

Community Wellbeing Strategy 2026–2030

Our Adelaide.
Bold.
Aspirational.
Innovative.

June 2026



CITY OF
ADELAIDE

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Our Cover Image

Giant Puppet KIRA (Kindness, Inclusion, Respect for All) in Adelaide. KIRA is a project of the South Australian Puppetry Network, facilitated by Felix Norgren (supported by the Swedish Arts Grants Committee) in partnership with the Australian Migrant Resource Centre (AMRC). KIRA's launch was supported by the City of Adelaide Community Grants

Photo: Dinuka Liyanawatte

Kurna Acknowledgement

The City of Adelaide acknowledges the Kurna People of the Adelaide Plains as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live, work and gather. We acknowledge and honour their spiritual and cultural stewardship of this country and recognise their deep and enduring relationship with its lands, waters, the sky, and all living things. We pay our respects to Kurna Elders past and present and recognise the important role of emerging leaders in sustaining and strengthening culture.

City of Adelaide tampinhi, ngadlu Kurna yartangka panpapanpalyarrinhi (inparrinhi). Kurna Miyurna yaiya mathanya Wama Tarntanyaku. Parnaku yailtya, parnaku tapa purruna, parnaku yarta, ngadlu tampinhi.

Yalaka Kurna miyurna ithu yailtya, tapa purruna, yarta, kawi, ngayirda kuma puru martinhi, puru warri-apinhi, puru tangka martulayinhi. Kumartarna yaiya miyurna iyangka yalaka ngadlu tampinhi.

Image: Spirit in Unity Welcome to Country Ceremony in the city's West End. Photo: Lana Adams

Lord Mayor's Foreword

The City of Adelaide's Community Wellbeing Strategy sets out our vision for creating a vibrant, connected and inclusive city, where people who live here and work here, and the many who visit, all experience a sense of place and belonging in a community.

At its heart, this Strategy is grounded in principles of empowerment, self-determination and social justice. It recognises that wellbeing is not something delivered to people, but something built with them, through inclusion, active participation, and strong partnerships across sectors and communities.

This Strategy prioritises investing in social infrastructure that brings people together: our community spaces, networks, services and shared experiences. In doing so we seek to strengthen our social capital because strong communities are built on strong relationships.

By focusing on people and place, we aim to build a city that can adapt, respond and thrive in the face of change, ensuring no one is left behind - building resilience in an increasingly complex world. Aiming for a population of 50,000 people by 2036, we have charted a course that builds resilience in people, harbours inclusiveness in community and strengthens connection to place, so that they do not become casualties of growth.

This Strategy also reflects our commitment to advancing a wellbeing economy, recognising that social, cultural and environmental outcomes are integral to economic growth that supports both current and future generations.

It is not a Strategy we can implement alone. Delivering on the vision will require collaboration with our community, partnering across government, local organisations and businesses. It is only through collaborating and working together that we will create the right conditions for people to connect, contribute and thrive.

The City of Adelaide has long tradition of engendering public discourse and active participation in the affairs of the city, shaping the community at its heart.

I encourage you to read the Strategy and identify your contribution to implementing it.



How we best take care of the place we call home, and how welcoming we make it for those who come to our city should be a shared commitment to participation and collective action.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Jane Lomax-Smith'.

Dr Jane Lomax-Smith AM

Lord Mayor

Introduction

Adelaide/Tarntanya is the Capital City and the cultural, civic and commercial heart of South Australia. Built on the traditional lands of the Kaurna people with a rich and deep Aboriginal heritage, the current layout of our city was designed by Colonel William Light in 1837. The plan for Adelaide proposed an inspired idea: an active city centre and an abundance of open space for our community with the River Torrens/Karrawirra Pari at its heart.

City of Adelaide is known for being progressive, resilient, bold and enterprising. The trailblazing Adelaide spirit has seen us withstand times of global social and economic disruption, and emerge with a reputation for being safe, liveable, walkable and green. As South Australia's economic centre, Adelaide is surrounded by the nationally listed Park Lands, is Australia's Festival Capital and the nation's first and only, UNESCO City of Music.

Located within a metropolitan region of 1.4 million people, we are a capital city of almost 30,000 residents with an ambition to grow toward 50,000 residents by 2036.

Our growing population will underpin our city's economic vitality and the need to support community wellbeing. To ensure success, we must: prioritise social

wellbeing; create inclusive and accessible spaces; facilitate learning and recreational experiences; foster community resilience and participation; and manage environmental sustainability.

Our city in the future will be a strong interconnected collection of unique neighbourhoods and precincts with diverse local experiences that promote social connectivity by making sure our streets are lively and accessible. A city that puts people and nature first when we design our public spaces.

We aspire to strengthen Adelaide's reputation as one of the world's most liveable cities. We are leveraging our past and looking to the future to grow an exceptional Capital City that is vibrant, connected and inclusive and where people who live, work and visit are supported to thrive across all life stages.

Council invests in initiatives, programs, projects and partnerships that support the health and wellbeing of our community above and beyond our core public health responsibilities, such as waste management and food safety regulation.

Our Vision

A vibrant, connected and inclusive city, where people who live, work and visit are supported to thrive across all life stages.

Our Principles

- Empowerment, self-determination, inclusion, social justice, capacity-building, partnerships and active participation in civic life.
- Strengthen social capital and social infrastructure.
- Build resilience through people and place.
- Advance a wellbeing economy for current and future generations.

