter
Program Manager



Mildura Public Base Hospital is the main hospital in the region providing a wide range of health services.

Matthew Jukes
Acting Chief Executive Officer



Murray Primary Health Network engages key partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of health services and improve the co-ordination of care.

Matt Jones
Chief Executive Officer



Mildura Rural City Council

Mildura Rural City Council is the local government authority delivering a wide range essential services and infrastructure such as roads, waste management, parks, planning, and community services.

Martin Hawson
Chief Executive Officer



Sunraysia Community Health Services delivers integrated, community-based healthcare across the Mildura region, with a focus on accessibility, prevention, and holistic support.

Darren Midgley
Chief Executive Officer



Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council provides representation, as well as a range of services, to culturally and linguistically diverse communities in the region.

Akesa Kei
Chief Executive Officer



Women's Health Loddon Mallee supports women's wellbeing in the region through health promotion, advocacy, and gender equity programs.

Kellie Dunn
Chief Executive Officer



Zoe Support Australia is a not-for-profit, community-based organisation operating in Mildura for young mothers aged up to 25. We aim to see young mothers and their children thriving in safe and healthy families by providing wrap around place-based Family Services, Family Day Care, Supported Playgroups and Social and Skills based programs

Merinda Robertson
Chief Executive Officer





Background

The overarching goal of this Plan is to support optimal health and wellbeing for the entire municipality. It does so by identifying and assessing current and emerging public health issues and outlining strategies to prevent or reduce their impact in line with the Victoria Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Framework and legal requirements.

Our Legislated Responsibilities

The development of the Community Health and Wellbeing Plan is guided by a strong legislative and strategic framework at both state and federal levels. The plan has been designed to align with relevant legislation, government priorities and outcomes frameworks to ensure a coordinated, evidence-based and community-driven approach to improving health and wellbeing across our municipality.

Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic) – Section 26

Under Section 26 of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008, councils are required to develop a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan every four years.

The plan must:

- Include an examination of data about health status and health determinants in the local community
- Identify goals and strategies based on available evidence for creating a local community in which people can achieve maximum health and wellbeing
- Provide for measures to prevent family violence and respond to the needs of victims
- Consider the Council Plan and the Municipal Strategic Statement
- Have regard to the current Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023–2027
- Provide for the involvement of people in the local community and specify how Council will work in partnership with agencies undertaking public health initiatives.



Local Government Act 2020 – Section 90

The Plan aligns with the priorities and vision outlined in the Council Plan, developed under Section 90 of the Local Government Act 2020, ensuring integrated planning and delivery across Council’s strategic objectives.

Planning and Environment Act 1987 – Section 12A

The plan also supports the objectives of Council’s Municipal Strategic Statement, prepared under Section 12A of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, particularly in addressing the social determinants of health through planning and land use strategies.

Climate Change Act 2017 – Section 17

In accordance with Section 17 of the Climate Change Act 2017, the Plan gives due consideration to climate change risks and impacts and incorporates strategies that contribute to community resilience and environmental sustainability.

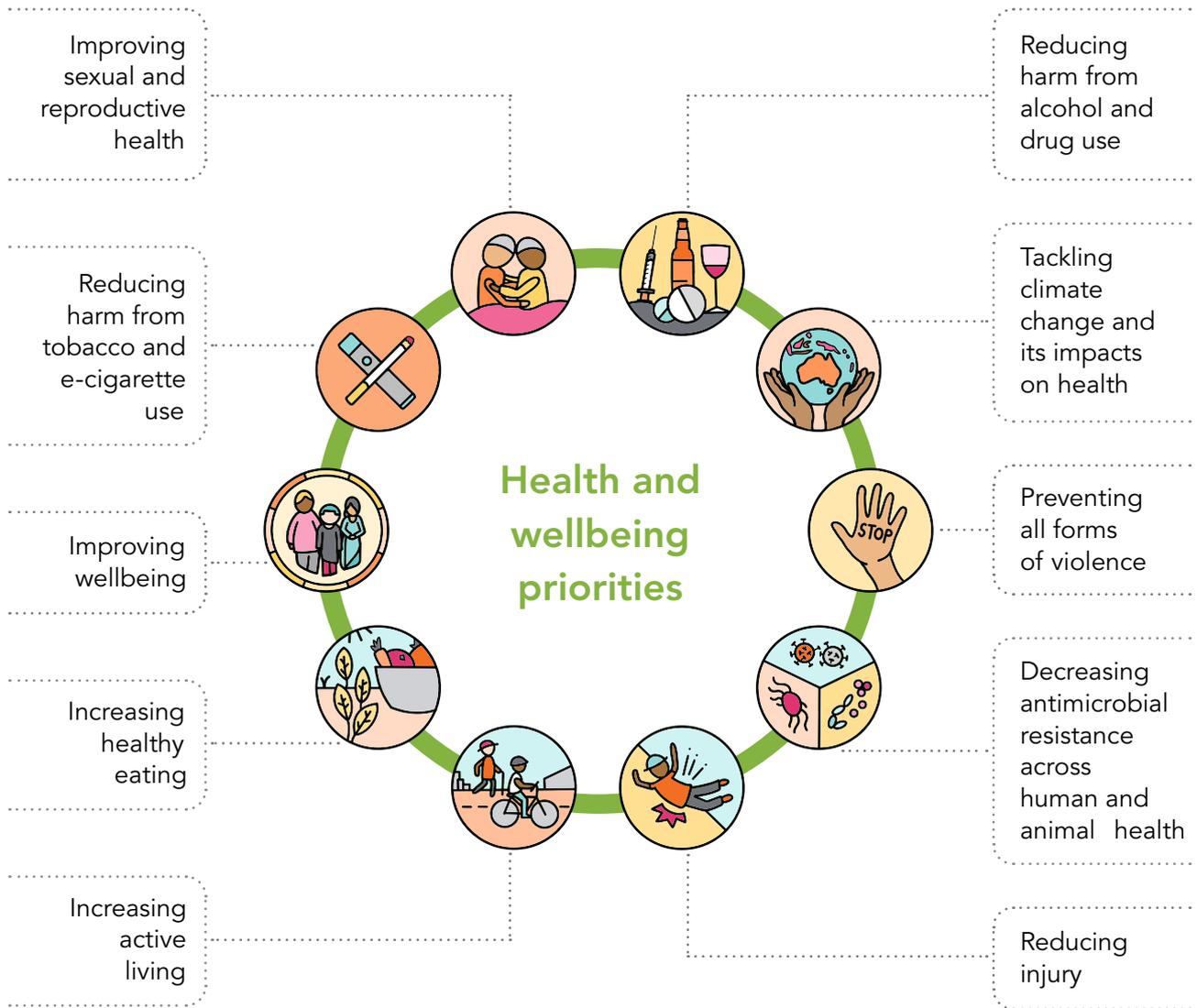
Gender Equality Act 2020

A Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) was undertaken during the consultation process and the drafting of the plan, in accordance with the Gender Equality Act 2020, ensuring the plan advances gender equality and considers the different impacts of policies and programs on all community members.

Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023–2027

The Plan has had regard to the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023–2027, which serves as the overarching framework for improving health and wellbeing across the state. The plan’s priorities and guiding principles are reflected throughout this document.

The priorities of the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan
Our 10 priorities are:

