

CITY OF GREATER BENDIGO

COUNCIL PLAN 2025-2029 *DRAFT*

MIR WIMBUL

Incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

CITY OF GREATER BENDIGO



Acknowledgement of Country

We would like to acknowledge and extend our appreciation for the Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Peoples, the Traditional Owners of the land that the City of Greater Bendigo is on.

We pay our respects to leaders and Elders past, present and future- for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and the hopes of all Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Peoples.

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 that we may walk forward together in harmony and in the spirit of healing.

We show our commitment through redeveloping our Barpangu Reconciliation Plan.

Acknowledgement of First Nations

The City recognises that there are people from many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities living in Greater Bendigo.

We acknowledge and extend our appreciation to all First Nations Peoples who live and reside in Greater Bendigo on Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Country, and we thank them for their contribution to our community.

In an Acknowledgment of Country, we say the name of the First Nations people whose land we are on. This is to respect the First Nations people who were here in the past and are still here today.

CONTENTS

4 Plan on a page

5 About the City of Greater Bendigo

5 Message from the Mayor and CEO

6 Your Council

7 What does the City of Greater Bendigo do?

9 About Greater Bendigo

11 About this Plan

11 What is a Council Plan?

11 How this plan works

12 How was this plan made?

13 What you said:

14 How we make decisions

14 Community guidance

16 Partnership

18 Council Plan and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan

18 Responsible

19 Healthy

20 Thriving

21 Welcoming

22 Monitoring

24 Appendix A – Links to other plans

25 Contact us



For help with access please contact 1300 002 642:

- *Telephone Interpreting Service users phone 13 14 50 then ask for 1300 002 642*
- *Speak and Listen users phone 1300 555 727 then ask for 1300 002 642*
- *TTY users phone 133 677 then ask for 1300 002 642*
- *Internet relay users connect to the NRS then ask for 1300 002 642*

GLOSSARY

Annual Budget	The plan of what money will be spent each year, starting 1 July and ending 30 June.
Assets	Buildings, roads, other infrastructure (like drains), equipment, resources and vehicles owned by Council.
(Greater Bendigo City) Council	Your elected Councillors, nine Councillors in total.
City of Greater Bendigo	The staff who deliver the services of the Council.
First Nations	In Australia, this refers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Plan	The plan that sets out how Council will work in partnership to improve the health and general wellbeing of residents.
Municipality	The area within the boundaries of the Local Government Area of Greater Bendigo, click here for a map. Roughly, in terms of townships, north past Elmore, west to Heathcote, south to Redesdale and west past Marong.
Traditional Owners	The First Nations local family groups that have traditional rights and responsibilities to a place. In Greater Bendigo, our Traditional Owners are the Dja Dja Wurrung people and the Taungurung people. Click here for a map of Victorian Traditional Owners.

PLAN ON A PAGE

Our 2025-2029 Goals and Priorities (shading indicates parts of the Health and Wellbeing Plan)

Responsible

1.1 The City is efficient and sustainable

The City invests wisely to get the best social, environmental and economic value from our services, infrastructure and assets.

Priorities:

- Drive a high performing organisation delivering value for community
- Work towards zero-carbon for City operations
- Working to make our existing infrastructure more resilient

1.2 The City connects and delivers

The City listens and responds to the community, delivering what's needed.

Priorities:

- Make our customer service systems easy for everyone to use
- Listen and share information better using a variety of methods that aim to reach all community members
- Respond openly and quickly to community enquiries

1.3 The City works in partnership

The City works with health and service providers. The City partners with community, including Traditional Owners and First Nations.

Priorities:

- Implement our updated health plan partnership
- Agree and implement our work with key strategic stakeholders and peak bodies
- Keep building our partnerships with community organisations

Healthy

2.1 We care for land, water and air

Our communities care for nature. We enjoy healthy parks, bush, waterways, farmland and residential areas in an integrated environment.

Priorities:

- 'Heal country' together restoring damaged land and water
- Progress the Reimagining Bendigo Creek project for a healthy creek
- Protect our natural reserves and rural areas

2.2 We protect the climate

We reduce our environmental impact. We prepare for more extreme weather and a changing climate.

Priorities:

- Build new paths to connect existing bike and pedestrian paths
- Build on our partnership towards integrated transport options, including active travel and public transport
- Maintain support for local climate action initiatives

2.3 We are safe, happy and healthy

Our people can live safely and have ways to connect, be active, eat well, and stay physically and mentally healthy as we grow and age.

Priorities:

- Be leaders in preventing family violence
- Respond effectively to reduce the impact of extreme weather
- Make it easier to live healthy and active lives across the lifespan

Thriving

3.1 Our economy is strong

Our city respects its heritage. We develop talent and creativity, while seeking and keeping investment. We create an economy that delivers local opportunities.

Priorities:

- Partner with local businesses, creators and makers, big and small, to help them adapt to change and thrive
- Increase action towards a zero-waste economy in Greater Bendigo

3.2 Our city and towns are vibrant and livable

Our city, suburbs and towns keep their identities and come together as Greater Bendigo. We live good lives in an affordable and accessible place.

Priorities:

- Promote vibrant tourism, including our flourishing arts, culture and food scenes
- Maintain our beautiful parks and shared spaces for all
- Help people access local, fresh, healthy and affordable food

3.3 Our housing meets different needs

We strive for housing that is affordable, energy efficient and varied to suit different people.

Priorities:

- Lead the shift to 70% of urban development being in infill areas
- Plan and build key infrastructure through existing partnerships for residential growth
- Increase advocacy to Victorian and Federal Government for more affordable, crisis, and social housing

Welcoming

4.1 Our community celebrates together

Across our community, we have events and activities to bring us together.

Priorities:

- Strengthen our partnerships with community to host open, welcoming and low-cost community events
- Maintain spaces for people to come together, aiming to reduce barriers to participation in our community

4.2 Our community cares

We support each other even when times are tough. Our community is welcoming, accessible, creative, fun, and everyone belongs.