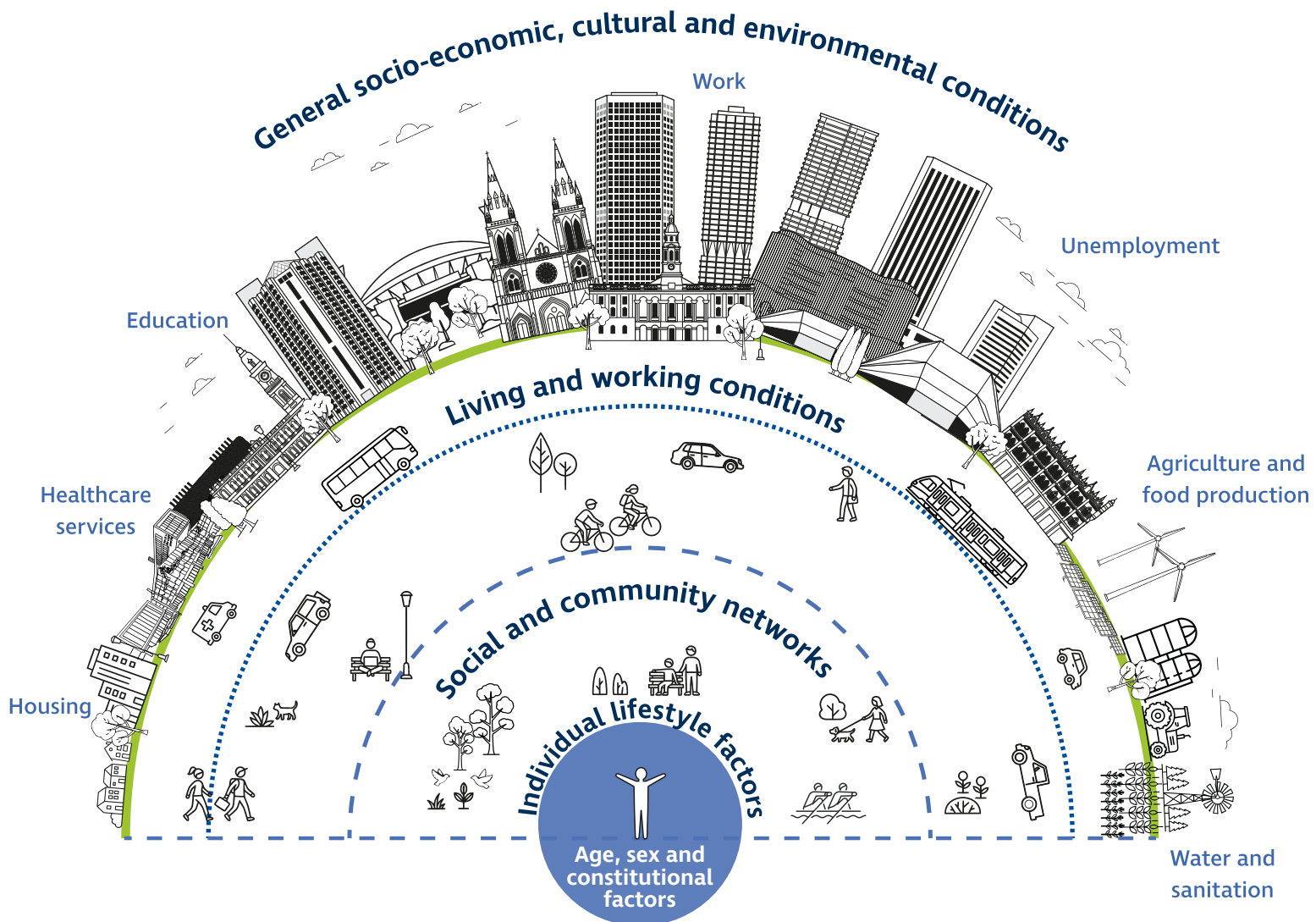
Our Goals

The Strategy outlines six goals that reflect local government's role in wellbeing and health, as well as the City of Adelaide's unique population profile, opportunities and challenges.

Our goals will guide investment and action across all Council Services.

Our goals are:

- Goal One: People feel welcome and connected
- Goal Two: People are active and healthy
- Goal Three: People can shape their community
- Goal Four: People are resilient
- Goal Five: People keep learning throughout their lives
- Goal Six: People feel safe where they live, work and spend time.



SOURCE: Dahlgren and Whitehead (1991). Used with permission of the Institute for Futures Studies, Stockholm, Sweden. Citation: 'Appendix A: Models of Health Determinant'. Institute of Medicine.

Defining Community Wellbeing

Community Wellbeing is a holistic concept reflected in the conditions that allow individuals, families, and groups to thrive. It spans social, environmental, economic, physical, mental, emotional, cultural and spiritual dimensions, and is linked to a sense of belonging and connection to the natural world.

Consultation feedback highlighted that, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, definitions of wellbeing must recognise strong connections to Country, community and culture. In response, this document also adopts the following definition from the National Aboriginal and Islander Health Organisation (1979).

"Aboriginal health does not (just) mean the physical wellbeing of an individual, but refers to the social, emotional and cultural wellbeing of the whole community ... Health care services should strive to achieve this (whole-of-life) state where every individual is able to achieve their full potential as human beings and must bring about the total wellbeing of their communities."

Wellbeing and health are closely linked. Our Strategy recognises this and has a focus on the social determinants of health, including:

1. Socioeconomic position – Educational attainment, occupation and income
2. Early life – Healthy physical development and emotional support
3. Social exclusion – Social disadvantage and lack of resources, opportunity, participation and skills
4. Social capital – Benefits obtained from the links that bind and connect people within and between groups
5. Employment and work – Participation in quality work is health-protective, instilling self-esteem and a positive sense of identity, while also providing the opportunity for social interaction and personal development.
6. Housing – Safe – Affordable and secure housing is associated with better health, which in turn impacts on people's participation in work, education and the community. It also affects parenting and social and familial relationships.
7. Residential environment – The residential environment has an impact on health equity through its influence on local resources, behaviour and safety. Communities and neighbourhoods that ensure access to basic goods and services are socially cohesive which promote physical and psychological wellbeing; and encourages protection of the natural environment.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines health as 'a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity' (WHO 1946). This definition recognises that health is multi-dimensional, and a person's health is linked to their wellbeing. For example, a person may have positive wellbeing in part, because they have good physical and mental health and timely access to quality, affordable health services and support.

Our Role in Community Wellbeing

This Strategy has been developed in a time of change and uncertainty for our city and community. The post-pandemic environment, inflation forecasts, housing and the cost of living crisis, social isolation, international democratic upheaval and climate change are all impacting our community. Over the next decade, our population is expected to grow and become more diverse. Health, wellbeing, equity and inclusion will continue to play important roles in supporting a changing population.