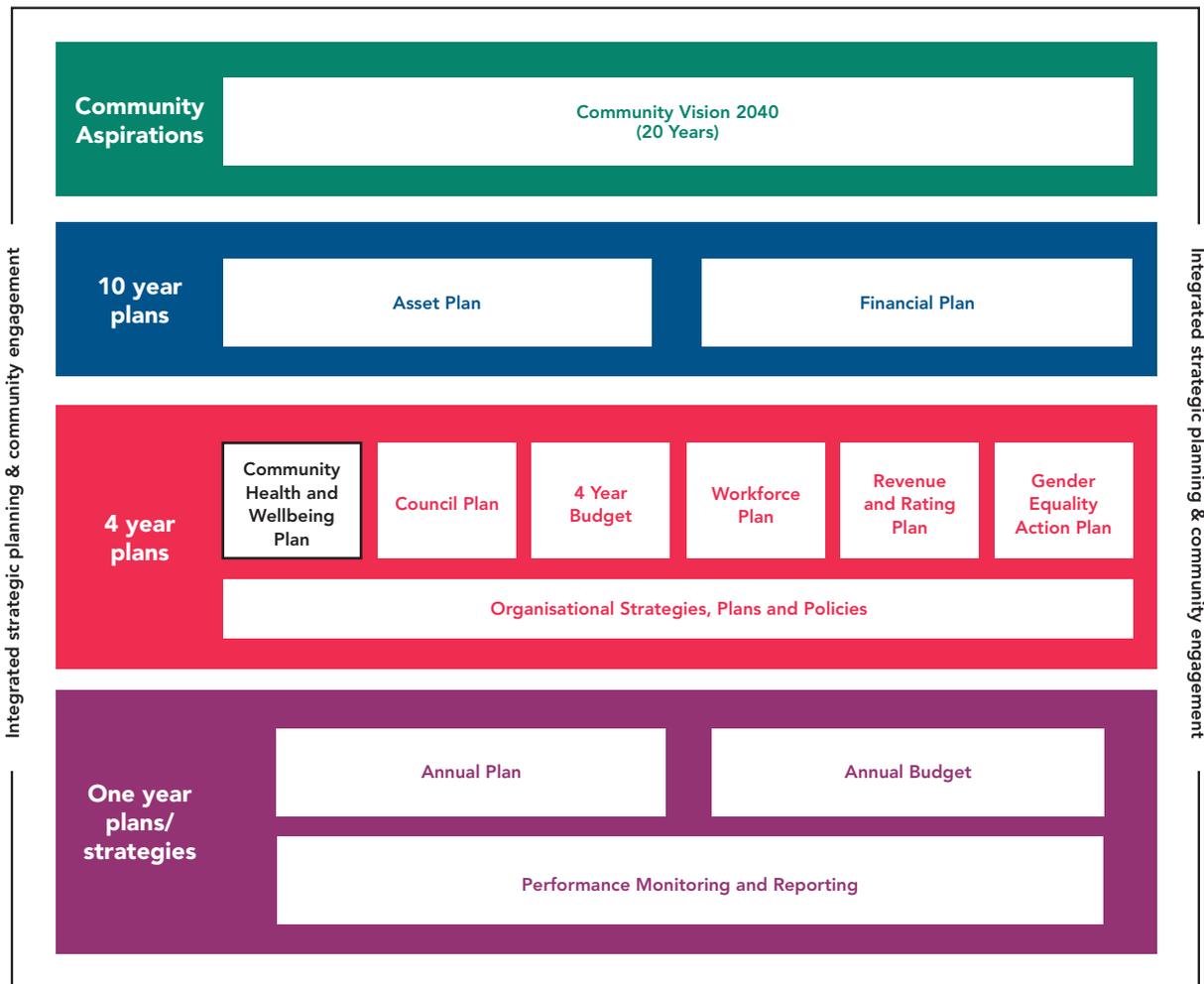


Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Framework

The Plan is informed by state-level public health priorities and aligns with the Domains of the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Framework, which supports consistent tracking of health and wellbeing outcomes across government and community sectors.

Alignment with our Community Vision and Council Plan

Our Community Health and Wellbeing Plan is one of the key strategic plans within Mildura Rural City Council’s Integrated Planning Framework as demonstrated in the figure below. It is aligned with our Community Vision and recently adopted Council Plan 2025 – 2029 as is required by State Government legislation.



Our Community Vision outlines the long-term hopes and aspirations of our community. The Council Plan sets out our strategic focus for the next four years as we work towards achieving that vision. Together, these documents have shaped the development of the Community Health and Wellbeing Plan. Their alignment with the outcomes and actions of our community partners helps to strengthen and extend the impact of Council’s work .



Our Community Vision Themes

Five themes frame the priorities that are most important to our community. By focusing our efforts on these themes, we will be able to monitor the progress of our region striving to become a more liveable and people-friendly community.

Environment

We will sustain and enhance our natural environment and resources for current and future generations

Community

We will be a healthy, respectful and connected community

Place

We will be a place to live, belong and visit with infrastructure and development that enhances our lifestyle

Economy

We will have a thriving economy that harnesses our strengths and capitalises on opportunity

Leadership

We will have responsible, collaborative leadership that puts community wellbeing at the heart of decision-making



Our liveable people-friendly region

Mildura Rural City is located in the north-west of Victoria and covers an incredible 10% of the state of Victoria. The local landscape boasts vegetation unique to the Mallee, while also being famous for broad acre grain properties, fresh fruit production (citrus, avocado, table grapes and wine grapes) and vibrant and welcoming townships.

The municipality shares borders with both New South Wales and South Australia, making it a regional service centre for all three states. Due to the unique cross border location many out-of-municipality residents are reliant on goods and services within the Mildura Local Government Area.

The jewel in the municipality's crown is its connection to the mighty Murray River, which winds its way through much of the region. It's a focal point for visitors and those who call the region home.

22,082km²

Land area

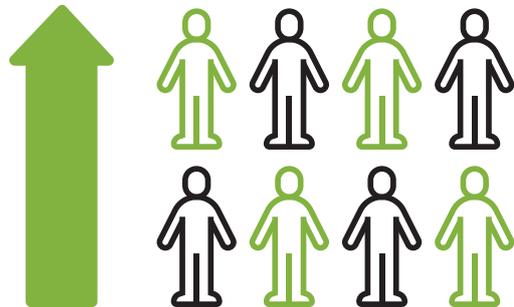


57,626

2024 estimated resident population

62,989

2036 projected resident population



Key industries

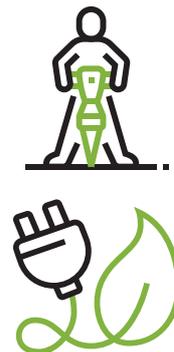
Dryland farming, irrigated horticulture (table grapes, wine grapes, dried grapes, citrus, vegetables and nuts), tourism, food and beverage manufacturing, transport and logistics, retail, health and community services.

Our towns

Cabarita	Koorlong	Nichols Point
Cardross	Merbein	Ouyen
Colignan	Meringur	Red Cliffs
Cowangie	Mildura	Underbool
Cullulleraine	Murrayville	Walpeup
Irymple	Nangiloc	Werrimull

Emerging industries

Renewable energy generation, aquaculture, mineral sands mining and recycling





\$8.805 billion
Annual economic output

13.84%
Born overseas



4.59%
Aboriginal or
Torres Strait
Islander

5,434
Businesses



7.42%
Need assistance
with core
activities



25,016
Jobs

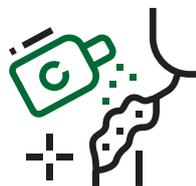
12.4%
Speak a language
other than English
at home



DOMAIN 1

Healthy and well

People with 3+ Sunburns in the last 12 months



Mildura
8.9%

Victoria
6.9%

Victorian Population Health Survey 2023



People who are Overweight 2023

Mildura
61.2%

Victoria
54.4%



Victorian Population Health Survey 2023

Adults who sought professional help for a Mental Health problem in the last year (2023)

Mildura
22%



Victoria
20.1%



Victorian Population Health Survey 2023



People with high or very high Psychological Distress (2023)

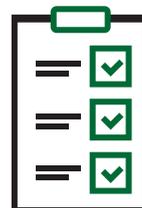
Mildura
20.1%

Victoria
19.1%

Victorian Population Health Survey 2023



0 10 20



People with 3+ Long Term Health Conditions

Mildura
4.1%

Victoria
2.9%

2021 Mildura, Census All persons QuickStats | Australian Bureau of Statistics



Adults unable to see a GP when needed (last 12 months 2023)

Mildura
27.3%

Victoria
19.5%

Victorian Population Health Survey 2023

Avoidable Deaths by Cause 0-74 years (2018-2022)	Mildura	Victoria
Suicide & Self Inflicted Injury	15.6	10.9
Cancer	36.6	27.5
Circulatory System Disease	44.5	33.3
Respiratory System Disease	17.5	9.1
Diabetes	9.1	5.5
Transport Accidents	10	4.1

*Rate per 100,000 people

Public Health Information Development Unit (PHIDU), Torrens University Australia. Social Health Atlas of Australia:Victoria (online) 2025. Accessed 17/7/2025 https://phidu.torrens.edu.au/current/data/sha-aust/lga/phidu_data_lga_vic.xls

People at Increased Risk or Harm from Alcohol-Related Disease Or Injury

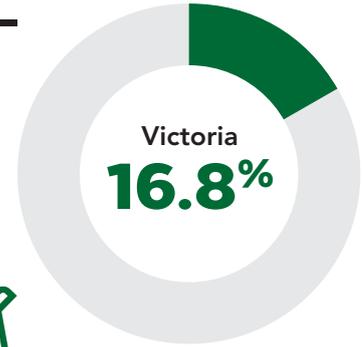
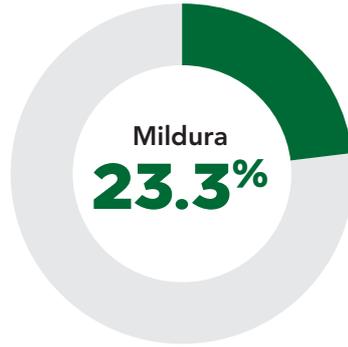


Mildura **16.8%**
Victoria **13.1%**

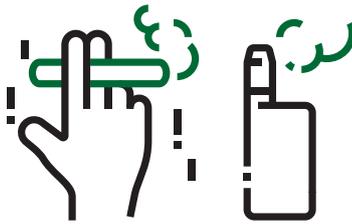


Victorian Population Health Survey 2023

Adults who did not do any moderate to vigorous Physical Activity



Victorian Population Health Survey 2023



People who Smoke or Vape 2023

24.1% Mildura
18.5% Victoria

Victorian Population Health Survey 2023

Rate Of Sexually Transmitted Diseases 2024	Mildura		Victoria	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Chlamydia	22.64	14.04	14.8	16.7
Gonorrhoea	1.93	5.79	2.5	10.2
Hepatitis B	0.88	0.44	0.8	0.8
Syphilis	1.76	1.58	0.6	2.5

*Rate per 10,000 people

Victorian Women's Health Atlas



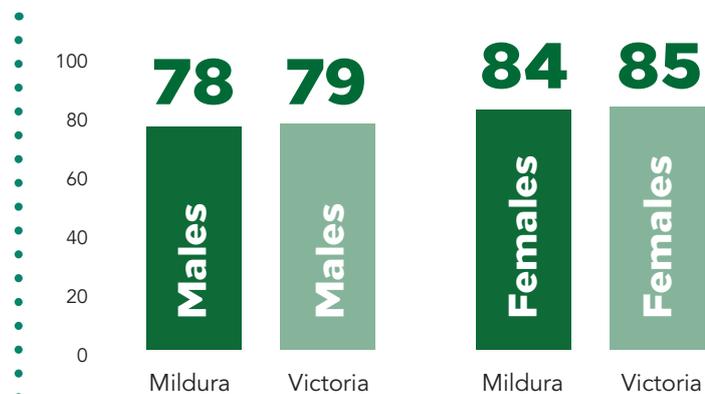
2021 Mildura, Census All persons
QuickStats | Australian Bureau of Statistics