Priorities:

- Develop strategies that are community-focused and help residents new and old belong
- Strengthen our partnerships to make community safer, both in-person and online
- Extend our partnerships to support people experiencing homelessness

4.3 Our children and young people thrive

All children are nurtured to grow, play, and learn. Our young people are empowered to lead.

Priorities:

- Keep partnering to provide health services to young children, including Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management
- Maintain welcoming places for all young people
- Partner to provide local learning, working and leadership opportunities for young people

ABOUT THE CITY OF GREATER BENDIGO

Message from the Mayor and CEO

We are proud to present the 2025-2029 Council Plan, incorporating our Health and Wellbeing Plan. We thank the many hundreds of community members who have given their time to be part of developing this plan.

You have told us that Greater Bendigo is experiencing both the benefits and the challenges of growth and change. We are working hard to advocate for our region to attract more housing and build more facilities that support a community where everyone can belong.

The Council Plan focuses on efficient and sustainable operations that get the basics right. By incorporating our Health and Wellbeing Plan, we are also focused on creating a welcoming community and healthy environment that supports our people to thrive.

To ensure that we put words into action, the specific work that the City will do to deliver this Council Plan is contained in an action plan released annually as part of the Budget. This ensures we have the resources to deliver on our commitments.

On behalf of Council and the City of Greater Bendigo, we look forward to implementing this Council Plan and working towards a safe and happy future.

Cr Andrea Metcalf, Mayor
Andrew Cooney , Chief Executive Officer





Front (L-R): Cr John McIlrath, Cr Karen Corr, Cr Aaron Spong, Cr Damien Hurrell.
Back (L-R): Cr Andrea Metcalf, Cr Abhishek Awasthi, Cr Shivali Chatley, Cr Owen Cosgriff, Cr Thomas Prince.

Your Council

Find your Councillor or check your ward at: www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/about-us/council/our-councillors

Contact your Councillor



Cr Andrea Metcalf
Epsom Ward
a.metcalf@bendigo.vic.gov.au



Cr Abhishek Awasthi
Kennington Ward
a.awasthi@bendigo.vic.gov.au



Cr Owen Cosgriff
Whipstick Ward
o.cosgriff@bendigo.vic.gov.au



Cr Aaron Spong
Eppalock Ward
a.spong@bendigo.vic.gov.au



Cr John McIlrath
Lockwood Ward
j.mcllrath@bendigo.vic.gov.au



Cr Shivali Chatley
Axedale Ward
s.chatley@bendigo.vic.gov.au



Cr Karen Corr
Golden Square Ward
k.corr@bendigo.vic.gov.au



Cr Thomas Prince
Lake Weeroona Ward
t.prince@bendigo.vic.gov.au



Cr Damien Hurrell
Ravenswood Ward
d.hurrell@bendigo.vic.gov.au

What does the City of Greater Bendigo do?

Australia's three levels of government have different responsibilities. Some of the main responsibilities for each level of government are shown here:

COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT

- Medicare, Centrelink, payments and pensions, aged care
- International trade and national defence
- Phone and internet networks, Australia Post
- National policies and regulations
- National parks
- Fund some state responsibilities

VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

- Hospitals, health services, ambulances, and schools
- Major roads, freeways, and VicRoads
- Public transport and railways
- Police, prisons, and emergency services
- Farming and fishing regulations, environmental protection, and state parks
- Fund some local government responsibilities

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (COUNCILS)

- Community buildings, reserves, sports grounds, and playgrounds
- Town planning and building permits
- Cultural and community activities, libraries, and youth spaces
- Local roads and traffic safety
- Recycling and resource recovery
- Health promotion services



Local government is made up of the Council (the nine elected Councillors) and the City of Greater Bendigo (the Chief Executive Officer and staff). The role of Council is to provide leadership for the wellbeing of the local community. The City of Greater Bendigo (the City) is a service provider, regulator, and advocate for the Greater Bendigo community.

Around 1,000 people work for the City. This includes almost 170 gardeners and labourers, over 100 tradespeople, over 150 community services workers, and almost 250 administrative workers, such as our customer service staff and venues staff.

Most people in Greater Bendigo use a Council service or facility every day. The City delivers over 60 services to community, with some of these grouped below.

My business and our economy

- Environmental health and permits
- Livestock exchange
- Tourism, Bendigo Airport and business attraction
- City centre development and parking

My recycling and bins

- Recycling, organics and bin collections
- Street sweeping
- Recycling centres and education

Our parks, gardens and open space

- Playgrounds and parks
- Public toilets
- Natural reserves

Our roads, paths, buildings and transport

- Maintaining our roads, paths, bridges, and drainage
- Maintaining our public buildings and facilities
- Planning, design and building for future needs

Our arts and culture

- Libraries
- Art and cultural events and programs
- Major events, community events and festivals



Our environment

- Emergency management and recovery
- Climate action and planning for sustainability
- Tree planting, waterway and habitat health

Our sport and active lifestyles

- Sports and recreation facilities
- Health promotion and planning
- Club development
- Supporting healthy eating

My family and community

- Local laws and animal services
- Family and youth services
- Community development
- Working with Traditional Owners and First Nations

My Council

- Communications and community engagement
- Customer services
- Governance and corporate services

Our housing and planning

- Managing growth and change
- Planning scheme and permits

About Greater Bendigo

People and place[1]

We are growing with both the benefits and challenges of a bigger population. We focus on developing an economy that includes everyone and respects our environmental boundaries.

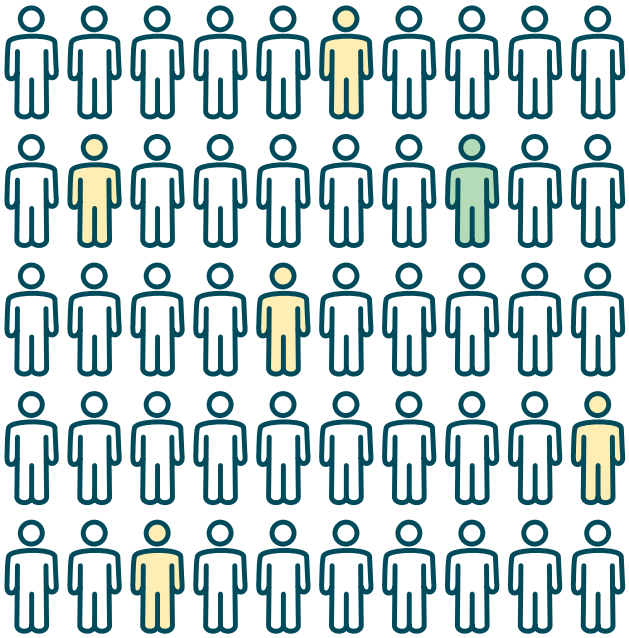
Our older population is getting larger, bringing both needs and opportunities.