We also recognise that priority groups experience these challenges differently, often facing compounded barriers to wellbeing due to factors such as income, cultural background, language, disability, gender identity, and age. An awareness of intersectionality reminds us that these overlapping experiences can intensify disadvantage, meaning tailored and inclusive approaches are essential to ensure equitable outcomes for all.

The City of Adelaide recognises the important role we play as part of a wider community wellbeing and health ecosystem. We work with other levels of government, community organisations, and industry to shape our places and spaces, deliver programs and services, and support inclusive, thriving communities.

Through our policies, programs, partnerships and placemaking efforts, we can positively impact community wellbeing.

Our roles include:

Deliver

Plan, deliver and fund services, programs and projects.

Facilitate

Assist others to undertake activities by bringing interested parties together.

Partner

Work with other stakeholders to achieve shared goals.

Educate

Share learning to support broader understanding and action.

Advocate

Promote the interests of our communities to influence decision makers.

Regulate

Regulate activities through local laws and legislation.



Image: Super Cycle Sunday 2024, Place Activation in Whitmore Square Iparrityi. Photo: Cath Leo

Goals and Priorities

The Strategy's goals and priorities build on the strengths of our community while responding to local feedback and global trends. Although each priority is aligned with a specific goal, they collectively support all goals. All goals and priorities are equally important, and the priorities are also connected to other Council strategies.

Goal	Statement	Priorities
Goal One: People feel welcome and connected	We will create opportunities for everyone to participate in community life, build strong connections and reduce isolation.	1.1 Promote housing solutions that strengthen community wellbeing (Housing Strategy) 1.2 Foster connection and inclusion for newly arrived people, including international students 1.3 Enable community initiatives through grant funding
Goal Two: People are active and healthy	We will provide and support accessible spaces for participation in programs and events that encourage movement, play, and recreation for people of all ages, abilities and means.	2.1 Promote inclusive participation through low-cost opportunities 2.2 Maximise the availability and use of community facilities 2.3 Support participation in physical activity for health and wellbeing
Goal Three: People can shape their community	We will support people to contribute their cultural knowledge and lived experience, engage in decision-making, and shape outcomes that affect them.	3.1 Foster community leadership and capacity building 3.2 Value and embed Lived and Living Experience 3.3 Partner with the community to co-design services and programs
Goal Four: People are resilient	We will strengthen people's ability to respond to challenges, support each other during difficult times and build long-term resilience.	4.1 Increase access to safe, nutritious and affordable food 4.2 Recognise and support the contribution of volunteers 4.3 Foster connected, resilient and thriving neighbourhoods
Goal Five: People keep learning throughout their lives	We will provide accessible learning opportunities, programs, and resources that enable people to develop skills, knowledge, and confidence at any age.	5.1 Build skills and provide resources to engage in a digital world 5.2 Encourage creativity and resourcefulness through making and repairing 5.3 Celebrate diverse cultures and artistic expression in the community (Cultural Policy)
Goal Six: People feel safe where they live, work and spend time	We will create and maintain safe, welcoming, and accessible places and spaces, while promoting community awareness and safety initiatives.	6.1 Ensure community centres and libraries are accessible, well-equipped and responsive to community needs 6.2 Implement initiatives that prevent gender-based violence and support survivors 6.3 Promote healthy streets and environments that support physical, social and mental wellbeing

Priorities for Goal One: People feel welcome and connected

We will create opportunities for everyone to participate in community life, build strong connections, and reduce isolation.

Priorities	Where we are	Where we want to be
1.1 Promote housing solutions that strengthen community wellbeing	Adelaide is ranked in the top 10 most unaffordable housing markets in the world. Many people who arrive in the City of Adelaide as international students, refugees, or asylum seekers stay in specialist or supported accommodation and are unable to remain in the city, even though they enjoy all that the city has to offer.	A city that supports people to remain in the city at any age by offering affordable rentals, affordable housing, and accessible housing for people with disability.
1.2 Foster connection and inclusion for newly arrived people, including international students	South Australia welcomed 47,378 international students between January and September 2025. Students are generally distributed across three key education segments: Higher Education (HE), Vocational Education and Training (VET), and English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS). Adelaide attracts international students from over 130 countries, with the largest cohorts from India, China, Nepal, Vietnam, the Philippines, and Bangladesh, alongside a growing presence of students from Colombia and other Latin American nations. 40,000 students from over 130 countries chose to live and study in Adelaide in 2025/26.	A welcoming destination, where all newly arrived people, can access equitable, culturally safe information and support to actively participate in community life.
1.3 Enable community initiatives through grant funding	The Community Grants Program has funds available for distribution across two streams: Arts and Culture and Community Impact, and two categories: Major and Quick Response. Community Grants are in high demand, with 177 applications received in 2024/25.	We want to be a city that maintains a robust grants program capable of responding to demand and supporting arts, recreation, sport, culture, and community initiatives at a meaningful scale.

Case Study:

Trees for Life: Regenerate Adelaide in the Adelaide Park Lands.



Image: Trees for Life Regenerate Adelaide Program 2026. Supported by the City of Adelaide Community Grants.
Photo: Jon Wah

Regenerate Adelaide is a free intergenerational and intercultural program for city residents over 55 years and international students delivered by Trees for Life and supported through the City of Adelaide Community Grants Program. This annual event series offers monthly nature-based group activities in the Adelaide Park Lands (Tutthangga and Nanu Wana) and surrounding natural spaces, promoting wellbeing through social and nature connections.

"I have been an avid bush-carer but am now afflicted with a genetic ataxia which has prevented me from walking long distances. A friend introduced me to the Regenerate project, and have found it enormously helpful, both for maintaining my mental equilibrium and for the opportunities to gain new knowledge. I also

appreciate the opportunities to talk with other folk who are interested in bushcare and, in particular, to meet young tertiary students" – Older participant.

