

Report to the Future Melbourne Committee**Agenda item 6.3****Reactivation and Recovery Plan update****1 June 2021****Presenter: Katrina McKenzie, General Manager City Economy and Activation****Purpose and background**

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) on achievements against the *COVID-19 Reactivation and Recovery Plan* ('R&R Plan' – Attachment 2) and the ways that the ideas in it are reflected in the draft documents recently endorsed by Council for public consultation.

Key issues

2. The R&R Plan included a number 'priority recovery actions' which formed the City of Melbourne's immediate response to the pandemic. These were broadly grouped under the headings of 'prioritise public health and wellbeing' and 'reactivate the city.'
3. The City of Melbourne has made substantial progress against all of the priority recovery actions in the R&R Plan. These initiatives have contributed to Melbourne's successful reactivation and recovery efforts. While the city's recovery is incomplete – and is likely to be further set back by new health-related restrictions – office workers have been returning, entertainment activity has been increasing and shoppers have come back to the city.
4. Key reactivation and recovery achievements have included:
 - 4.1. The highly visible \$3 million 'grime-busting' street-cleaning campaign that has included removal of an additional 1,000 pieces of graffiti since January 2021. This complements the 1.5 hectares of anti-graffiti coating applied to city buildings. The City of Melbourne also responds to customers' requests to remove graffiti, the majority of which is removed within five days. These extensive cleaning efforts ensure that when members of the public return to the city, they discover a city that is clean and looking its best.
 - 4.2. The Flash-Forward creative laneways program secured \$7.5m from the Victorian government along with \$650,000 (capital) from the City of Melbourne. This job-creation program has employed over 160 creatives to reimagine 40 of Melbourne's CBD laneways and support the city's social and economic recovery. To date 40 new music albums have been commissioned, 40 mural and street art works and a range of integrated and stand-alone lighting installations are currently being delivered. All Flash-Forward Program commissions are on track to be delivered by August 2021.
 - 4.3. Delivery of a major program of events and activations, including Urban Blooms, Music in the City, Melbourne Music Week Extended (MMW), Christmas Festival and a reimagined New Year's program. In early 2021, a reimagined Moomba Festival was delivered along with playground activations during Easter at Docklands. These events provided employment, supported industries that were particularly hit by closures and attracted significant visitation over a six month period when Melbourne needed it the most.
 - 4.3.1. MMW was reimagined from its usual week-long model to a three-month extended program from 9 December to 28 February because of COVID. MMW Extended made a significant contribution to the music industry as a whole, with over 1,000 people directly employed as a result, including artists, music venue operators and artist bookers. MMW Extended strengthened its support to the industry by designing its largest program to date. Combining forces with key cultural institutions such as NGV, Melbourne Museum, The Capitol and Sidney Myer Music Bowl, the result was significantly more musicians employed over a longer time frame. Core to MMW-Extended was support for Melbourne's music venues – these were amongst the first public venues to close and the last to re-open during COVID. MMW Extended programmed 67 shows in music venues, working with them to fund performances and cover costs to stage events.

- 4.4. The activation of 70 vacant shopfronts (through to June 2021), with artworks by local artists, bringing colour and vibrancy to shopping precincts. Four of these shops have already been leased.
 - 4.5. The Extended Outdoor Dining Program (EOD) that provided a life-line to hospitality business through 915 permits issued (with fee waivers) and the establishment of 206 parklets for diners. The extension of the program is being warmly anticipated by hospitality providers and restaurateurs who feel that despite the colder months approaching, the EOD program continues to support their businesses.
 - 4.6. The deployment of more than 11.5 kms of bike lanes, which has allowed for increased use of this COVID-safe mode of transport by commuters. Volumes of bicycles have increased by 11 per cent month-on-month, and are now at 58 per cent of pre-COVID levels, which is a stronger recovery than that experienced by public transport, demonstrating that commuters looking for COVID-safe ways to access the city are happy to get on their bikes.
5. The R&R plan also sketched out a number of 'opportunities to consider implementing over the next four years'. Many of these ideas have since been developed further and are reflected in both the draft Council Plan and draft Economic Development Strategy. For example:
 - 5.1. The R&R Plan's focus on building economic resilience is reflected in the draft Economic Development Strategy, and in particular the key priority of 'Beyond the Office'. This includes actions to 'support the growth of technology sectors that have the capacity to be globally competitive' and 'globally competitive innovation districts in City North, Arden and Fisherman's Bend.'
 - 5.2. The R&R Plan's focus on affordability and access is reflected in the draft Council Plan through the Access and Affordability objective, which aims to ensure universal access to housing, core services and information.
 - 5.3. The R&R Plan's focus on transforming our spaces and buildings is reflected in the draft Council plan through the 'Climate and Biodiversity Emergency' and 'Melbourne's Unique Identity and Place' objectives.
 6. Successful advocacy by the City of Melbourne has also resulted in significant contributions by the Victorian governments to the city's reactivation and recovery efforts:
 - 6.1. In late September 2020, the Victorian government joined with the City of Melbourne to establish the \$100 million Melbourne City Recovery Fund. The Fund has supported delivery of many R&R Plan activities. It has additionally provided support for Queen Victoria Market traders and Council's free-parking initiative that actively supported traders in the lead-up to Christmas 2020.
 - 6.2. In the May 2021 budget, the Victorian government announced that it would contribute a further \$107.4 million to the city's revitalisation, through the establishment of the Melbourne City Revitalisation Fund and the Melbourne Money dining initiative. The new fund will support the city's recovery efforts over the next two years.