Our homes have fewer people living in them than before, with over half of us now living alone or with one other person.

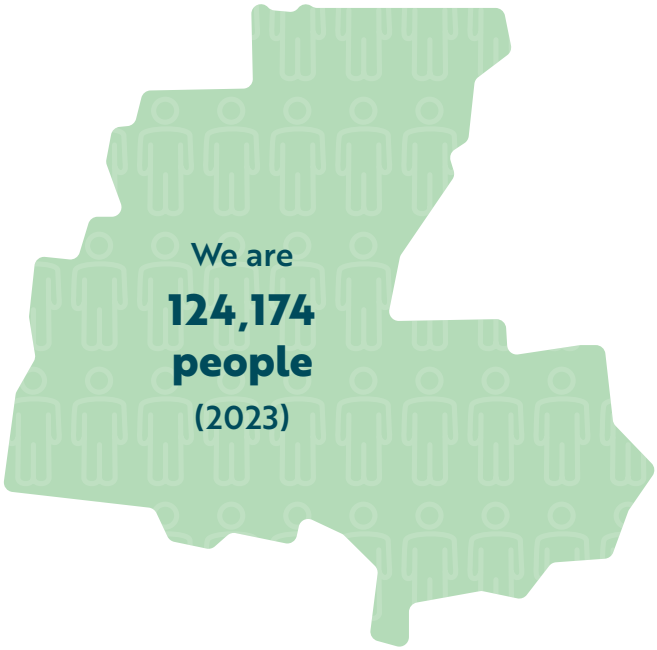
Unlike some other part of regional Victoria, we also have a significant population of children and young families.

Therefore, we provide for many different needs and people across our community.

Around **1 in 50 people** are First Nations



Around **1 in 10 people** speak a language other than English at home



35-49 year olds are our biggest age group...

followed by **25-34 year olds**

We live in **49,082** households



4 out of 5 homes have 3 or more bedrooms



13,000 people lived alone in 2021 compared to **8,200** in 2001

By 2046...

- Our population **will be bigger** than the 2021 populations of Darwin or Cairns
- People **aged 70-84 year olds** will be our second largest age group

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Census of population and housing

Health and wellbeing

In the future, we are likely to have more people living with chronic illnesses. Many chronic illnesses make people more likely to need health services. People with chronic illnesses are also more likely to struggle with climate change, like more extreme heat or worse air-quality.

Being able to live healthier lives will help our community avoid or delay many health conditions and enjoy a better quality of life. However, some people in our community need more support than others to improve their health. Often people need help due to things like existing health conditions, limited mobility, living alone, being isolated, time pressure, or low income. Greater Bendigo also has more people living with a disability than the Victorian average. Working towards an accessible community means everyone can participate, no matter who they are.

Therefore, help for people to live healthier lives is central to this Plan. This Plan also includes ending family violence as a priority, reflecting that family violence incidents rose 7% between 2023 and 2024, to the highest rate recorded in five years.[2]



Around **4 in 10 people** have a long-term health condition, mental health conditions are most common[1]



Just over half of people get enough exercise[3]

2 out of 3 adults are overweight or obese



Almost **1 in 10 residents** need help in their daily lives due disability[1]

1 out of 8 adults eat enough vegetables[3]





At least **1 in 10 households** run out of food and can't afford to buy more

Climate change

By the 2050s, Greater Bendigo's climate is likely to be more like Shepparton's current climate, that is, hotter and dryer. We will have more extremely hot days, and the bushfire season will be longer and more dangerous. Rain will fall less often but be heavier, resulting in more flooding.[4]

We expect these changes in climate will:

- Increase crop losses, reduce food and water security, and increase the costs of food and water
- Create more extreme weather, with more deaths, injuries, and property losses from floods, fires, and storms
- Affect human health through increased heat exposure, faster spread of diseases and worse air quality

While Greater Bendigo alone cannot prevent climate change, we are part of a growing global alliance of communities determined to do their bit. We must take immediate action to protect people and property from the impacts of extreme weather. These priorities are included in our Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan.

If you would like to learn more about people in Greater Bendigo, please see our online portal at https://profile.id.com.au/bendigo

By the 2030s...

- Daily temperatures will be **up to 1.7 degrees** (compared to the 1990s)
- About **a third less rain** than between 1960-1990
- The fire season is expected to **last from October to April**

2. Crime Statistics Agency (2024) Local Area Statistics Family Violence Dashboard
3. Healthy Loddon Campaspe (2019) Active Living Census
4. CSIRO & DELWP (2019) Loddon Campaspe Climate Projections 2019

ABOUT THIS PLAN

What is a Council Plan?

The Council Plan sets the direction for Council over the next four years. This Council Plan also includes the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. Our health plan shows how we will work with our health partners to improve wellbeing in Greater Bendigo.

The Council Plan aims to deliver the Greater Bendigo Community Vision. In 2021, a 'Community Panel' made up of local community members developed our 10-year Community Vision. In 2025, a second Community Panel refreshed the Community Vision.

Our current Community Vision is:

***Community Vision** – Greater Bendigo celebrates and respects our diverse and growing community. We aim to be welcoming, sustainable and flourishing. Walking hand-in-hand with our First Nations communities. Building on our heritage for a safe and happy future.*

How this plan works

The 2025-2029 Council Plan has four themes:

Responsible

Running an effective, fair and efficient organisation.

Healthy

Protecting and improving our physical, mental, and environmental health.

Thriving

Managing our growth, including businesses, housing, heritage and creativity.

Welcoming

Celebrating and including everyone in our community.