Long Term Health Conditions 2021	Mildura	Victoria
Cancer (Including Remission)	3.1%	2.8%
Heart Disease	4.8%	3.7%
Mental Health Condition	9.9%	8.8%
Asthma	10%	8.4%



Low Birthweight Babies 2019 - 2021

Public Health Information Development Unit (PHIDU), Torrens University Australia. Social Health Atlas of Australia:Victoria (online) 2025. Accessed 17/7/2025 https://phidu.torrens.edu.au/current/data/sha-aust/lga/phidu_data_lga_vic.xls



Median Age at Death

Public Health Information Development Unit (PHIDU), Torrens University Australia. Social Health Atlas of Australia:Victoria (online) 2025. Accessed 17/7/2025

DOMAIN 2

Our community members are safe and secure



Family Violence Incidences
Year ending March 2025

Mildura

3872.4

Victoria

1497.1

*Rate per 100,000 people

www.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/crime-statistics/latest-crime-data-by-area



Estimated people
experiencing Homelessness

Mildura

62.6

Victoria

46.9

*Rate per 10,000 people



Public Health Information Development Unit (PHIDU), Torrens University Australia. Social Health Atlas of Australia:Victoria (online) 2025. Accessed 17/7/2025 https://phidu.torrens.edu.au/current/data/sha-aust/lga/phidu_data_lga_vic.xls

Households Receiving
Rent Assistance 2023

Mildura

18.5%

Victoria

11.6%

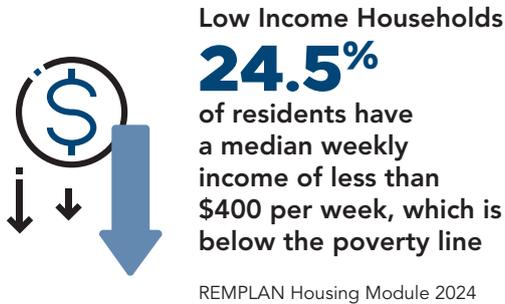


Based on Public Health Information Development Unit (PHIDU), Torrens University Australia material from: Social Health Atlas of Victoria Data by Local Government Area (online) June 2025.



DOMAIN 3

Our community members have the capabilities to participate



People experiencing Food Insecurity in the last year (2023)

Mildura
10%

Victoria
8%



Victorian Population Health Survey 2023



People with a self-reported Disability (2023)

Mildura
24.9%

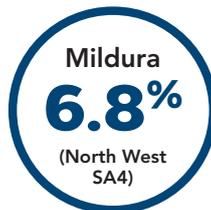
Victoria
19.9%



Victorian Population Health Survey 2023

Youth Unemployment Rate (May 2025)

Jobs and Skills Atlas, Jobs and Skills Australia accessed July 2025



Youth 15-24 years Engaged in Education and Employment

Mildura
23.6%

Victoria
32.3%



Unemployment Rate (May 2025)

Victoria
4.4%



Mildura (North West SA4)
3.4%

0 20 40 60 80 100

REMPPLAN Community July 2025

Jobs and Skills Atlas, Jobs and Skills Australia accessed July 2025

DOMAIN 4

Our community members are connected to culture and community



Adults experiencing Loneliness

Mildura

23.4%

Victoria

23.3%



Victorian Population Health Survey 2023



Adults who experienced Discrimination



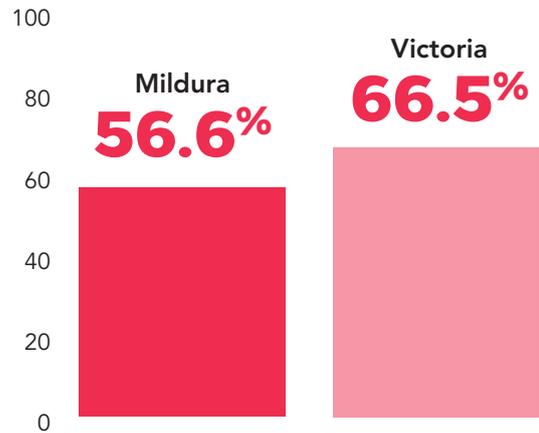
Mildura

15.4%

Victoria

15.8%

Victorian Population Health Survey 2023



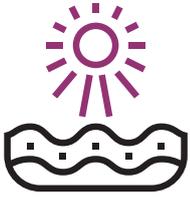
People who believed Multiculturalism definitely made their life better



Victorian Population Health Survey 2023

DOMAIN 5

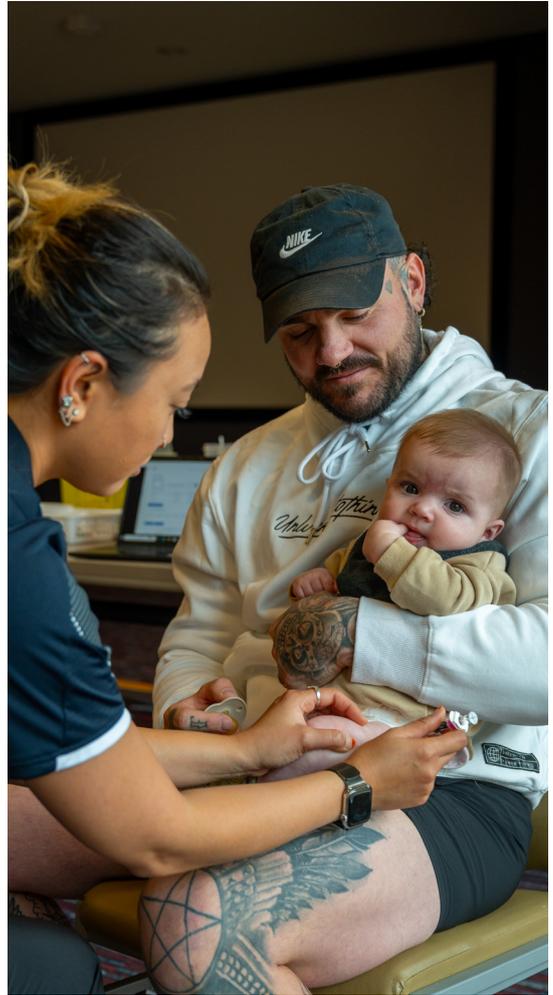
Our community is liveable



Increases in daily max temperature
0.9 - 2.0°C
expected by 2050



https://www.climatechange.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0027/732393/Victorian-Climate-Science-Report-Collateral-Regional-Reports-Mallee.pdf



Climate Change: Effects on health and wellbeing.

DIRECT EFFECTS	INDIRECT EFFECTS	SOCIAL IMPACTS	HEALTH IMPACTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extreme Heat • Bush Fires • Drought • Floods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Quality • Food Safety • Air Quality • Ecological Land use change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio Economic Status • Education • Housing • Transportation • Food Security • Access to health and human services • Age • Gender 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respiratory Diseases • Cardiovascular Disease • Infectious Diseases • Mental Illness • Allergies • Injuries • Poor Nutrition • Skin Diseases

Adapted from Tackling climate change and its impacts on health through municipal public health and wellbeing planning. Department of Health 2024.

How the plan was developed

Evaluation of Previous Plan

2021-2025 plan was evaluated with key learnings identified. Please see following page.

Data Analysis

Analysis of a wide range of local, state, and national data to identify key health gaps, emerging needs, and community vulnerabilities.

Gender Impact Assessment

A Gender Impact Assessment ensured the plan considers the different needs of women, men, and gender-diverse people and promotes fairness in health outcomes.

Community Engagement - Community Vision review and Council Plan

Feedback from over 3,000 community members during the Community Vision review and Council Plan consultations helped shape this plan, ensuring it reflects local voices and priorities.

Community and Health Sector Engagement

Over 60 people from 29 local organisations took part in workshops and surveys to share their knowledge of service gaps and opportunities.

Theming

Feedback and data were then grouped into key themes to guide the plan's goals and align with state and community priorities.

Partner Conversations and Commitments

Council and partners confirmed their support for delivering actions, ensuring shared responsibility and ongoing collaboration.

Actions Defined with Stakeholders

One-on-one conversations with staff and partners helped shape practical, place-based actions that respond to local needs and resources.

Plan Developed

Plan Adopted by Council

The development of the Plan followed a structured and inclusive process - guided by legislation, informed by evidence, and shaped by the voices of our diverse community and service sector.

Governance and Guidance

Governance and oversight of the plan's development were achieved through strong collaboration across Council and key partners. An internal working group, made up of representatives from Council's key business units - including Recreation, Environmental Health, Community Care, and Community Partnerships - worked closely with a representative from the Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit to guide the process.

A Steering Committee, consisting of partner organisations from health, education, multicultural, and the youth and disability sectors, provided strategic direction and played a key role in supporting engagement and consultation activities.

Within Council, staff from the Community Partnerships Branch ensured the development of the plan aligned with broader strategic planning and timelines.

Evaluation of the Previous Plan

Insights and lessons learned from the Community Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 directly influenced the structure and focus of this plan, with particular emphasis on strengthening partnerships and measurable outcomes.