"Taking part in Regenerate has been a truly rewarding experience. It gave me the chance to connect with others while learning practical skills in bushcare and conservation. Each activity felt meaningful and uplifting, from restoring native habitats to joining cultural walks that deepened my understanding of this land. I always left feeling recharged, connected, and proud to have contributed to our community!" – International student participant.

Priorities for Goal Two: People are active and healthy

We will provide and support accessible spaces for participation in programs and events that encourage movement, play, and recreation for people of all ages, abilities and means.

Priorities	Where we are	Where we want to be
2.1 Promote inclusive participation through low-cost opportunities	29.3% of City of Adelaide residents are in the lowest quartile (\$0 to \$377) for income, higher than the average for Greater Adelaide (24.7%). Of the 6,035 households in private rental in Adelaide, 33.3% (2,004) are in rental stress. This is higher than the average for Greater Adelaide. We heard through our consultation that one of the first things people go without when they are struggling with the cost of living is wellbeing activities.	We want to ensure people have access to low-cost programs and events that support their wellbeing, including formal and informal recreation and sport.
2.2 Maximise the availability and use of community facilities	A 2023 Social Infrastructure Assessment commissioned by the City of Adelaide found that, based on floorspace and population benchmarks, the city currently has a shortfall in community facilities, a gap that will increase as the population grows unless further investment is made. An external review of Adelaide Park Lands Community Buildings (Sport and Recreation) found that around 75 per cent do not meet the expected benchmark for a fit-for-purpose sport and recreation facility. These buildings demonstrate notable deficits in their condition, functionality, and/or ability to support community benefit, indicating a substantial renewal need across the Park Lands network.	We want people to have access to a range of multi-purpose community facilities that cater to their needs, including both indoor and outdoor options.
2.3 Support participation in physical activity for health and wellbeing	A majority of residents (54%) rate their health as 'Excellent' or 'Very Good'. Physical activity is common, with residents averaging between 3.4 to 4.7 days per week People who accumulate 150+ minutes of physical activity per week report better overall health, require fewer health services, enjoy better mental health, maintain stronger social connections and have greater self-efficacy. Overall wellbeing scores are higher when more than half of the physical activity is done with other people. Local Area Frameworks in the City Plan identified a number of additional open spaces to achieve the objective of 'open space at your doorstep'. Activity Hubs are valued by the community; they are a collection of informal recreation facilities that share amenities such as public toilets and drinking fountains. Examples of typical activity hub facilities are children's playspaces, kick about spaces, basketball courts, tennis courts, Petanque pistes, BBQ facilities, walking and cycling tracks.	We want more people to be able to choose active lifestyles, particularly those who report low levels of physical activity, such as students and those aged 18 to 24 years. Our activity hubs enable informal physical activity that supports health and wellbeing.

Case Study:

Quentin Kenihan Inclusive Playspace

This playspace in Rymill Park/Murlawirrapurka brings disability advocate, writer and actor Quentin Kenihan's vision to life, offering gardens with play experiences for all ages and abilities. Surrounded by lawns, all-access paths, sheltered seating, barbecue facilities, and 'Changing Places' toilets, it's designed for everyone to enjoy. The project was shaped by community input, including the Access and Inclusion Advisory Panel, ensuring the space reflects local ideas and aspirations.



Image: Quentin Kenihan Inclusive Playspace



Image: Adelaide University Athletics Club Run the Loop 2026. Bullrush Park/Warnpangga (Park 10). Supported by the City of Adelaide Community Grants. Photo: Evalin Brautigam, John Yin and Riley Hughes

Priorities for Goal Three: People can shape their community

We will support people to contribute their cultural knowledge and lived experience, engage in decision-making, and shape outcomes that affect them.

Priorities	Where we are	Where we want to be
3.1 Foster community leadership and capacity building	The Adelaide Community Leaders Program was one approach the City of Adelaide used to support community leadership development; other examples from across local government include Youth Advisory Groups and Leaders Scholarships.	We want to support community leaders, particularly those from priority groups, with the training, networks, resources and opportunities they need to shape their local community.
3.2 Value and embed Lived and Living Experience	The City of Adelaide Community Engagement Charter outlines a commitment to actively seek community feedback and input to enable all community members to have an opportunity to participate in decisions that impact them. However, many priority groups do not contribute to traditional community engagement processes.	We want to develop a Lived and Living Experience Framework that can guide how we engage with lived and living experience in a way that is authentic, trauma-informed and appropriately remunerated.
3.3 Partner with the community to co-design services and programs	The City of Adelaide Community Engagement Charter outlines a commitment to recognise the diverse needs of our community and create inclusive, accessible opportunities to share feedback. A commitment to co-design requires time, resources, skills and funding, which need to be built into project management.	We want to explore needs, aspirations and opportunities before drafting ideas or solutions. We want to co-create the scope, priorities and success measures for our projects. We aim to share decision-making power and support the engagement of priority groups.



Image: Welcoming Leaders Program and Minor Works Building Community Centre (2022). Photo: Capture the Present

Case Study:

City of Adelaide Access and Inclusion Advisory Panel

The Access and Inclusion Advisory Panel aims to connect the City of Adelaide with people's lived experience of disability. The Panel meets quarterly to help shape access and inclusion outcomes for key projects, programs and policies across the city. The Panel is made up of six individual and six organisational members who provide timely and expert advice on real life deliverables. Panel members are paid a sitting fee in recognition of their contribution. Their advice creates better project outcomes and helps to make our great city safe, accessible and inclusive for all city users.



Image: City of Adelaide Access and Inclusion Advisory Panel (2026)

Priorities for Goal Four: People are resilient

We will strengthen people's ability to respond to challenges, support each other during difficult times, and build long-term resilience.