Each theme has three goals, making 12 goals in total. Each goal has 2-3 priority action areas, making 34 priorities in total.

Annual actions against the goals and priorities are in the Annual Budget. This means that we will consult with the community every year on annual actions.

You can view the 2025-2026 Annual Action Plan and Budget by visiting: link when available.

The City conducts community consultation on the Annual Action Plan and Budget every year – you can register at letstalkgreaterbendigo.com.au or call 1300 002 642 to find out more.

The Plan also includes strategic indicators to monitor progress, these are shown on page 22.



How was this plan made?

The Council has adopted this Council plan consistent with:

- the *Local Government Act 2020*
- the *Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*
- the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme Municipal Planning Strategy
- the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023-2027 health priorities

The Plan was developed through wide consultation with the local community. This consultation included a 42-person deliberative community panel. That panel met for three days to create guidance for Councillors as they make decisions for our community (see page 14).

1 REVIEW

The City reviewed thousands of customer requests, hundreds of survey responses, collected past community feedback and reviewed local data and evidence.

2 DISCOVER

The City met with dozens of community and stakeholder groups, held 10 focus groups, surveyed hundreds of local residents and consulted with children at five local schools.

3 DESIGN

The City worked with staff, leaders, Councillors, stakeholders and a 42-person community panel to develop the Council Plan and community guidance on Council decisions.

4 TEST

The City invited the Greater Bendigo community to comment on a draft plan with TBC responses received.

5 DELIVER

The Council adopted the 2025-2029 Council Plan including the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan and the City is delivering the Council Plan goals and priorities through the Annual Budget and Action Plan.



What you said

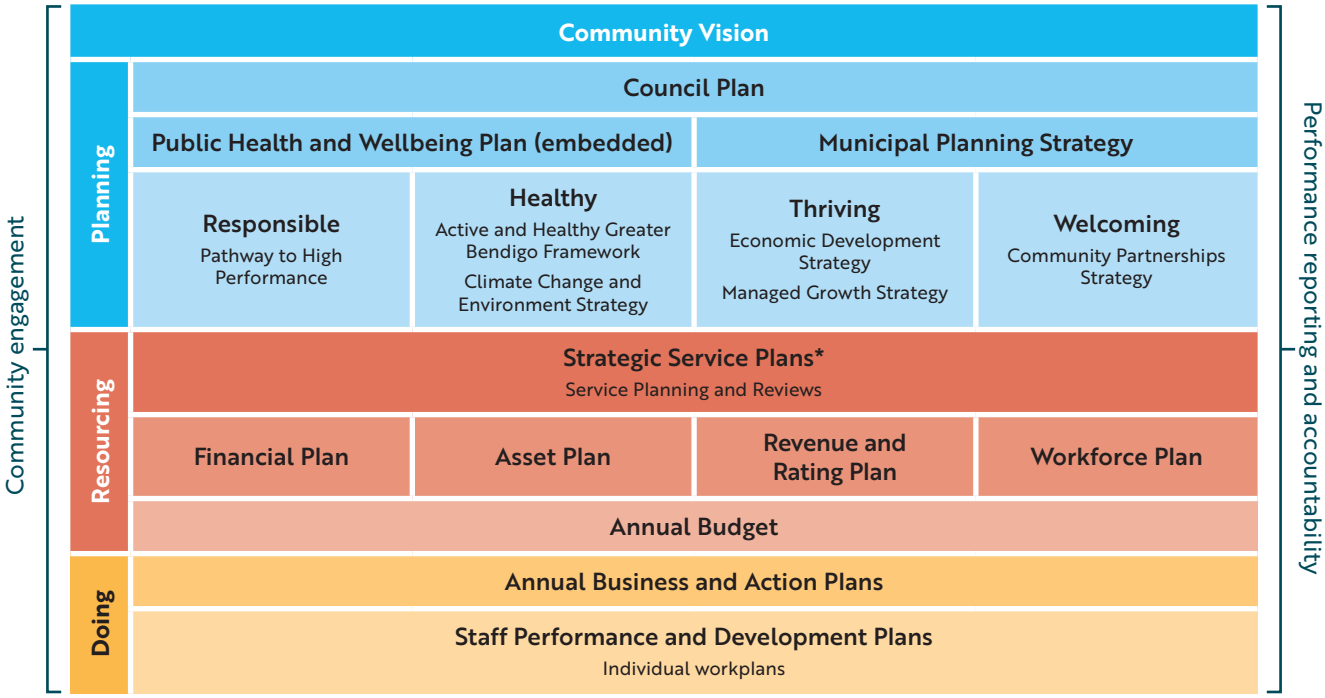
Community members said...	The City of Greater Bendigo is...
The cost of living is hurting	We're working to keep rates as low as possible. We worked with the 2025 Community Panel to create guidance for Council when making decisions around changes in services to keep rates lower.
People are lonely and it's hard to connect	We're supporting community events and places to connect, like neighbourhood houses, community events, and youth spaces.
Housing is too expensive and hard to find	We cannot afford to build housing. But we are supporting homelessness services, including outreach to people sleeping rough. We campaign to the Victorian and Australian Governments for more housing relief in Greater Bendigo.
The roads are in bad shape	We spent around $19M in 2023-2024 (6.3% of the total budget) on road maintenance. We advocate to the Victorian and Australian Governments for more road and path funding.
Traffic and pedestrian crossings are getting more dangerous, parking is getting harder	We work closely with the Department of Transport and Planning, VicRoads and Victoria Police to increase traffic safety. In 2023-2024, we spent $2.9M on footpaths and shared paths, and around $133,000 on raised crossings.
It's hard to eat well and be active	We're partnering with Foodshare to help people access the food they need. The City of Greater Bendigo has over 310 public parks and reserves, as well as sports facilities, paths and trails. We provide wellbeing programs and activities, see CONNECT for more details. Visit CONNECT at www.connectgreaterbendigo.com.au
Tackle climate change and protect our environment	Our Climate Change and Environment Strategy works towards carbon emission reductions and improving our environment. Our Managed Growth and Rural Areas Strategies protect our natural and farming landscapes while allowing for more housing.
Kids need places for them and opportunities to stay in Greater Bendigo	We work with schools, the Department of Education, La Trobe University and Bendigo TAFE to provide great options for our young people. We work across all areas of business to support our local businesses and economy. Through YO Bendigo we provide safe spaces and inclusive youth activities.
Waste and recycling services must suit our needs	We are continuing to work towards a zero-waste future to reduce costs and climate impacts. We understand that some people have medical needs that mean they have more waste items. Please speak to your GP if this affects you, as some people are eligible for a larger bin.
We love our open spaces and festivals	We are proud of our beautiful open spaces and our wonderful public events. We will continue to keep these spaces beautiful and deliver free or low-cost public events. We understand that these are important to the community.
Violence in our homes is increasing and it's hard to find safe places to stay	We tackle family violence as an employer, a partner agency, a community connector and a leader. The City raises awareness through community events, partnerships and with Councillors as advocates against family violence. We work closely with Victoria Police to increase community safety. Our staff working in the community have ways to report concerns. We continue to campaign to the Victorian and Federal Government for more crisis housing in Greater Bendigo.