A review was undertaken on the overall effectiveness of the plan strategies and actions to inform future planning and decision-making. The following was identified as part of the evaluation process.

Key evaluation findings:

- 1. Development, Design, and Delivery:** Clear design and involving a variety of stakeholders ensured that the Plan responded effectively to local needs. The broad scope, covering multiple health domains, and the involvement of the Steering Committee, ensured a well-rounded and place-based response, particularly during crises such as the pandemic and floods. While linking it to the broader Council Plan had some benefits, feedback showed that keeping the plan as a standalone document allows for stronger focus on health and wellbeing.
- 2. Implementation, Effectiveness, and Impact:** Strong local partnerships played a crucial role in achieving outcomes, especially in reaching vulnerable groups. Staff and funding changes within organisations sometimes disrupted progress. Integrating some Council strategies,

the newly formed Community Wellbeing Team at Council, and the Gender Equality Act 2020 strengthened the focus on social determinants of health.

3. Monitoring, Data Collection, and

Management: Data collection is essential for tracking progress and demonstrating impact. For the first time in 2024, the Steering Committee received a comprehensive annual action plan report that tracked progress and included project narratives. This was well-received as it provided a broader perspective on the plan's impact.

- 4. Working Together:** The Steering Committee provided strong collaboration and strategic leadership with meetings proven effective in maintaining relationships and gathering insights. Governance structures, including Terms of Reference and data-sharing agreements, were in place and regularly reviewed.

Key Areas for Improvement:

Steering Committee Structure: Strengthening link between senior leaders and front-line staff could improve accountability and momentum across all levels. Invite senior leaders to committee meetings.

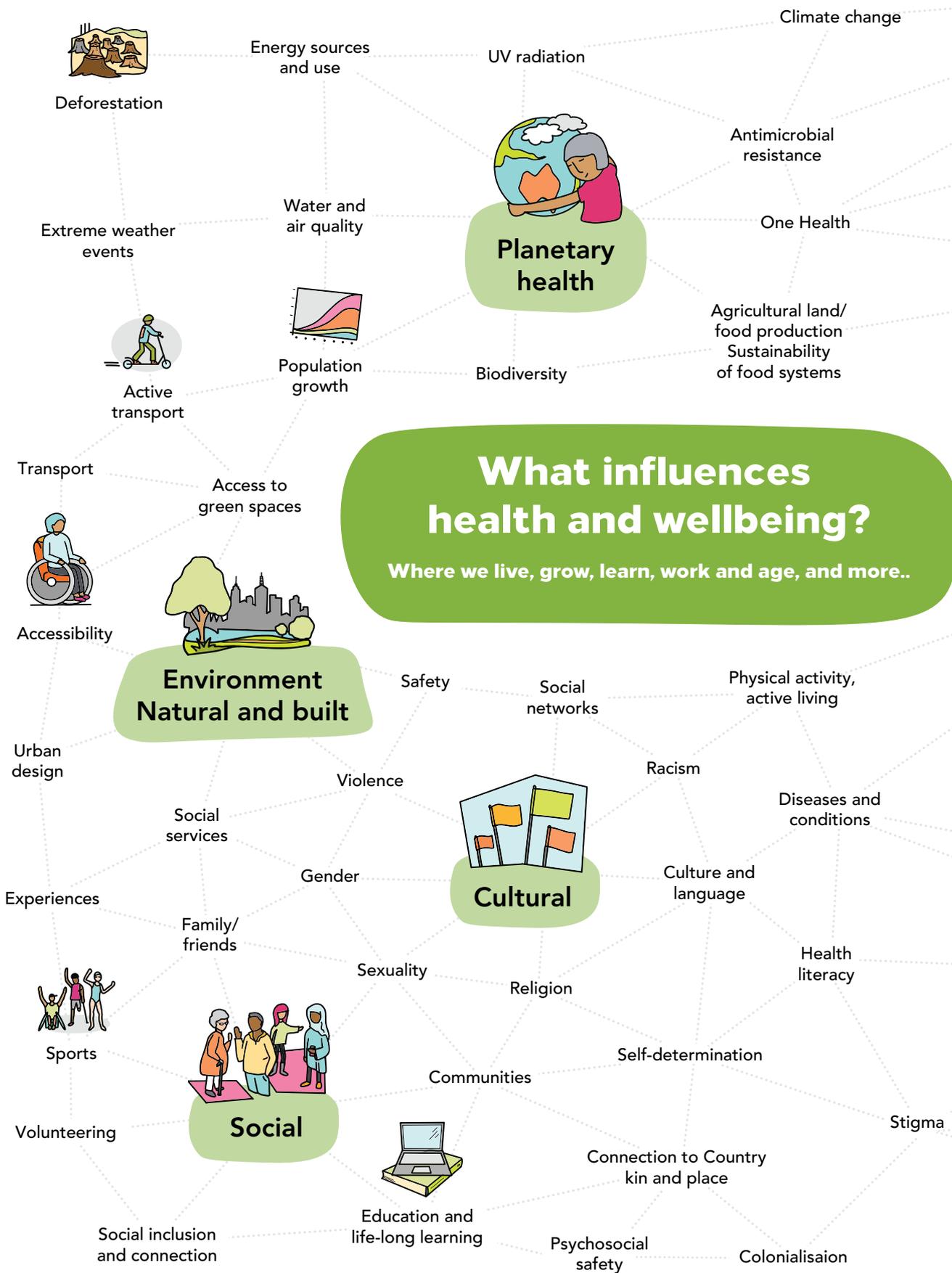
Integration across Council: Improved collaboration across Council departments and better visibility of the plan will be key to future success. Effective communication and stakeholder mapping will strengthen shared goals.

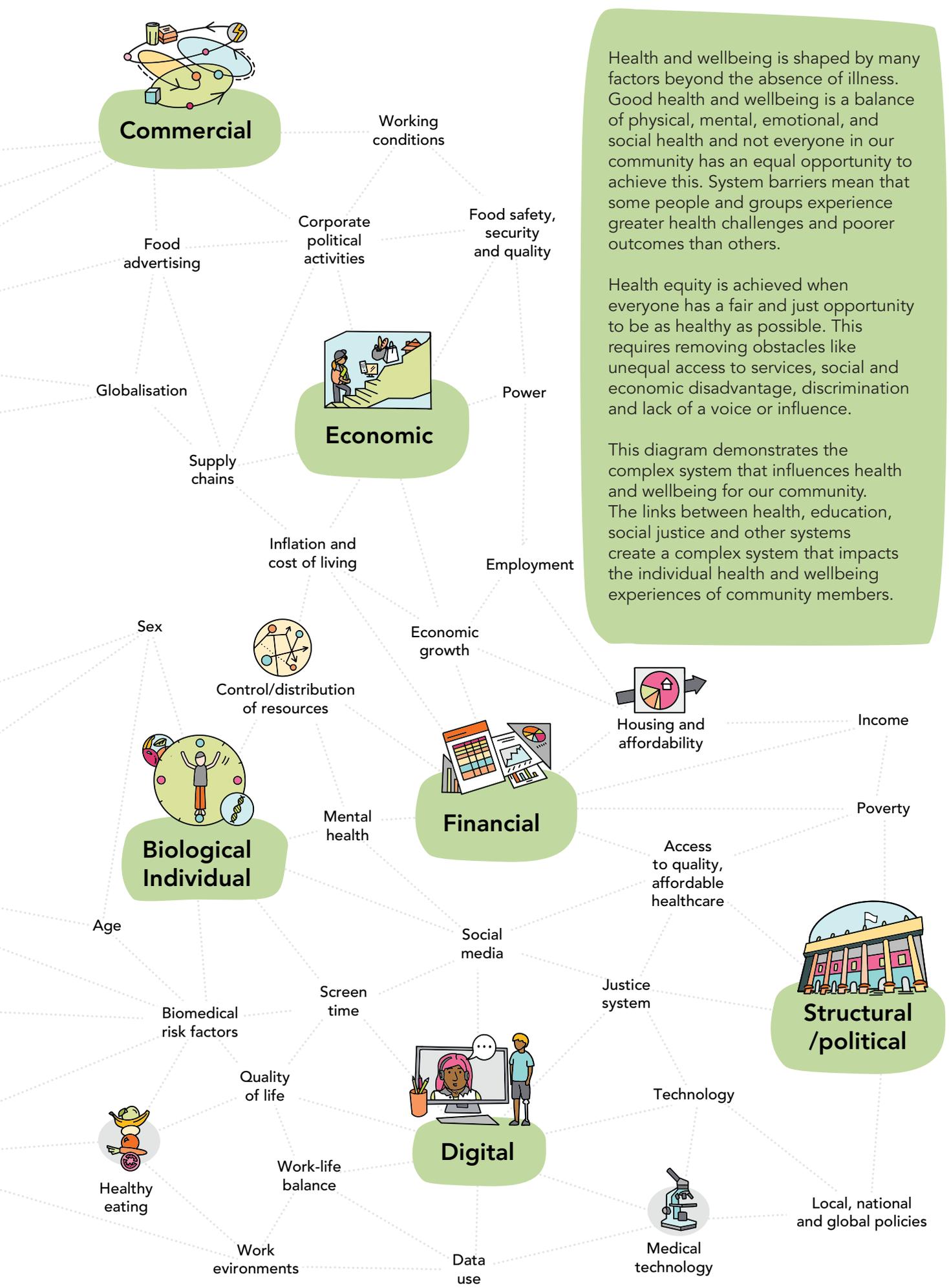
Gender Impact Assessments: Undertaking a gender impact assessment on both planning and actions, will help ensure fair access and reduce discrimination.