Priorities	Where we are	Where we want to be
4.1 Increase access to safe, nutritious and affordable food	One in six families in South Australia experiences food insecurity, caused by a lack of access to food, rather than a lack of availability. Paid employment is no longer considered a safeguard against poverty. Risk factors for waged poverty include being the sole earner in a household, engaging in precarious, low-paid employment (eg gig work), major life changes and under-employment. Research shows that people experiencing waged poverty rank lower on a number of health-related indicators, including quality of life and mortality.	We want to collaborate with local partners to develop a 'food plus' system, where people can access food in a range of welcoming, dignified social environments.
4.2 Recognise and support the contribution of volunteers	In 2021, 19% of City of Adelaide residents (4,473 people) contributed to the local community as volunteers. While volunteer numbers declined by almost 200 people compared to 2016 census figures, City of Adelaide residents are more likely to volunteer than those in Greater Adelaide, with 15.5% of residents volunteering. In 2025/26, the City of Adelaide engaged 284 volunteers who collectively contributed approximately 16,000 hours across 36 volunteer programs. Their contributions translated to a dollar value of over \$834,413. 70% of the City of Adelaide volunteers reside outside the LGA. 93% of 2025 Volunteer Survey respondents reported high or very high levels of wellbeing connected to their volunteering. The wider city volunteering network includes people contributing their time to festivals, hospitals, health services, sporting clubs and recreation. While the sheer breadth of volunteer contributions in SA is immense, this comes at a significant personal cost to volunteers. Research reveals an hourly cost of \$14.92 to volunteer, with volunteers absorbing 83.3% of the total expenses of volunteering, compared to 16.7% for volunteer-involving organisations. Additionally, 9.5% of paid volunteer managers and 23% of unpaid volunteer managers bear the brunt of costs related to volunteering activities.	We want volunteering to be supported, accessible, and sustainable for everyone by reducing the financial burden on volunteers.
4.3 Foster connected, resilient and thriving neighbourhoods	In our 2025 annual Residents Survey, 86% of respondents said they could get help from family, friends, or neighbours when needed, and 62% said they trust people in their neighbourhood. However, only 53% reported feeling a strong sense of belonging to their local community. The National Social Capital and Social Infrastructure Framework (2025) found neighbourhoods across the City of Adelaide show a wide mix of social capital and social infrastructure levels. Some areas have strong social ties and a high density of places that draw people together. Others, however, show signs of low connection – where people are less engaged with each other and with local places, such as pubs, cafés, or community spaces. In many of these areas, people are studying or spending more time alone at home, which reduces everyday opportunities to connect.	We want people to feel a strong sense of belonging in their neighbourhood and support the development of mutual aid networks.



Image: City of Adelaide Talk with a Local Volunteer Program Participants at the Adelaide Botanic Gardens Gathering (2025)

Case Study: Talk with a Local

The Talk with a Local volunteer program was established as an action from the *Promoting International Student Resilience and Wellbeing through Community Engagement – Pilot Report (2024)* prepared by the UniSA, Centre for Research in Education and Social Inclusion in partnership with the City of Adelaide and Bupa. The program facilitates local connections and friendships, as well as English language practice and cultural exchange between local residents and international students.

“The program provided me with many benefits, such as learning more about Australia's lifestyle and meeting a wonderful volunteer whom I used to see every week.”
– International student

Case Study: Ageing Well Podcast Pilot Project

The Ageing Well Podcast Pilot Project brought together older city residents from November to December 2025 to create and share meaningful content about their stories of living in the city. Over eight weeks, participants learnt how to develop and produce a podcast series, using technology available through our library service. The project aimed to increase knowledge of local connection points, resources and services in response to findings of the COTA SA's *The Plug-In Report* for the city. After a successful pilot that saw participants' confidence with technology and social connections increase, new volunteer roles have been created for a team of content and storytellers to share stories of ageing in the city.

Priorities for Goal Five: People keep learning throughout their lives

We will provide accessible learning opportunities, programs, and resources that enable people to develop skills, knowledge, and confidence at any age.

Priorities	Where we are	Where we want to be
5.1 Build skills and provide resources to engage in a digital world	The Australian Digital Inclusion Index (ADII) – provides a comprehensive picture of Australia’s online participation by measuring three key dimensions of digital inclusion: Access, Affordability, and Digital Ability. Around one in five (20.6%) Australians are excluded or highly excluded, and roughly one in ten (9.2%) are highly excluded. Rates of exclusion are much higher for people aged 75+ years (66.5%), those who did not complete secondary school (54.5%), public housing residents (45.2%) and First Nations people (40.9%). SA has a 71.3 index score, the lowest affordability index on mainland Australia. 9.7% of the population only have access to a mobile connection, limiting their ability to effectively access education, work, healthcare and online government services.	We want to bridge the digital divide by providing access to digital technology and building people’s capability to utilise digital technology to realise health and wellbeing benefits.
5.2 Encourage creativity and resourcefulness through making and repairing	Our community centres and libraries provide access to a range of programs and resources that support making and repairing. We also provide grant funding to support community partners to deliver programs and resources that encourage making and repairing.	We want to maintain and enhance our natural ecosystems and move to a circular economy.
5.3 Celebrate diverse cultures and artistic expression in the community	Adelaide is Australia’s first and only UNESCO Creative City of Music and is part of a global network committed to driving culture as foundational for the city’s sustainable and inclusive development across economic, social, cultural and environmental dimensions. Honouring the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the City of Adelaide is committed to ensuring that everyone has the right to participate in, enjoy, and contribute to the city’s cultural life.	We want to value, protect, champion and promote the city’s unique history, identity, character, creativity and cultural life and strengthen Adelaide’s role as a global cultural capital.

Priorities for Goal Six: People feel safe where they live, work and spend time

We will create and maintain safe, welcoming, and accessible places and spaces, while promoting community awareness and safety initiatives.