HOW WE MAKE DECISIONS

The City delivers on the Council Plan and the incorporated Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan through more detailed plans and strategies. These more detailed strategies link right through to staff performance and development plans.

Key plans and strategies are shown below.



*In development

Community guidance

In March 2025, 42 community members came together as a Community Panel to represent the Greater Bendigo community. They were chosen through a random process from over 200 people who registered to take part.

Our panel members came from over 20 areas of Greater Bendigo. The panel included people of all genders and abilities, and people from a range of cultural backgrounds including First Nations community members.

The Community Panel worked over two and a half days to create six criteria for decision making to guide our Councillors. For each of the six criteria, the Community Panel developed a checklist of questions to help in decision making. Their work is shown on page 15, just as it was written by the 2025 Community Panel. These criteria are being used by staff and Council to guide decision-making.

We thank the members of the 2025 Community Panel for generously sharing their time, thoughts, and experiences to benefit the whole community.

Greater Bendigo celebrates and respects our diverse and growing community. We aim to be welcoming, sustainable and flourishing. Walking hand-in-hand with our First Nations communities. Building on our heritage for a safe and happy future.



Financial Responsibility

Resources must balance immediate costs with long-term sustainability and value for money.

- What is the initial cost versus ongoing cost?
- What is the impact on other services?
- Does this provide value for money beyond the life of the project?
- Does this make sufficient use of local resources?



Strategic and Legal

Decisions must align with the Community Vision, values and needs, and legal obligations to ensure responsible governance.

- Does this implement an existing community priority, plan or strategy?
- Does this decision comply with legislated obligations with First Nations communities?
- Does this maintain and protect the unique heritage of the community?
- Are there any statutory or legal requirements?



Fairness and Equity

Decisions must be inclusive, accessible and considerate of diverse needs, ensuring no one is unfairly disadvantaged.

- Does this decision address ongoing challenges or barriers for future generations?
- Who might be excluded or disadvantaged as a consequences of this decision? What supports are in place?
- Is the service accessible, equitable, culturally safe and respectful?
- Does the decision recognise and respect the cultural and heritage values of our community?



Impact and Outcomes

Decisions must be made in good faith and lead to meaningful improvements and benefits for the community.

- Is this the right thing to do?
- What are the drivers of this decision?
- What are the positive and negative impacts of the decision on people and environment?
- Can we safely test or pilot the decision?
- How do we monitor the success of the decision?



Communication, Engagement and Transparency

Communication and engagement is open, clear and accessible to ensure decisions reflect community needs and expectations.

- Does the community know what's happening?
- Are there opportunities for the community to contribute to decision making?
- What are the range of views?
- Does the public have access to rationale, research, data behind the decision and outcome?



Sustainability

Environmental, social and economic sustainability must be prioritised to make lasting impacts.

- Does the decision benefit future generations?
- How does this decision make Greater Bendigo a healthier community?
- Does the decision build upon Greater Bendigo's key strengths to empower our community?
- Are we embracing innovation in our changing world?

Partnership

The City works with other governments, not-for-profits and businesses because we share a common goal to improve the wellbeing of our community. We can only achieve great outcomes together.

The partners we work with most frequently are shown on page 17 but we work with many other organisations as needed, including directly with community.

We work together so that we:

- know who is doing what
- gain from our shared effort
- communicate with each other well
- measure our combined impact and progress
- can do more of what works and change what doesn't

Our commitment to partnership with our Health and Wellbeing Partners includes:

Shared Goals

We share goals because we work for the same community

This plan provides common goals through the embedded Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan goals:

- The City works in partnership
- We care for land, water and air
- We protect the climate
- We are safe, happy and healthy
- Our city and towns are vibrant and liveable
- Our housing meets different needs
- Our community celebrates together
- Our community cares
- Our children and young people thrive

Commitment to communication

Regular and frequent communication

The City will:

- host quarterly online coordination meetings
- host annual executive strategic roundtables
- lead healthy communities network (not all health partners separately)
- seek opportunities to share events and communications
- maintain the CONNECT Greater Bendigo website

Partners will:

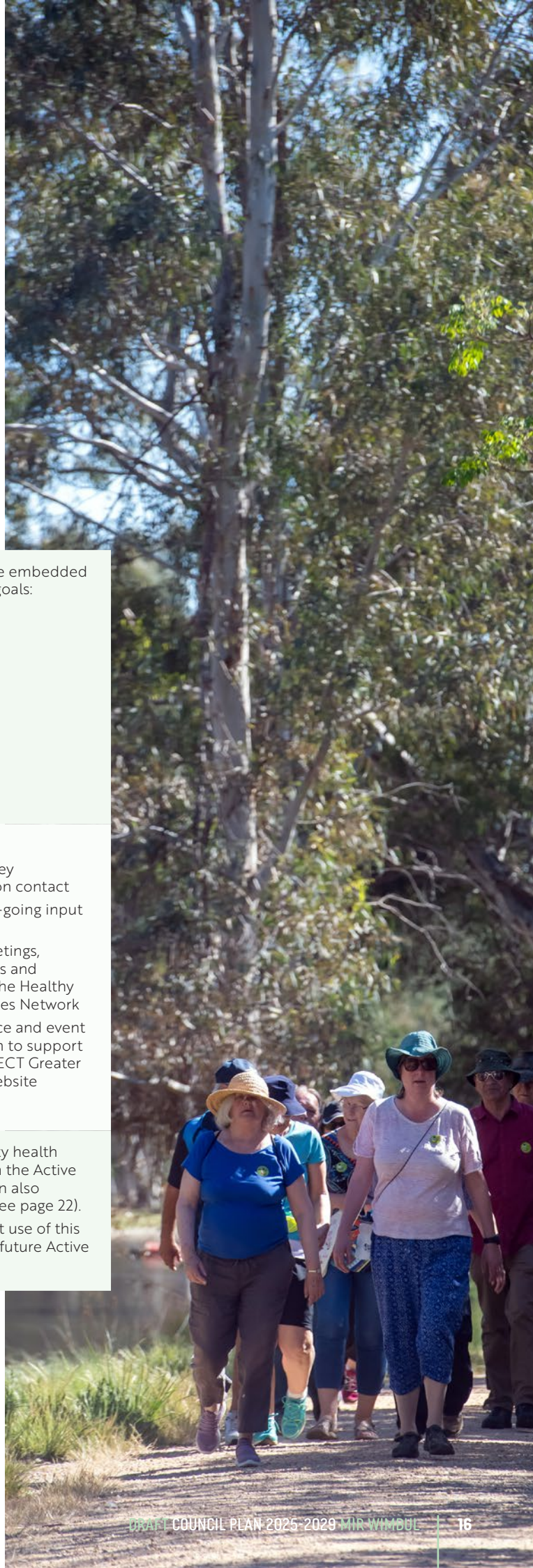
- identify a key coordination contact
- provide on-going input and ideas
- attend meetings, roundtables and engage in the Healthy Communities Network
- share service and event information to support the CONNECT Greater Bendigo website

Shared measurement

A shared set of indicators to monitor progress

The City will lead measurement of community health through the Active Living Census. The City ran the Active Living Census in 2016, 2019 and 2025. This Plan also includes 15 indicators of broader wellbeing (see page 22).

Working with partners, the City will make best use of this information and will seek further funding for future Active Living Censuses.



Council works in partnership with:

Health and Wellbeing Partners

- Aboriginal Homes Victoria
- Bendigo Community Health Services
- Bendigo and District Aboriginal Cooperative
- Bendigo Foodshare
- Bendigo Health
- Community housing providers
- Heathcote Health
- Healthy Loddon Campaspe
- Loddon Campaspe Regional Partnership
- Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit
- Sports Focus
- Thorne Harbour Country
- Trans and Gender Diverse Bendigo and Beyond
- Women's Health Loddon Mallee

Education, Community and Business Partners

- Be.Bendigo
- Bendigo TAFE
- Community organisations and clubs
- Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (Djaara)
- Goldfields Library Corporation
- La Trobe University
- Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services
- Neighbourhood houses
- Primary and secondary schools
- Taungurung Land and Waters Council
- Workspace Australia

Advocate
Educator
Funder
Facilitator
Planner

Advocate
Educator
Funder
Planner
Regulator

With these partners, Council is an:

Advocate
Expert
Planner

Advocate
Educator
Expert
Planner
Regulator

Policy Partners

- Australian Government Departments and agencies
- Municipal Association of Victoria
- Other Councils (Local Governments)
- Peak bodies and industry associations
- Victorian Government Departments and agencies

Community Safety Partners

- Coliban Water
- Country Fire Authority and Fire Rescue Victoria
- Environment Protection Authority Victoria
- Family violence services
- Homes Victoria
- Powercor
- Victorian State Emergency Service
- VicRoads
- Victoria Police

COUNCIL PLAN AND MUNICIPAL PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN

Responsible

****Priorities align with the Victorian Health and Wellbeing Plan goals**

	Our services	Our supporting plans*	Council measures	Our 2025-2029 priorities
Goal 1.1 **The City is efficient and sustainable** The City invests wisely to get the best social, environmental and economic value from our services, infrastructure and assets.	**My Council** · Communications and community engagement · Customer services · Councillor support · Governance and corporate services	· Asset Plan · Financial Plan · Revenue and Rating Plan	· Complete 10 Service Reviews to deliver positive impacts on the City's budget in both cost and operational efficiencies over the life of the Council Plan · 98% of sealed local roads are maintained to condition standards · Progress towards zero carbon from Council's operations	· Drive a high performing organisation delivering value for community · Work towards zero-carbon for City operations by 2030 · Work to make our existing infrastructure more resilient
Goal 1.2 **The City connects and delivers** The City listens and responds to the community, delivering what's needed.	**My Council** · Communications and community engagement · Customer services	· Customer Service Charter	· Improving scores on the *Our Service, Your Satisfaction Survey*	· Make our customer service systems easier for everyone to use · Listen and share information better using a variety of methods that aim to reach all community members · Respond to openly and quickly to community enquiries
Goal 1.3 **The City works in partnership** The City works with health and service providers. The City partners with community, including First Nations and Traditional Owners.	**All services**	· Barpangu Reconciliation Plan	· Maintain local procurement spend	· Implement our wellbeing actions with our health partners** · Agree and implement our work with key strategic stakeholders and peak bodies** · Keep building our partnerships with community organisations**