Clear Measurement Tools: Define how success will be measured for each action from the start, so everyone is clear on expectations and outcomes. Better Data: Collect local data and analyse disaggregated data for more accurate and evidence-based decision-making.

Diverse representation: Actively involve diverse representation—such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, multicultural communities, people with disabilities, people of all ages, and LGBTQIA+ communities—to ensure the plan meets everyone's needs.

Factors that influence health and wellbeing





Health and wellbeing is shaped by many factors beyond the absence of illness. Good health and wellbeing is a balance of physical, mental, emotional, and social health and not everyone in our community has an equal opportunity to achieve this. System barriers mean that some people and groups experience greater health challenges and poorer outcomes than others.

Health equity is achieved when everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles like unequal access to services, social and economic disadvantage, discrimination and lack of a voice or influence.

This diagram demonstrates the complex system that influences health and wellbeing for our community. The links between health, education, social justice and other systems create a complex system that impacts the individual health and wellbeing experiences of community members.

The Role of Local Government in Health and Wellbeing

Council plays important roles in influencing many of the systems and factors represented in the previous diagram that enable people to live healthy, connected and purposeful lives. These roles can be described in the following ways:



Provider

Council provides services and infrastructure including waste collection, open spaces, local road and footpath networks, stormwater drainage, maternal and child health, libraries and many other community services and programs.



Regulator

Council is responsible for regulating a range of activities throughout the municipality. Ensuring that local laws and government legislation and the administration of it is done in a way that is supporting the Community Vision.



Partner

Council has many partners across the community including service providers, agencies, businesses and community groups who we collaborate with to deliver services, infrastructure and events.



Facilitator

Council has a role in bringing groups of people and organisations together to support collaboration and new partnerships to create new opportunities and solve problems for the community.



Advocate

Council advocates on behalf of the community to other levels of government and various other decision-makers to deliver the best possible outcomes for the Mildura Rural City Council community.

As the level of government closest to the community, Council is uniquely positioned to facilitate long-term, equitable health outcomes for all through service delivery, planning, partnerships.

Some of the ways Council can protect, improve and promote public health and wellbeing are:

- Reducing social isolation through community events, programs, and facilities like libraries and community buildings that bring people together and help build social networks.
- Facilitating inclusion and belonging by promoting equity, cultural safety, gender equality, and respect for diversity in policies and practices.
- Designing walkable communities, accessible green spaces, and safe active transport infrastructure to support physical activity and social connection.
- Advocating for key issues such as mental health funding, alcohol regulation, climate action, public housing and improving water management.

- Delivering inclusive early years, maternal and child health services, immunisation, youth engagement, healthy ageing and family services to protect and promote health.
- Leading local climate change mitigation and adaptation initiatives and supporting communities to prepare for extreme climate events such as heatwaves and floods.
- Safeguard public health by managing and mitigating environmental hazards and promoting healthy living conditions through regulation and education provided by Environmental Health. Including in areas of food safety, infection prevention and control, onsite wastewater management, public health nuisances, tobacco control, accommodation standards and mosquito surveillance and control.



Enablers For Improving Health Equity

We are committed to working in partnership with organisations and community members to create stronger and more sustainable outcomes. Throughout the development of this Plan, feedback from community and stakeholders consistently identified key enablers that should guide how we work together and build our capacity to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for all. The following enablers will guide our partnership work and will be incorporated into the Measurement, Evaluation and Learning Plan:



Self-determination for First Nations communities: Actions that impact First Nations people must be grounded in self-determination and cultural safety. In addition, commitments are needed to drive change via the Reconciliation Action Plan and recommended commitments to Closing the Gap.



Community-led and co-designed approach: Actions must be co-designed with those most impacted — including young people, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, First Nations people, and people with lived experience — to ensure solutions are effective and elevate equity.



Elevating lived experience: Community members should be actively involved in planning, delivery and evaluation of actions. Lived experience is essential for understanding existing barriers and more effective solutions.



Applying an intersectional equity lens: Actions should recognise and respond to the diverse needs and barriers faced by people across gender, culture, race, ability, age, socioeconomic status and other intersecting identities.



Evidence-informed and strategically aligned: Actions should be guided by data, research, and alignment with local, regional, and state health and wellbeing priorities.



Focus on systems change: Actions should aim for long-term, sustainable improvements by addressing root causes and changing the systems that influence health and wellbeing.



Storytelling and education for change: Storytelling, community voices, and shared knowledge should be used to create understanding, advocate for change, and shift social norms.



Collaborative partnerships: Working together across sectors, organisations, and communities is essential for collective impact.



A whole-of-life approach: Health equity requires actions to consider all life stages and key life transitions where relevant to ensure support is provided where it is needed to each person.



Shared measurement and accountability: Evaluation, data transparency, and shared indicators of success are essential for tracking progress and continuous improvement.



Council's leadership role: As the level of government closest to community, Council plays a key role in facilitating partnerships and local action and advocating for equity across all life stages.



Domains, Priorities and Actions

This Plan outlines the health and wellbeing priorities of Council, our partner organisations and the State Government as expressed through the Council Plan, the strategic plans of our partners, and the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan respectively.

The actions included in this Plan are aligned with the following Victorian Department of Health’s five domains of health and twelve priority outcomes from the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Framework (2016).

DOMAIN 1	DOMAIN 2	DOMAIN 3	DOMAIN 4	DOMAIN 5
Healthy and Well	Safe and Secure	Capability to Participate	Connected to Culture and Community	Our Community is Livable
<p>Our community members have good physical health</p> <p>Our community members have good mental health</p> <p>Our community acts to protect and promote health</p>	<p>Our community members live free from abuse and violence</p> <p>Our community members have suitable and stable housing</p>	<p>Our community members participate in learning and education</p> <p>Participate in and contribute to the economy *</p> <p>Our community members are financially secure</p>	<p>Our community members are socially engaged and live in inclusive communities</p> <p>Our community members safely identify and connect with their culture and identity</p>	<p>Our community members belong to resilient and liveable communities</p> <p>Our community members have access to sustainable built and natural environments</p>

*No actions currently included for this strategy.

Domain 1 - Our Community Members are Healthy and Well

This domain aims to enhance physical health and foster a socially connected community in the Mildura region. Everyone should be able to act to protect and promote their health including good physical health, reduction of chronic disease, premature death, unintentional injury and mental health.

Key priorities include:

- **Physical Health:** Addressing high rates of chronic disease, preventable hospitalisations and health risk factors. Locally only 48.3% of adults meet physical activity guidelines, and 61.2% are overweight or obese (Victorian Population Health Survey, 2023). Smoking (including E-Cigarettes), alcohol-related harm are significant concerns with 24.1% of people smoking and 16.8% at increased risk of harm from alcohol related disease or injury (Victorian Population Health Survey, 2023).
- **Mental Health:** Creating opportunities for connection, access to mental health services, and building inclusive and supported communities. One in five residents experience high psychological distress and experience loneliness in our region. These rates are higher for youth, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities and economically disadvantaged community members (Victorian public health and wellbeing progress report, 2023).
- **Safe public spaces and recreation:** Environments that support healthy choices are vital to support active lifestyles. Built environments need to be accessible and inclusive. Affordable recreation and culturally safe services support healthy living and ensure everyone feels a sense of belonging; regardless of age, gender, cultural background or disability and especially for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, newly arrived migrants, people with disabilities, and those facing financial or social challenges.
- **Targeted Health Programs:** Implementing targeted health prevention and promotion programs such as reducing harmful behaviour, increasing proactive behaviour and prevention programs to ensure we have good health to fully participate in life. Systems for effectively treating illness and injury are less burdened if preventative measures are taken before illness or injury occurs.
- **Food Systems:** Promoting and providing equitable access to affordable, nutritious and culturally appropriate food; and sustainable and resilient food systems. Ten percent of people in our local government area experienced severe food insecurity by running out of food and not being able to buy more. A further twelve percent were definitely worried about food insecurity and running out of money to buy more (Victorian Population Health Survey, 2023).



What Council will keep doing:

Council will implement these strategies and projects identified in the Council Plan 2025 to 2029: These efforts aim to improve health outcomes and foster a connected, inclusive community in the Mildura Local Government Area.