Priorities	Where we are	Where we want to be
6.1 Ensure community centres and libraries are accessible, well-equipped and responsive to community needs	The Residents Survey found that in the past three months, 63% of residents visited a library, and 91% of residents see the library as a trusted public space. One in five residents (19%) recently visited a community centre, with higher usage among those aged 40 and older (24%). 52% of respondents would like to access more wellbeing programs. The <i>2023 Social Infrastructure Assessment</i> highlights the strong value generated by our community facilities, including both community centres and libraries. The three community centres deliver \$4.4 million in total benefits at a cost of \$650,000, while the three library centres provide \$16.5 million in benefits at a cost of \$5.5 million. In both cases, there are opportunities to further increase impact through investment. Increasingly, community centres and libraries are serving as refuges for the community against extreme weather events driven by climate change, including heatwaves, as directed by state government 'Code Red and Blue' alerts. Our centres also serve customers who cannot access in-person customer service from the state and federal government, such as Services Australia. Throughout our consultation, we heard that priority groups were more likely to seek help and safety at a library than other sources of safety, such as security guards or police.	We want to be a city that enhances safety and wellbeing by ensuring our community centres and libraries are accessible, well-staffed, and able to meet the needs of all users.
6.2 Implement initiatives that prevent gender-based violence and support survivors	Violence against women is experienced across all communities and cultures. However, its nature, prevalence and risk factors differ within population groups. 94% of South Australians agreed that violence against women is a problem in Australia, but only 38% of South Australians agreed it is a problem in their suburb or town. Two in five women (39%) have experienced violence since the age of 15. Men are more commonly the perpetrators of physical violence, sexual harassment and sexual violence. On average, one woman is killed every nine days by a current or former partner. In the year 2021/22, 4,620 women aged 15 years and over (an average of 13 women a day) were hospitalised due to family and domestic violence. The Royal Commission into Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence (DFS) recommended that the government identify places and spaces across SA where people may seek help for DFS and work to develop awareness of a central entry-point service within those places and spaces, which could include libraries and community centres.	We want a community where respect, equality and accountability prevent gender-based violence.

Priorities	Where we are	Where we want to be
6.3 Promote healthy streets and environments that support physical, social and mental wellbeing	In partnership with the state government, local government provides foundational public health services to protect people from public health risks. Examples of the work undertaken by the City of Adelaide to protect public health include food safety checks, regulation of wastewater systems, vaccination programs and communicable disease management, monitoring of cooling towers, public swimming and spa pools, responding to climate change challenges, disaster response and public space management. City of Adelaide also has a role in public space management and road safety. Crash data shows that between 2020 and 2024, five people died on our streets, 126 people were seriously injured and 844 people had minor injuries.	We want to work in partnership with the state government to promote and protect the health of residents and visitors and reduce the incidence of preventable illness, injury and disability. We want to create Healthy Streets – streets that prioritise people’s wellbeing by reducing pollution, encouraging active travel, and fostering social interaction.

Case Study:

Creating a pathway to meaningful employment – a City of Adelaide/Catherine House partnership

The City of Adelaide partnered with Catherine House to create meaningful employment opportunities for women experiencing homelessness, many of whom have been impacted by gender-based violence. Building on Catherine House’s accommodation and trauma-informed support services, the program provides a safe, supported pathway back into work through paid, part-time internships within select Council teams.

This innovative initiative demonstrates the impact of purposeful collaboration between Local Government, community organisations, and dedicated staff. By combining compassion with strategic planning, the program delivers genuine social impact while offering a blueprint for Councils seeking to develop inclusive employment pathways within their communities.

Priority Groups

Our vision is for a vibrant, connected and inclusive city, where people who live, work and visit are supported to thrive across all life stages.

Some people face greater barriers to health, safety, inclusion, or participation. These barriers can include discrimination, cost, limited access to services, language, disability, or social isolation. A priority groups approach helps address these gaps by prioritising investment to remove systemic barriers and create fairer outcomes.

Priority Group	Evidence for inclusion
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	Over-represented in homelessness data, face systemic barriers to culturally safe systems and supports. Connection to Country and culture is essential for wellbeing.
Children and families	Early intervention and support are needed for healthy development, especially in high-density, low-income households.
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) people	45% of residents are born overseas; language, cultural stigma, and service navigation are key barriers to wellbeing.
International students	High risk of isolation, financial stress, workplace exploitation, food insecurity, and mental health issues and often lack access to mainstream health and wellbeing services.
Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning, asexual (LGBTIQA+)	Experience higher rates of discrimination, mental health challenges, and housing insecurity and limited spaces and places for safe, inclusive recreation, such as night-life.
Older people (50+ years)	Highly vulnerable to cost-of-living pressures and at risk of isolation and digital exclusion. Many people are experiencing chronic health conditions and live alone.
People experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage	Face compounding barriers to housing, health, employment and are vulnerable to cost-of-living pressures.
People from refugee backgrounds and/or asylum seekers	Often experience trauma, language barriers, and limited access to culturally appropriate services.
People with disability	Often face social exclusion and housing challenges, requiring accessible environments and inclusive services.
Women	Disproportionately affected by gendered violence, the impact of caregiving responsibilities and economic insecurity, leading to housing insecurity.
Young people (12–25 years)	High rates of mental distress, housing precarity, unemployment and higher rates of climate/eco-anxiety.

How the Strategy was Developed

Community Development Discussion Paper – February 2024

We considered our historic role in community development and the challenges and opportunities in the current policy setting.

Stakeholder Workshops – November 2025

We partnered with the Centre for Social Impact, Flinders University, to host stakeholder workshops to better understand the current and emerging trends impacting community wellbeing, including cost of living, socio-economic divide, community connections, safety and public space, age divide and population growth.

Policy Review

Our existing policy and plans informed the Strategy. We considered local government's role in community wellbeing and how this interacts with state and federal government responsibilities.

Consultation

Over 300 people were engaged over the course of the public consultation. Their feedback has shaped the priorities within the Strategy.