*Links in Appendix A



Healthy

****Priorities align with the Victorian Health and Wellbeing Plan goals**

	Our services	Our supporting plans*	Community measures	Our 2025-2029 priorities
Goal 2.1 **We care for land, water and air** Our communities care for nature. We enjoy healthy parks, bush, waterways, farmland and residential areas in an integrated environment.	**Our environment** • Tree planting, waterway and habitat health **Our parks, gardens and open space** • Sports and recreation facilities • Playgrounds and parks • Natural reserves **My recycling and waste** • Street sweeping	• Asset Management Plans • Biodiversity Strategy • Environment and Climate Change Strategy • Greater Bendigo Public Space Plan • Greening Greater Bendigo • Loddon Mallee Regional Emergency Management Plan • Managed Growth Strategy • Rural Areas Strategy	• Improving habitat quality and condition scores for selected City or Traditional-owner managed reserves	• 'Heal country' together restoring damaged land and water • Progress the Reimagining Bendigo Creek project for a healthy creek • Protect our natural reserves and rural areas
Goal 2.2 **We protect the climate** We reduce our environmental impact. We prepare for more extreme weather and a changing climate.	**Our environment** • Climate action and planning for sustainability • Tree planting, waterway and habitat health **My recycling and waste** • Recycling, organics and bin collections • Recycling centres and education	• Asset Management Plans • Community Asset Policy • Environment and Climate Change Strategy • Greater Bendigo Public Space Plan • Integrated Transport and Land Use Strategy	• Reducing greenhouse gas emissions across the Greater Bendigo community measured by Snapshot Climate	• Build new paths to connect existing bike and pedestrian paths** • Build on our partnership towards integrated transport options, including active travel and public transport** • Maintain support for local climate action initiatives**
Goal 2.3 **We are safe, happy and healthy** Our people can live safely and have ways to be active, eat well, and stay physically and mentally healthy as we grow and age.	**My family and community** • Family and youth services • Community development **Our sport and active lifestyles** • Sports and recreation facilities • Health promotion and planning • Club development **Our environment** • Emergency management and recovery	• Asset Management Plans • Aquatic Facilities Strategy • Community Asset Policy • Environment and Climate Change Strategy • Fair Access Action Plan • Greater Bendigo Public Space Plan • Integrated Municipal Emergency Management Plan • Food Systems Strategy • Walk, Cycle Greater Bendigo Strategy	• Falling rate of family violence incidents measured by Crime Statistics Agency Victoria • Growing percentage of people who rate themselves as in good or excellent health measured by the Active Living Census and Victorian Population Health Survey	• Be leaders in preventing family violence • Respond effectively to reduce the impact of extreme weather** • Make it easier to live healthy and active lives across the lifespan**

*Links in Appendix A

Thriving

**Priorities align with the Victorian Health and Wellbeing Plan goals

	Our services	Our supporting plans*	Community measures	Our 2025-2029 priorities
Goal 3.1 **Our economy is strong** Our city builds on its heritage, developing talent, creativity and investment. We create an efficient economy that delivers local opportunities.	**Our arts and culture** · Art and cultural events and programs · Major events, community events and festivals **My business and our economy** · Environmental health and permits · Livestock exchange · Tourism, Bendigo Airport and business attraction · City centre development and parking	· Commercial Land and Activity Centre Strategy · Bendigo Airport Plan · Economic Development Strategy · Greater Bendigo Industrial Land Development Strategy · Greater Bendigo Public Space Plan · Greater Creative Bendigo	· Falling amount of waste to landfill per head from kerbside collections	· Partner with local businesses, creators, and makers, big and small, to help them adapt to change and thrive · Increase action towards a zero-waste economy in Greater Bendigo
Goal 3.2 **Our city and towns are vibrant and livable** Our city, suburbs and towns keep their identities and come together as Greater Bendigo. We live good lives in an affordable and accessible place.	**Our housing and planning** · Managing growth and change · Planning scheme and permits **Our parks, gardens and open space** · Playgrounds and parks · Public toilets · Natural reserves **Our arts and culture** · Libraries · Art and cultural events and programs · Major events, community events and festivals	· Bendigo Regional Destination Plan · Community Asset Policy · Commercial Land and Activity Centre Strategy · Greater Bendigo Public Space Plan · Parking Services Plan · Public Art Plan	· Growing Gross Regional Product over time measured by REMPLAN economic monitoring	· Promote vibrant tourism, including our flourishing arts, culture and food scenes · Maintain our beautiful parks and shared spaces · Help people access local, fresh, healthy, and affordable food
Goal 3.3 **Our community makes space for everyone** We strive for housing that is affordable, energy efficient and suits different needs.	**Our housing and planning** · Managing growth and change · Planning scheme and permits **Our roads, paths and transport** · Maintaining our roads, paths, bridges, and drainage · Maintaining our public buildings and facilities · Planning, design and building for future needs	· Affordable Housing Action Plan · Asset Plan · Community Asset Policy · Managed Growth Strategy	· Monitor increase in number of houses in urban areas measured by REMPLAN economic monitoring	· Lead the shift to 70% of urban development being in infill areas · Plan and build key infrastructure through existing partnerships for residential growth · Increase advocacy to Victorian and Federal Government for more affordable, crisis, and social housing**

*Links in Appendix A

Welcoming

**Priorities align with the Victorian Health and Wellbeing Plan goals

	Our services	Our supporting plans*	Community measures	Our 2025-2029 priorities
Goal 4.1 **Our community belongs** Across our community, we have events and activities to bring us together.	**My family and community** · Community development **Our arts and culture** · Libraries · Art and cultural events and programs · Major events, community events and festivals	· Community Asset Policy · Fair Access Action Plan · Gender Equity Action Plan · Greater Bendigo Public Space Plan · Greater Creative Bendigo · Public Art Plan	· Increase percentage of people who support multicultural communities measured by the Victorian Population Health Survey	· Maintain spaces for people to come together, aiming to reduce barriers to participation in our community** · Strengthen our partnerships with community to host open, welcoming, and low-cost community events**
Goal 4.2 **Our community cares** We support each other even when times are tough. Our community is accessible, creative, fun, and everyone belongs.	**My family and community** · Local laws and animal services · Family and youth services · Community development	· Community Asset Policy · Fair Access Action Plan · Gender Equity Action Plan · Greater Creative Bendigo · Public Art Plan	· Improve position relative to national average on Scanlon-Monash Social Cohesion Compass domains of social cohesion (belonging, worth, social inclusion and justice, participation, and acceptance and rejection)	· Develop strategies that are community-focused and help residents new and old** · Strengthen our partnerships to make our community safer, both in-person and online** · Extend our partnerships to support people experiencing homelessness**
Goal 4.3 **Our children and young people thrive** Our children are nurtured to grow, play, and learn. Our young people are empowered to lead.	**My family and community** · Family and youth services · Community development **Our environment** · Climate action and planning for sustainability	· Early Years planning · Fair Access Action Plan · Gender Equity Action Plan · Greater Bendigo Public Space Plan	· Falling percentage of children defined as 'vulnerable' or 'at-risk' on the Australian Early Development Census	· Keep partnering to provide health services to young children, including Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management** · Maintain welcoming places for all young people** · Partner to provide local learning and working opportunities for young people

*Links in Appendix A



MONITORING

We evaluate to find out what works (and why) so we can improve our performance for our community.