- Establish the Social Inclusion Action Group
- Develop and implement an Arts & Culture Strategy to drive community and economic outcomes
- Implement the Recreation Strategy
- Review the Tracks and Trails Strategy
- Implement the Public Open Space Strategy
- Advocate for the upgrade of the Underbool Pool
- Deliver the Mildura Riverfront Adventure Playground
- Deliver the Sunraysia Hockey Pitch upgrade
- Review the Aquatic Facilities Redevelopment Strategy
- Deliver the Kenny Park Off Leash Dog Park
- Develop and implement the Domestic Animal Management Plan
- Implement the Road Safety Strategy
- Maintain the sealed and unsealed road network across the municipality in accordance with the Road Management Plan
- Implement the Victorian Local Government Partnership with VicHealth

Our Partnership Actions

WHAT	The major actions and initiatives to be achieved	WHO The organisation/s responsible
Outcome: Our community acts to protect and promote health		
1.1	Support and promote the use of arts-based initiatives to enhance community health, wellbeing, inclusion, and connection.	Arts Mildura
1.2	Increase immunisation rates by delivering responsive, targeted vaccination outreach programs for priority populations.	Mildura Rural City Council
1.3	Co-design and pilot a Proactive Heart Health Check Model for Rural Populations to improve access to cardiovascular screening for community members facing barriers to traditional health services.	La Trobe University
1.4	Promote and facilitate access to regular heart health checks for all adults by partnering with heart health check providers at local community events.	Katrina Umback
1.5	Promote and facilitate access to heart health checks for all Mildura Rural City Council employees in the workplace by partnering with heart health check providers.	Mildura Rural City Council
1.6	Support and promote the Connecting the Docs partnership to strengthen recruitment, retention, and integration of medical professionals in the region, ensuring doctors are supported to live, work, and stay in our communities.	Mildura Base Public Hospital
1.7	Partner with Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) to deliver the Aboriginal Health Practitioner Course to staff at the Aboriginal Health Unit in Mildura, supporting enrolment and completion over a three-year period to enhance cultural and clinical support.	Mildura Base Public Hospital
1.8	Partner with community and services to support local programs that make healthy, sustainable food more available—especially for children and priority groups. Build skills, share knowledge and strengthen local networks to improve food access and security.	Sunraysia Community Health Services Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit
1.9	Partner with key stakeholders to support policies, programs and environments that promote physical activity. Focus on priority groups, build local capacity, and use networks to create active, healthy communities.	Sunraysia Community Health Services
1.10	Establish and embed a Family Leadership Group to guide the direction of The Family & Child Hub.	Family and Child Hub - Sunraysia Community Health Services & Hands Up Mallee

1.11	Promote and grow integrated, wraparound support for families and children through service delivery at The Family & Child Hub, with a focus on early intervention, cultural safety and improved access to services.	Family and Child Hub - Sunraysia Community Health Services
1.12	Facilitate equitable access to healthcare for children in care by building capacity of the service sector and carers.	Family and Child Hub - Sunraysia Community Health Services
1.13	Lead and support collaborative systems change through the Better Health Systems for Children in the Mallee to improve health outcomes for children aged 0–17 in care and those at risk of entering care, through place-based projects and integrated governance.	Department of Families Fairness and Housing
1.14	Conduct a comprehensive review of the Mosquito Surveillance and Control Plan to assess effectiveness, incorporate updated public health data, and improve community protection strategies against mosquito-borne diseases.	Mildura Rural City Council
1.15	Investigate re-establishing a cross-sector Hoarding and Squalor Working Group, with a renewed focus on holistic, compassionate approaches that address social and mental health needs in addition to legislative compliance.	Mildura Rural City Council
1.16	Advocate and deliver projects that engage community members to create inclusive and accessible public space that promotes physical activity and social connection.	Mildura Rural City Council
1.17	Develop and support initiatives at Mildura Sporting Precinct that encourage community use, improve amenity (including access to cool, UV protective shade), and foster vibrant, safe, and active public spaces.	Mildura Rural City Council
1.18	Use the Food Environment Policy Index (Food-EPI+) Tool to assess local food system settings and prepare an action plan to address opportunities for improvement.	Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit & Mildura Rural City Council
1.19	Maintain a sustainable and equitable community food relief system to ensure all community members have reliable access to food.	Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council
1.20	Support successful settlement, social and economic participation and integration of multicultural communities into the region	Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council
1.21	Deliver inclusive sport and active recreation programs, and build the capacity of local clubs to increase participation among people with disabilities and other underrepresented groups	Mallee Sports Assembly
1.22	Expand inclusive sport and active recreation initiatives through partnerships with local clubs, schools, and community organisations to ensure equitable access for all.	Mildura Rural City Council

1.23	Undertake a settings-based approach with the Cancer Council's Achievement Program to support physical, social and emotional wellbeing of students across the region.	Sunraysia Community Health Services
1.24	Increase access to inclusive, community-based programs in rural areas that support social connection, physical activity, and wellbeing.	Mallee Track Health and Community Service
1.25	Collaborate with the Loddon Mallee Health Network while upholding the values and priorities of the Northern Mallee Partnership, ensuring strong cross-border and regional partnerships.	Mildura Base Public Hospital
1.26	Undertake a community needs assessment and consultation to inform the development and implementation of The Mildura Sexual Wellness Action Plan.	Centre for Excellence in Rural Sexual Health
1.27	Facilitate the Northern Mallee Cancer Advisory Group to support system integration and cancer service improvement with regards to prevention, promotion and focus on ensuring equitable access to care that is closer to home.	Loddon Mallee Integrated Cancer Service
Outcome: Our community members have good mental health		
1.28	Deliver community capacity-building initiatives through collaborative partnerships that improve mental health literacy, reduce stigma, and strengthen the ability of local groups and leaders to respond to mental health challenges in culturally safe and inclusive ways.	Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit
1.29	Support ongoing community health and wellbeing events and initiatives that provide accessible education and engagement opportunities focused on early intervention, resilience, and proactive physical and mental health promotion.	Mildura Rural City Council
1.30	Collaborate with local health services and lived experience advocates to develop and implement a Regional Model of Care and Action Plan for Mental Health that strengthens local pathways, integrates support services, and reflects community needs.	Murray Primary Health Network
1.31	Develop and implement suicide prevention and postvention strategies, working collaboratively with health services, community organisations, and people with lived experience.	Murray Primary Health Network

Outcome: Our community members have good physical health		
1.32	Partner with key stakeholders to develop and promote smoke-free and vape-free policies and environments. Focus on life stages, and where appropriate, adopt a settings-based approach to deliver coordinated support and awareness campaigns, and link with broader health priorities to reduce tobacco and vaping harm.	Sunraysia Community Health Services
1.33	Explore the option to create Council's Tobacco and Smoke-Free Areas Policy and associated processes to strengthen enforcement, expand smoke-free zones, and reflect best practice in protecting community health.	Mildura Rural City Council
1.34	Implement updated tobacco licensing and regulatory changes in alignment with state reforms.	Mildura Rural City Council
1.35	Prioritise improving access to screening and treatment for sexually transmitted infections and blood-borne virus, and support better sexual and reproductive health outcomes including increased availability of contraception including condoms.	Sunraysia Community Health Services
1.36	Focus on education as a prevention strategy for reducing the incidence of sexually transmitted infections and blood-borne virus through settings based and community awareness in sexual wellness.	Sunraysia Community Health Services
1.37	Advocate to secure sponsorship and operational delivery of a mobile screening truck to provide accessible health checks, including heart health and skin cancer screening, across the region.	Mildura Base Public Hospital
1.38	Support delivery of the RISE4Skincancer project as it relates to the Mallee region via a regional consortium to design, implement and evaluate system level reform strategies for improved integration of services for the detection and treatment of skin cancers	Loddon Mallee Integrated Cancer Service
1.39	Promote and grow community uptake of the GoodSAM smartphone app to increase local capacity to respond to cardiac arrests and other emergencies by alerting registered trusted responders in proximity following a Triple Zero (000) call.	Ambulance Victoria
1.40	Audit, map, and promote publicly accessible automated external defibrillator (AED) locations across the region, ensuring visibility and community awareness.	Ambulance Victoria
1.41	Assist local schools to deliver the Heart Foundation's Jump Rope for Heart program.	Katrina Umback
1.42	Support the establishment of a local drug and alcohol residential rehabilitation facility in the region by ensuring timely delivery, contributing to service design through community input, and fostering partnerships to ensure culturally safe, accessible, and recovery-focused care.	Sunraysia Community Health Services



Domain 2 – Our Community

Members are Safe and Secure

A safe and secure community is vital for everyone’s health and wellbeing in our Mildura municipality. This involves ensuring protection, support, and access to essential resources. Feeling safe has a strong influence on our wellbeing and feeling unsafe can cause stress and contribute to poor mental wellbeing. Everyone should feel safe and supported in the communities where we live, learn, work and play.

Key priorities include:

- Gender equality and preventing gender and family violence: especially addressing the disproportionate impact on women and children. Experiencing violence can directly impact more than physical wellbeing it also effects perceptions of safety and contributes to mental illness, post-traumatic stress, cardiovascular disease and premature mortality.
- Safe, stable, and affordable housing: addressing the challenges of homelessness and housing affordability. Mildura has been identified as one of the top twenty areas with surging homelessness, from 2016 to 2021 the number of people living in severely crowded dwellings increased by 195% and the number of people sleeping rough increased by over 50% (chp.org.au Analysis Report – Victoria’s Top 20: Areas with surging Homelessness).
- Financial insecurity: can lead to an inability to pay for food, housing, energy and health care and participate in the community. There is also a link between participation, employment and fundamental health and wellbeing outcomes including equal opportunity and spaces that are inclusive of all ages, abilities, genders and cultural back grounds.