Strategic Alignment

City of Adelaide

Subject Matter	Relevant City of Adelaide Policy
Adelaide Park Lands	Adelaide Park Lands Building Design Guidelines Adelaide Park Lands Community Buildings (Sport and Recreation) Policy Adelaide Park Lands Management Strategy
Arts and Culture	Cultural Policy Christmas Festival Action Plan (2024–2028) Adelaide Events Guidelines
Business and Work	Economic Development Strategy – A thriving economy for all Adelaide Economic Development Agency Strategic Plan
Climate	Integrated Climate Strategy 2030 Climate Risk and Opportunities Register Resilient East Climate Action Plan (RECAP)
Community Facilities	Asset Management Plans Community Facilities Policy and Implementation Plan
Equity and Inclusion	Homelessness Strategy – Everyone’s Business Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (2024–2028) Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (2024–2027)
Health	Regional Public Health Plan
Housing	Housing Strategy – Investing in our housing future City Plan – Adelaide 2036
Safety	Safer City Policy 2019–2023
Transport	Integrated Transport Strategy
Wellbeing	Community Wellbeing Strategy (2026–2030)

Implementation

The goals and priorities outlined in the Strategy are timed for delivery over a four-year implementation cycle. Delivery is subject to the Annual Business Plan and Budget process.

Monitoring and Learning

Our annual strategic reporting will summarise how well we have delivered, including:

- Participation and access metrics from Community Centres, Libraries and Volunteering
- Priority group engagement case studies
- Community satisfaction and inclusion indicators from the Residents' Survey and City User Profile
- Progress on goals and priorities via the annual report against the Annual Business Plan and Budget
- Population Health Profile from Preventive Health SA
- Lease and licence holder data.



Image: Gather, Dance and Explore 2026. Place Activation at Whitmore Square Ipparityi. Photo: Saige Prime

Glossary

Accessibility: the design of services, spaces and information to ensure they can be used by people of all abilities, backgrounds and needs.

Active Participation: the involvement of individuals in community life, decision-making, programs or civic activities.

City Safety: the condition where all people can move through and participate in urban life without fear of harm, exclusion, or discrimination. It includes physical, social, cultural and emotional safety, ensuring environments are respectful and inclusive of everyone.

Co-design: a collaborative approach where community members actively contribute to the design of programs, services or policies. The process ensures that those with technical expertise and lived experience come together on equal ground design specific solutions so that they are better tailored to actual needs.

Community Development: a long-term, participatory, and strengths-based approach to work alongside communities and build capacity, foster empowerment and promote social justice.

Cost of Living: the rising cost of bills, inflation, energy costs and affordable food that are impacting the ability of people to keep pace with the cost of expenses. Fixed expenses like rent and utility consume household budgets, leaving less for food and essential services or activities that promote wellbeing.

Digital inclusion: the ability of individuals and communities to access and use digital technology effectively and safely.

Equity: fairness in access to opportunities, resources and outcomes, recognising that different groups may require different levels of support.

Food Security: when people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preference for an active and healthy life.

Inclusion: the deliberate act of creating environments and communities where everyone, regardless of background, identity, or ability, feels valued, respected, and supported to fully participate.

Intersectionality: the way different aspects of a person's identity (eg cultural background, gender, income, ability) combine to create unique experiences of disadvantage or privilege.

Lived Experience: direct, personal knowledge and understanding gained through navigating specific life events, challenges or circumstances. It represents a form of expertise, and it is a perspective that is central for increasing understanding of experiences so that learnings can be applied to benefit others.

Placemaking: a participatory process where communities work together to improve public spaces, strengthening social connections, enhancing local economies and creating safe, accessible and meaningful places.

Resilience: the ability of individuals and communities to respond to, adapt to, and recover from challenges or adverse situations.

Social Capital: the social networks, relationships, and trust that enable individuals and groups to work together for mutual benefit. Social capital is what brings communities together, fostering cooperation, reciprocity, and improved performance in social and economic endeavours.

Social Infrastructure: the facilities, spaces, services and networks that support the quality of life and wellbeing of our communities. The network of social infrastructure contributes to social identity, inclusion and cohesion, and helps communities to feel happy, safe, to learn and to enjoy life.

Volunteering: time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain. Volunteers share their passions, abilities, and skills in meaningful ways that strengthen community capacity.

Measuring Community Wellbeing

City Profile

Our community is vibrant and dynamic, with almost 30,000 residents and 350,000 daily city visitors. The Adelaide Park Lands welcome 10 million visitors annually. Our resident base is diverse, with 45% of our residents born overseas and 36% speaking a language other than English. Adelaide is also home to the young and young-at-heart. Nearly half of our residents are aged 18 to 34 and 15% are over 65. Our demographic profile creates a unique mix of students, early-career professionals and older residents, each with different housing and service needs and suggests that our city

acts as a demographic entry point, facilitating movement from within Adelaide and SA, interstate and overseas.

The City of Adelaide is also home to almost 13,000 businesses and contributes close to 18% of the state’s economic value. Financial and insurance services; professional, scientific and technical services; and public administration and safety form the city’s three largest industries in terms of economic contribution. Adelaide is also the international gateway for migration and education in South Australia.

At a glance	Housing	Diversity
30,173 residents (2% of Greater Adelaide)	Median house price: \$1.22 million (Greater Adelaide: \$880,000)	45% of residents were born overseas (28% in Greater Adelaide). Top countries of birth include China, United Kingdom and India
12,717 local businesses (10% of Greater Adelaide)	Median weekly rent: \$680 per week (Greater Adelaide: \$620 per week)	47,388 international students studied in SA (Jan-Dec 2025) across Higher Education, Vocational Education and Training and English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students.
172,652 local workers (22% of Greater Adelaide)	54% high-density housing	43% of residents are young adults 20–35 years (21% in Greater Adelaide)
4% population growth (one of the highest in South Australia)	41% lone person households – particularly among older people and international students	15% of residents are older adults 65+ years (19% in Greater Adelaide)
Residents aged 15 and over span the full income spectrum, reflecting both affluence and financial vulnerability: 31% are in the highest income quartile, 29% in the lowest.	1,422 households have an unmet need for affordable housing in Adelaide (12.8% of all households, compared with 4.8% for Greater Adelaide)	High rates of mobile populations (students, short-term renters, tourists). Between 2016 and 2021, 73.9% of the population turned over

Appendix B

Community Data

The City of Adelaide regularly collects sentiment and service data to better understand our community. Our Resident Survey, Business Survey and City User Profile (CUP) surveys form the core components of our community data collection:

Goal One: People feel welcome and connected

86% of residents feel confident they could rely on family, friends, or neighbours for help when needed, and 62% trust people in their neighbourhood. However, only 53% of residents feel a strong sense of belonging to their local community. Overall, 68% of residents perceive their community as either "Very inclusive or Somewhat inclusive," indicating a generally positive view of inclusivity within local communities. This perception is generally consistent across gender and age. (2025 Resident Survey).