Under the Local Government Act 2020, the City's services must:

1. be equitable and responsive to diverse needs
2. be accessible to the people who need them
3. provide good value for money
4. be regularly reviewed and improved
5. provide fair and effective complaints handling

The City measures progress in a variety of ways, including:

- reporting ongoing business and services through the Annual Report
- reporting on Council Plan actions to the Council quarterly
- reporting on the health and wellbeing priorities of this plan annually to the Department of Health
- reporting on the City's performance against Council Plan using the Council strategic indicators below
- reporting on the Community indicators below
- using case studies to understand specific projects, with details on page 23

Strategic Indicators

The impact of this Plan will be monitored through the **Council Indicators** (shown below). These measure if the Council is getting the basics right. These are:

Responsible

Council indicators	Frequency and source
Complete 10 Service Reviews to deliver positive impacts on the City's budget in both cost and operational efficiencies over the life of the Council Plan	Annual – internal data
98% of sealed local roads are maintained to condition standards	Annual – internal data
Improving scores on the Our Service, Your Satisfaction Survey	Annual – internal data
Maintaining local procurement at 50% or more of total procurement	Annual – internal data
Progress towards zero-carbon from Council's operations	Annual – internal data

The wellbeing of the community will be measured through the **Community Indicators**. These help Council understand how our community is going. These indicators will change in response to many things in our community, not just Council actions.

The **Community Indicators** are:

Healthy

Community indicators	Frequency and source
Falling rates of family violence incidents	Annual – Crime Statistics Agency Family Violence Dashboard
Growing percentage of people who rate themselves as in good or excellent health	Three-yearly (2023, 2026, 2029) – Victorian Population Health Survey; Active Living Census (2019, 2025)
Reducing greenhouse gas emissions across the community	Annual – Snapshot Climate
Improving habitat quality and condition scores for selected City or Traditional-owner managed reserves	Annual – internal data

Thriving

Community indicators	Frequency and source
Falling amount of waste to landfill per head from kerbside collections	Annual – internal data
Growing Gross Regional Product over time	Annual – REMPLAN Economy
Monitor increase in number of houses in urban areas	Annual – REMPLAN Economy

Welcoming

Community indicators	Frequency and source
Increase percentage of people who support multicultural communities	Three-yearly (2023, 2026, 2029) – Victorian Population Health Survey
Improve position relative to national average on domains of social cohesion (belonging, worth, social inclusion and justice, participation, and acceptance and rejection)	Various – Scanlon-Monash Social Cohesion Compass
Falling percentage of children defined as 'vulnerable' or 'at-risk'	Annual – Australian Early Development Census

Service Reviews

Council has a program of services reviews to make our services the best they can be. Two of these reviews will also evaluate parts of this Plan.

Case study – Early learning

'Our children and young people thrive' is Goal 4.3 of this plan. The City plays important roles in providing maternal and child health services and immunisations, helping children thrive.

The City provides a limited number of early learning (childcare and kindergarten) places. Early learning service across Greater Bendigo provided by a mix of government, not-for-profit, and private providers. The City will evaluate Council early learning services through a service review to make recommendations for future work and improvements.

Case study – Transport infrastructure

'Our city and towns are vibrant and liveable' is Goal 3.2 of this plan. To be liveable city and towns need to help people move around easily and affordably. The City plays a role in building and maintaining roads and paths, and helping people use active transport. The City campaigns for more public transport.

Work to make our communities more walkable is already happening. In 2026, the City will review its transport infrastructure to look for ways to provide better accessibility and value for money.



APPENDIX A – LINKS TO OTHER PLANS

Affordable Housing Action Plan
Aquatic Facilities Strategy
Asset Plan
Barpangu Reconciliation Plan
Bendigo Airport Plan
Biodiversity Strategy
Commercial Land and Activity Centre Strategy
Community Asset Policy
Customer Service Charter
Early Years planning
Economic Development Strategy
Environment and Climate Change Strategy
Fair Access Action Plan
Food Systems Strategy
Gender Equity Action Plan
Greater Creative Bendigo
Greater Bendigo Industrial Land Development Strategy
Greening Greater Bendigo
Integrated Transport and Land Use Strategy
Integrated Municipal Emergency Management Plan
Financial Plan
Managed Growth Strategy
Greater Bendigo Public Space Plan
Parking Futures Action Plan
Public Art Plan
Revenue and Rating Plan
Rural Areas Strategy (in development)
Walk, Cycle Greater Bendigo Strategy







CONTACT US

Opening hours

- Monday 9am - 4.30pm
- Tuesday 9am - 4pm
- Wednesday 9am - 4.30pm (Heathcote closed)
- Thursday 9am - 4.30pm
- Friday 9am - 4.30pm

Call centres and in-person centres are closed for all public holidays and weekends.

Phone 1300 002 642:

- Telephone Interpreting Service users' phone 13 14 50 then ask for 1300 002 642
- Speak and Listen users' phone 1300 555 727 then ask for 1300 002 642
- TTY users' phone 133 677 then ask for 1300 002 642
- Internet relay users connect to the NRS then ask for 1300 002 642

In person

- Galkangu - Bendigo GovHub
  189-229 Lyttleton Terrace, Bendigo
- Heathcote Service Centre
  125 High Street, Heathcote

Mail

City of Greater Bendigo
PO Box 733, Bendigo VIC 3552

Online

requests@bendigo.vic.gov.au

www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/requests-and-payments

CITY OF GREATER BENDIGO