What Council will keep doing:

Council will implement these strategies and projects identified in the Council Plan 2025 to 2029:

- Undertake Gender Impact Assessments on community infrastructure projects
- Develop and implement a new Gender Equality Action Plan
- Retain White Ribbon Workplace accreditation
- Advocate for the expansion of the public CCTV network
- Gender and Equity Inclusion in Sport Program

Our Partnership Actions

WHAT The major actions and initiatives to be achieved	WHO The organisation/s responsible
Outcome: Our community members have suitable and stable housing	
2.1	Develop and implement the Social and Affordable Housing Taskforce Annual Action Plan.
Mallee Accommodation & Support Program	
2.2	Advocate for resourcing to provide outreach and support for people sleeping rough.
Mallee Accommodation & Support Program	
2.3	Advocate for the rights and needs of renters to ensure secure, affordable, and appropriate housing options within the community.
Mallee Family Care	
2.4	Investigate the development and implementation of a strategy for short stay budget accommodation including for seasonal work force.
Mildura Rural City Council	
Outcome: Our community members live free from abuse and violence	
2.5	Bring local stakeholders and networks together to define shared goals and collective action to promote gender equality and prevent family and gender-based violence in our community.
Mildura Rural City Council	
2.6	Actively seek out and connect with organisations, clubs and community groups in the Mildura Local Government Area to provide opportunities to build workforce capacity and support them to contribute to the primary prevention of violence against women
Women's Health Loddon Mallee	



Domain 3 - Our Community Members Have the Capabilities to Participate

Participating in community life is crucial for health, wellbeing and belonging in the Mildura municipality. We need to ensure people's needs are met, including access to optimised health and wellbeing outcomes across the entire lifespan. People of all ages and abilities need equitable opportunities to engage and connect socially, environmentally and intergenerationally.

Key priorities include:

- **Children and Families:** Meeting the needs of children and families changes along the life course, beginning with antenatal care, infancy, early childhood, middle years, adolescence and young adults. The wellbeing of infants and children is influenced by their family and community context. Focus needs to be on strengthening families and creating a community in which children and their families can thrive.
- **Youth:** Opportunities to build confidence, leadership, and resilience for our youth are vital. Young people experience rapid growth, learning and transitions that can be physically and emotionally challenging. This can include coping with stress, body image, social connection, respectful relationships, disengagement with school, under-employment, alcohol and other drugs, young parenting and cyber safety. Positive influence in this life stage can support growth, learning about risky behaviours and set up good patterns for physical and mental health throughout life.
- **Ageing Population:** As the population gets older, planning for healthy aging is a growing public health and wellbeing challenge. As well as developing and maintaining functional ability with older age, efforts to foster positive community attitudes to aging, age-based discrimination and marginalisation are essential aspects of healthy aging. Participation in the community also reduces isolation and improves wellbeing, making advocating for age-friendly programs, clubs and partnerships to increase opportunities for residents as they age vital.
- **Disability:** Advancing inclusivity and supporting people with disabilities in our community creates a more inclusive and accessible society for all. Every individual, regardless of ability, has the fundamental right to live safely, access resources and opportunities equally, and shape their own future. Respecting that each individual experience is unique and understanding that people with disability are more likely to experience poorer physical or mental health from effects on their daily lives including physical barriers, lack of transport, increased sexual, physical or intimate partner violence, emotional abuse, sexual harassment or being the target of discrimination and other crimes is critical.



What Council will keep doing:

Council will implement these strategies and projects identified in the Council Plan 2025 to 2029:

- Review, develop and implement the Municipal Early Years Plan
- Review and continue implementation of the Early Years Infrastructure Plan
- Deliver the Nichols Point Early Years Hub
- Continue the Best Start Partnership to improve outcomes for children and families through collaborative early years planning.
- Continue to strengthen outreach to culturally and linguistically diverse families to support their engagement with early years services.
- Implement the Youth Engagement Strategy
- Develop and implement a Middle Years Strategy to support and engage with our young people aged 9 to 12
- Review and implement the new Healthy Ageing Action Plan
- Review and implement the new Disability Action Plan
- Develop and implement a new Library Strategy
- Implement the Economic Development and Tourism Framework
- Develop and implement a Tourism Strategy
- Develop and implement an Economic Development Strategy
- Develop a Workforce Accommodation Framework
- Advocate for a regional workforce plan that considers education, training and skills
- Review and maintain the Workforce Plan to meet the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020
- Support the activation of the Mildura Central Business District through the implementation of the CBD Strategy
- Advocate to state and federal governments for more equitable local government funding and support.

Our Partnership Actions

WHAT The major actions and initiatives to be achieved	WHO The organisation/s responsible
Outcome: Our community members are financially secure	
3.1 Collaborate with partners to raise awareness of gambling-related harms and build community capacity through public campaigns, particularly during Gambling Harm Awareness Week.	Anglicare Victoria
Outcome: Our community members participate in learning and education	
3.2 Provide equitable access to education and lifelong learning opportunities for all community members, regardless of background or circumstance.	Mildura Neighbourhood House
3.3 Provide opportunities to participate in adult education and learning programs, particularly English and employability skills development	Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council
3.4 Explore opportunities for young people to connect with leaders and role models within the community.	Mildura Rural City Council
3.5 Continue to provide social connection and education through facilitation of Playgroup, Youth Group and social connection programs	Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council
3.6 Removing barriers and increasing opportunities for people with disability to engage in sport and recreational activities by delivering a pilot wheelchair basketball program, including evaluation and community feedback, to inform the development of an ongoing inclusive sports initiative	Intereach
3.7 Deliver wellbeing programs in partnership with local health care professionals for young mothers to make informed decisions about health and wellbeing for themselves and their children.	Zoe Support Australia



Domain 4 – Our Community

Members are Connected to Culture and Community

A strong sense of cultural identity and community connection is crucial for health and wellbeing in our communities. Feeling that the things we do are worthwhile and being satisfied with life assist to promote health behaviours and reduce social isolation and loneliness.

Key priorities include:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: We are committed to working alongside First Nations peoples in genuine partnership – honouring their leadership, knowledge and aspirations. Our work needs to align with the national Closing the Gap priorities and is grounded in the principle of self-determination. We work in respectful collaboration with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, Elders, Traditional Custodians and local Aboriginal community members, recognising that real and lasting change begins with listening, trust and shared power.
- Discrimination: Upholding a zero-tolerance stance against all forms of discrimination and exclusion raises awareness, promotes respect and addresses barriers to ensuring a more inclusive community. Racism impacts stress, emotional wellbeing and can cause adverse cognitive and emotional responses. Racism can also result in physical injury from racially motivated violence. Indirectly, when racism reduces access to employment, education and housing resulting reduction in socio-economic status it can cause decline in mental and physical health as well as participation in healthy behaviours such as sleep and exercise or unhealthy behaviours such as substance abuse.
- LGBTQIA+ community: We all need to play our part in making sure we celebrate and embrace diversity and human rights. LGBTQIA+ people encounter disproportionately higher rates of exclusion, discrimination, and harassment across various social environments, including in the workplace. LGBTQIA+ Victorians face increased levels of violence, harassment, and discrimination. By championing and celebrating LGBTQIA+ inclusion, listening and working alongside and co-designing responses we can improve well-being and better serve the needs of LGBTQIA+ people.
- Volunteering: An opportunity that has a powerful impact when it is accessible and visible to all with benefits to the individual, volunteering involving organisations and the broader community. All aspects of volunteering need to be recognised including volunteer leaders, formal and informal volunteering. Volunteering provides many benefits including building skills, confidence, and strengthening social and community connection. An increased focus on the impact of volunteering will assist the community to understand the value and raise the profile of volunteering.



What Council will keep doing:

Council will implement these strategies and projects identified in the Council Plan 2025 to 2029:

- Develop and implement a Volunteering Action Plan
- Develop and implement a new Reconciliation Action Plan
- Develop and implement an Anti-Racism Strategy
- Develop and implement a Rainbow Ready Action Plan
- Partner with town advisory groups to support the review and development of new community plans
- Engage with the community to support delivery of projects within their community plans
- Complete the Mildura Arts Centre Master Plan review
- Seek opportunities to deliver the Mildura Arts Centre Masterplan
- Develop and implement a Social Media Strategy
- Develop and implement a new Community Engagement Strategy
- Provide opportunities for community engagement throughout the municipality in accordance with the Community Engagement Strategy

Our Partnership Actions

WHAT The major actions and initiatives to be achieved	WHO The organisation/s responsible	
Outcome: Our community members are socially engaged and live in inclusive communities		
4.1	Support co-design approaches which centre children, young people and families in the design and decision making around public assets related to community health and wellbeing.	Hands up Mallee
4.2	Promote inclusion, increased acceptance and create opportunities for full participation within the community.	Christie Centre
4.3	Advocate for and create opportunities to showcase and celebrate the diversity of cultures in our community	Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council
4.4	Support the creation of dementia-friendly places and spaces to foster inclusion, safety, and accessibility for people living with dementia and their carers.	Mildura Rural City Council
4.5	Remain informed and responsive to the evolving Aged Care reforms and support community and the Aged Care Sector during the transition.	Mildura Rural City Council
4.6	Deliver Mildura Arts Centre programs and initiatives that foster participation, understanding of and celebrate our diverse, inclusive communities.	Mildura Rural City Council
4.7	Support grass roots community events through Council's events and community funding and review policies and programs to ensure equitable access and opportunities.	Mildura Rural City Council
4.8	Strengthen partnerships with settlement support organisations and build relationships with key multicultural leaders to enhance engagement with culturally diverse communities	Mildura Rural City Council
4.9	Undertake projects to address inequity and enhance social connectedness, wellbeing and safety in identified neighbourhoods.	Mildura Rural City Council
4.10	Develop and deliver the annual Mildura Aquatic Facilities Outcomes Framework to determine the social and community impact of Mildura's aquatic facilities.	Mildura Rural City Council

Outcome: Our community members safely identify and connect with their culture and identity

4.11	Support the ongoing coordination and resourcing of the Cultural Significant Events Committee to ensure culturally safe and inclusive planning of key events for and with the Aboriginal community.	Mildura Rural City Council
4.12	Create and support ongoing coordination of a Reconciliation Action Plan Community of Practice to strengthen relationships, knowledge sharing, and reconciliation outcomes across sectors.	Mildura Rural City Council





Domain 5 – Our Community is Liveable

Good health and wellbeing mean people have access to clean air, green spaces, sustainable infrastructure, and resilient communities. Facing both direct and indirect effects of climate change can affect both ongoing wellbeing and contribute to immediate threats to physical safety such as extreme heat, bush fire, drought and adverse weather events, rising temperatures and water scarcity. Council is committed to strong environmental leadership and climate action and sustaining our natural resources for current and future generations.