Engagement through sport: Watching sports in the City of Adelaide is a popular activity, with 35% of respondents engaging, especially among city workers. Men were more likely than women to participate in sports and recreational activities, with a total of 46% compared with 32%. A similar pattern emerges by country of birth, with Australian-born respondents more likely to watch sports (37%) than those born overseas (30%). Income levels also play a role; those with a household income of \$150k or more were far more likely to watch sports in the City of Adelaide (42%) compared with those earning \$75k or less (24%) (CUP 2025).

Goal Two: People are active and healthy

Just over half of residents (52%) rate their health as 'Excellent' or 'Very Good'. Physical activity is common, with residents averaging between 3.4 to 4.7 days per week. When asked about various aspects of their lives, residents generally felt positive, rating the worthiness of their lives at an average of 8/10, their happiness at 7/10, and life satisfaction at 8/10. People over 65 were more likely to agree with these statements, particularly those aged 65–74 years.

Residents generally exhibited low levels of anxiety, with 36% reporting little or no anxiety at all. People under 40 generally had lower levels of life satisfaction, particularly those in the 31 to 39 age group, where differences were significant (2025 Resident Survey).

The city as a health hub: One-third of city users (33%) reported visiting the City of Adelaide for health-related services. Medical appointments were a key reason for visiting the city, particularly for people aged 50 and above, with 37% reporting such visits. This trend was even stronger among individuals with a disability, with nearly half (46%) having attended appointments in the past year (CUP 2025).

Goal Three: People can shape their community

The 2025 Resident Survey shows that 25% of residents feel they have a voice in decision-making in their local community.

At the time of the survey, 53% of respondents agreed that they felt informed about the work undertaken by the City of Adelaide. Since then, These findings indicate opportunities to further improve how residents feel informed about Council activities, particularly among older residents and in areas where satisfaction is lower. Council has taken significant steps to strengthen communication and engagement, including the launch of the new Our Adelaide platform and the endorsement of the Community Engagement Charter in December 2025.

Goal Four: People are resilient

In the City of Adelaide, 19% of the population reported doing some form of voluntary work in 2021. This was greater than the proportion of Greater Adelaide (16%). Note that volunteer numbers for the 2021 Census declined in many parts of Australia due to lockdowns and COVID-19 distancing measures.

Goal Five: People keep learning throughout their lives

Residents expressed the benefits from visiting libraries and community centres including access to trusted information or services (51%), feeling safe and welcome (40%) and gaining knowledge (36%).

About half of City of Adelaide residents visited city libraries or community centres in the past three months. Visitation varies by cohort with 68% of household with children and 65% City South-East residents visiting a centre in the past three months. Visitation also increases with age from 43% of young people (18–30 years) to 74% of people aged over 75 years (Resident Survey).

The City User Profile Survey revealed that residents and students are most likely to visit City of Adelaide libraries, with 36% of resident responders and 39% of student respondents stating they have visited a City Library in the last 12 months. This is compared to 28% of city workers, 15% of tourists and 12% city visitors. (CUP 2025).

Goal Six: People feel safe where they live, work and spend time

78% of residents feel that the city is welcoming to people from diverse cultural backgrounds, 83% agree that the city's parks and open spaces are well maintained, and 78% agree that local event and activations make neighbourhoods vibrant. While the majority of residents feel positively about the city, the 2025 Resident Survey identifies opportunities to further strengthen safety effectiveness, and communication.

89% of residents feel safe using public spaces during the day, but only 44% at night (2025 Resident Survey). Perceptions of safety also decrease for all city users as the evening progresses with only 17% feeling safe between 1am and 8am. Women, older individuals, and people with disabilities reported the lowest perceptions of safety at night. Suggestions for improving safety included better street lighting, increased police presence, and improved public space management, alongside calls for community engagement and social support to address issues such as homelessness and alcohol-related disturbances (CUP 2025).

These insights provide a clear focus for ongoing improvements to ensure all residents feel secure and confident in the Council's initiatives.

Appendix C

Population Health Snapshot

The Population Health Profile from Preventive Health SA includes Census 2021 health data and South Australian population health datasets.

Overall health status and city-specific public health considerations:

- 26% of City of Adelaide residents report one or more long term health conditions, which is significantly lower than Greater Adelaide (34.5%) and SA overall.
- Despite lower overall prevalence, mental health conditions are the most commonly reported long term condition.
- In the City of Adelaide, health and wellbeing strategies must prioritise prevention, mental wellbeing, injury prevention, and social connection, rather than age related chronic disease services that dominate Greater and Regional SA needs.
- Effective action requires culturally responsive approaches, multilingual communication, and strong partnerships with education, settlement, and community organisations.
- Lower proportions of residents report disability or need for assistance compared with Greater Adelaide and Regional SA. While prevalence is lower, universal design and housing quality remain key determinants of participation and wellbeing in a capital city environment.
- The City of Adelaide shows high socioeconomic diversity amongst our residents, with significant contrasts between high income professionals and vulnerable groups, including low income renters, students, and people experiencing homelessness. LGA wide averages can mask concentrated disadvantage. Place-based and targeted interventions are essential to effectively address inequities.
- The City of Adelaide's population is healthier on average than Greater Adelaide and SA, but has distinct capital city and mental health needs requiring tailored prevention and wellbeing strategies.



Image: Wawi Nights Vintage, Vinyl and Vibes 2026. Place Activation in Light Square Wauwi. Photo: Saige Prime



Image: Adelaide City Skate Park Launch. Photo Saige Prime

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Pride Adelaide. Supported by the City of Adelaide Community Grants. Photo: Sam Graves

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