Key priorities include:

- Sustainability and climate action: Embedding sustainability in planning and operations, such as increasing tree canopy for cooler and greener spaces, promoting sustainable transport, supporting community gardens and investing in waste reduction and take action to protect biodiversity. Healthier natural systems, and using our resources sustainably ensures our natural environment is flourishing to support our community's health and wellbeing.
- Affordable and clean energy electrification: Transitioning away from fossil fuels to improve energy efficiency and support renewable energy. This assists to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.
- Community Engagement: Meaningful participation in climate and health action supports decision making and action that is relevant to our community. Partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, environmental groups, schools and organisations to drive innovation and shared action, and delivering education campaigns to empower sustainable choices. These efforts aim to create a community that is vibrant and liveable, where communities thrive in harmony with the environment.

What Council will keep doing:

Council will implement these strategies and projects identified in the Council Plan 2025 to 2029:

- Implement the Mildura Waste & Resource Recovery Strategy
- Develop and implement a program to educate the community about recycling for kerbside bins
- Implement the Urban Forest Strategy
- Implement a system to improve management of urban street trees
- Deliver the 'Cool It' Street Tree Program to increase tree canopy cover in residential areas
- Purchase additional water share to increase water security
- Implement the Towards Zero Emissions Strategy
- Expand Solar PV across Council sites
- Complete the electrification of key Council-owned buildings
- Implement the Native Vegetation and Pest Management Plan
- Support the community to implement the Community Climate Response Plan 2024-2029
- Continue to activate and promote the Mildura Eco Village for community environmental sustainability activities
- Implement the Environmental Engagement Action Plan
- Review the Municipal Emergency Management Plan
- Develop and implement the Stormwater Drainage Strategy
- Implement the Integrated Transport and Land Use Strategy
- Review the Mildura Planning Scheme and implement recommended actions
- Implement the Mildura East Growth Area Framework Plan
- Develop township structure plans in accordance with the Planning Scheme
- Determine the future of Development Contribution Plans beyond 2030
- Deliver the Murrayville Multi-Purpose Centre upgrade
- Review and implement the Public Toilet Strategy
- Review and implement the Litter & Illegal Dumping Strategy
- Implement the Mildura RV, Caravan & Camping Strategy
- Implement the Mildura Rural City Council Advocacy Framework
- Foster partnerships with key organisations and agencies to progress community outcomes
- Review and implement the Mildura Riverfront Precinct Activation Plan to increase visitation
- Advocate for improved public transport access and frequency, particularly for communities experiencing transport disadvantage

Our Partnership Actions

WHAT The major actions and initiatives to be achieved	WHO The organisation/s responsible
Outcome: Our community has access to sustainable built and natural environments	
5.1 Identify opportunities for cool, UV protective and sustainable green spaces in new development areas in line with the public open space strategy	Mildura Rural City Council
Outcome: Our community is resilient and liveable	
5.2 Facilitate information sharing and learning to support the establishment, growth, and sustainability of community gardens to foster social connection, healthy eating, and community self-reliance.	Mildura Neighbourhood House
5.3 Investigate opportunities for nature-based and risky play opportunities that integrate cool, UV protective shade design considerations for safe, continued use in new play space designs.	Mildura Rural City Council
5.4 Develop and implement a formal agreement between MRCC and Victoria Police to support joint regulation, response, and enforcement of residential noise complaints.	Mildura Rural City Council
5.5 Develop and implement the Municipal Onsite Wastewater Management Plan	Mildura Rural City Council
5.6 Deliver community capacity-building initiatives through collaborative partnerships that improve environmental sustainability and strengthen the ability of local groups and leaders to respond to climate change in culturally safe and inclusive ways.	Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit



Community Health and Wellbeing Steering Committee

The Community Health and Wellbeing Steering Committee (The Committee) that has been guiding the implementation of previous plans will continue to inform strategic oversight of the plan is supported by intersectoral, multilevel leadership, governance, knowledge, capacity, and resources for delivery of actions. The Committee promote a partnership approach to the development and evaluation of key initiatives outlined in The Plan and annual action plans.

Membership of The Committee includes Council and action lead partner organisation staff representatives who are accountable for actions in the plan.

Our Steering Group Actions:

WHAT The major actions and initiatives to be achieved	WHO The organisation/s responsible
Outcome: Enhance skills and knowledge for collaboration	
Share resources and tools that build knowledge and capacity for applying health promotion; co-design; equity; intersectionality; gender equity; accessibility and inclusive principles and practice.	Steering Committee
Support capacity building for Community Advisory and Working Groups.	Steering Committee
Ensure actions have the enablers embedded into the design and delivery.	Steering Committee
Promote reflective and continuous improvement practice.	Steering Committee
Outcome: Shared Measurement and Accountability	
Develop and Implement the Measurement Learning and Evaluation Framework that identifies gaps in data collection and procedures to ensure accurate collection and reporting of results.	Steering Committee
Lead collaboration to develop a plan to respond to existing and emerging health and wellbeing issues and trends.	Steering Committee

Monitoring, reporting and evaluation

Measurement, Evaluation and Learning Framework

The strategic health and wellbeing priorities and actions identified in this Plan will be implemented across the next four years. A Measurement Evaluation and Learning Plan (MEL) will be developed with our Steering Committee, to monitor health and wellbeing outcomes, build an evidence base and inform continuous improvement opportunities throughout the life of the plan. The MEL will include qualitative and quantitative measures drawing on publicly available data, surveys and stories of success and learnings.

Annual Action Plan

An Annual Action Plan will be developed with The Committee each year that includes a detailed description of each action, clearly defined and agreed action measures and outcome measures. The Steering Committee will incorporate population level outcomes that can be measured against the Victorian Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Framework.

As identified in the evaluation report of the 2021-2025 Plan, it is critical to collate “local data and access disaggregated data to track progress, refine strategies and analyse community impact to ensure the plan continues to meet community needs. This will ensure that interventions are more accurately evidence based.”

As changes in health across the population can usually only be observed over an extended period, a range of indicators need to be identified to monitor progress over both the medium and long-term. Medium-term indicators are used to measure the success of projects and their implementation. Long-term indicators are used to show progress against the health priorities that the Steering Committee want to improve.

The Steering Committee adopts a partnership approach to the development and evaluation of key initiatives outlined in the Community Health and Wellbeing Plan and Annual Action Plans, including the sharing of information to track achievements and identify emerging health and wellbeing outcomes in the Municipality. The enablers identified during the consultation by local stakeholders which are referred to in detail earlier in the Plan on page 28 will be incorporated into the Measurement, Evaluation and Planning Framework. This aims to ensure they underpin our approach and continue to inform our ways of working.

Sources of Information

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2024) [People with a Disability in Australia](#)

Australian Local Government Association [Closing the gap 2023 Annual Report](#)

Cancer Council Victoria-Local Government Area Snapshot 2025 – Mildura [Local Government - Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans](#)

Council of Australian Governments (National Cabinet) [Closing the Gap Partnership Agreement | Federation 2019-2029](#)

Council on the Aging Victoria and Municipal Association of Victoria (2024) [Building Healthy Aging into Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans – A resource guide.](#)

Council to Homeless Persons (2023) [Victorias Top 20: Areas with Surging Homelessness](#)

Department of Health and Human Services Victoria (2017) [Racism in Victoria and what it means for the health of Victorians](#)

Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit (2024) [Bendigo Health Mildura Data Profile 2024](#)

State Government of Victoria (2016) [Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Framework.](#)

State Government of Victoria Department of Health (2024) [Victorian public health and wellbeing progress report 2023.](#)

State Government of Victoria (2023) [Pride in our future: Victoria's LGBTQIA+ strategy 2022-2032.](#)

State Government of Victoria (2024) [Tackling Climate Change and its impacts on health through municipal public health and wellbeing planning](#)

Victorian Agency for Health Information [Victorian Population Health Survey Results 2023](#)

Volunteering Victoria (2025) [State of Volunteering Report 2025](#)

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the community members who shared their ideas and feedback as part of our formal consultation process to review the 20-year Community Vision and develop this Plan.

We also acknowledge the contributions of Councillors, Council staff and partners involved in this project and their ongoing efforts to implement this Plan over the next four years.

Photography

All images used showcase people and settings from the Mildura Rural City Local Government Area. All photos were captured by local photographers.

Alternative formats

This publication is available online at mildura.vic.gov.au and in large text format. If you would like this publication in an alternative format, please contact us.

Disclaimer

Information contained in this publication was correct at the time of printing. Every effort has been made to ensure its accuracy, however no liability is accepted for any inclusions, advice given or omissions.

Data

The data sets used to inform this plan are all existing and gathered from external sources and a range of data custodians. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy and variables should be clarified via the original data source.

Any figures, data and commentary presented in this plan that are based on data sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), most of which relates to the 2021 and 2016 Census. ABS sourced data has been randomly adjusted by the ABS to avoid the release of confidential data. The ABS states that "No reliance should be placed on small cells. These changes may cause the sum of rows or columns to differ by small amounts from the table totals."