Recommendation from management

7. That the Future Melbourne Committee:
 - 7.1. Note the progress against the priority actions of the *COVID-19 Reactivation and Recovery (R&R) Plan*.
 - 7.2. Note that since the R&R Plan's release, the ideas within it have been developed further and are reflected in both the draft Council Plan and draft Economic Development Strategy.

Attachments:

1. Supporting Attachment (Page 3 of 53)
2. City of Melbourne Recovery and Reactivation Plan – September 2020 (Page 4 of 53)

Supporting Attachment

Legal

1. No direct legal issues arise from the recommendation from management.

Finance

2. Actions and opportunities for action will be considered as part of existing Council processes.

Conflict of interest

3. No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a material or general conflict of interest in relation to the matter of the report.

Health and Safety

4. In developing this proposal, no Occupational Health and Safety issues or opportunities have been identified.

Stakeholder consultation

5. Throughout July and August 2020, broad community research, as well as targeted engagement with experts was undertaken to deepen our understanding of the trends and issues that were facing people, places and businesses in the City. Utilising the collective intelligence of both community and experts was vital in creating an inclusive, balanced and bold Reactivation and Recovery Plan.

Relation to Council policy

8. Many of the ideas in the R&D Plan have since been developed further and are reflected in both the draft Council Plan and draft Economic Development Strategy.

Environmental sustainability

6. The actions in the R&R Plan were drafted to align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals to ensure the future we build is prosperous and sustainable for all.

COVID-19 REACTIVATION AND RECOVERY PLAN

CITY OF THE FUTURE
SEPTEMBER 2020



CITY OF MELBOURNE

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

The City of Melbourne respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Bunurong Boon Wurrung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin Nation and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. We are committed to our reconciliation journey, because at its heart, reconciliation is about strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, for the benefit of all Victorians.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Up until March 2020, Melbourne’s central city had a daytime population of nearly a million people, Australia’s fastest growing night time economy and an annual Gross Local Product of more than \$104 billion. Greater Melbourne was on track to become Australia’s biggest city by 2030. Accolades such as the World’s Most Liveable City were frequent. We were at a high water mark.

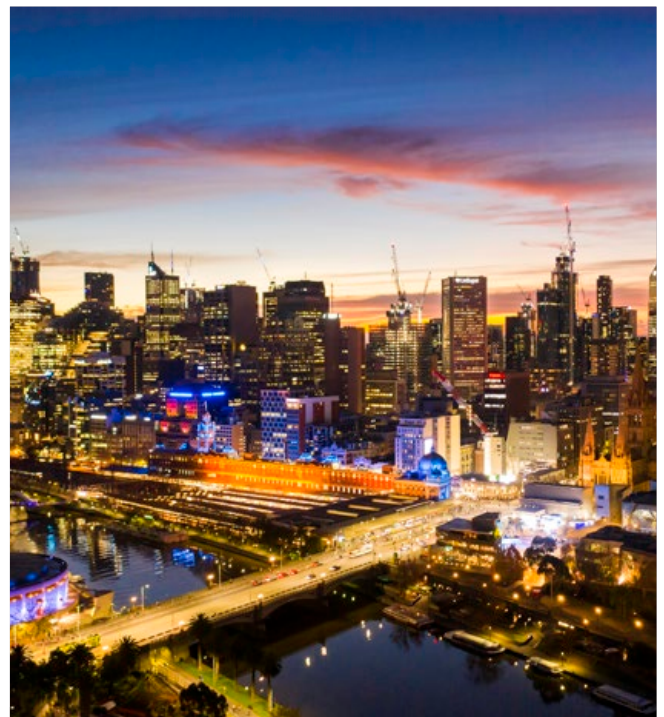
The COVID-19 pandemic has had devastating health, economic and social impacts on Melbourne’s businesses and communities. Severe and changing restrictions to stem the spread of COVID-19 have sharply disrupted the way Melburnians live and work, changing the very nature of our social fabric. Our city economy has been hit hard and the livelihood and well-being of so many has been significantly damaged.

This Reactivation and Recovery Plan highlights the immediate actions we must take to support Melbourne’s recovery and shape the future Melbourne we aspire for. We are steadfast in our commitment to work together with our community, businesses and other levels of government to respond to this crisis and create a better future. Through a series of public engagement and research activities, this work has been built with the input of our community and experts from across Melbourne, Australia and the globe.

Seven initiatives represent our city’s plan for reactivation and recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic. Together, they connect our immediate response to the crisis with our city’s longer term regeneration. By linking the actions that we take in the short-term with the outcomes we want to see in the future, we can ensure that we target our resources to those initiatives that best meet our long term strategic objectives and ultimately deliver maximum benefit for our city and its citizens.

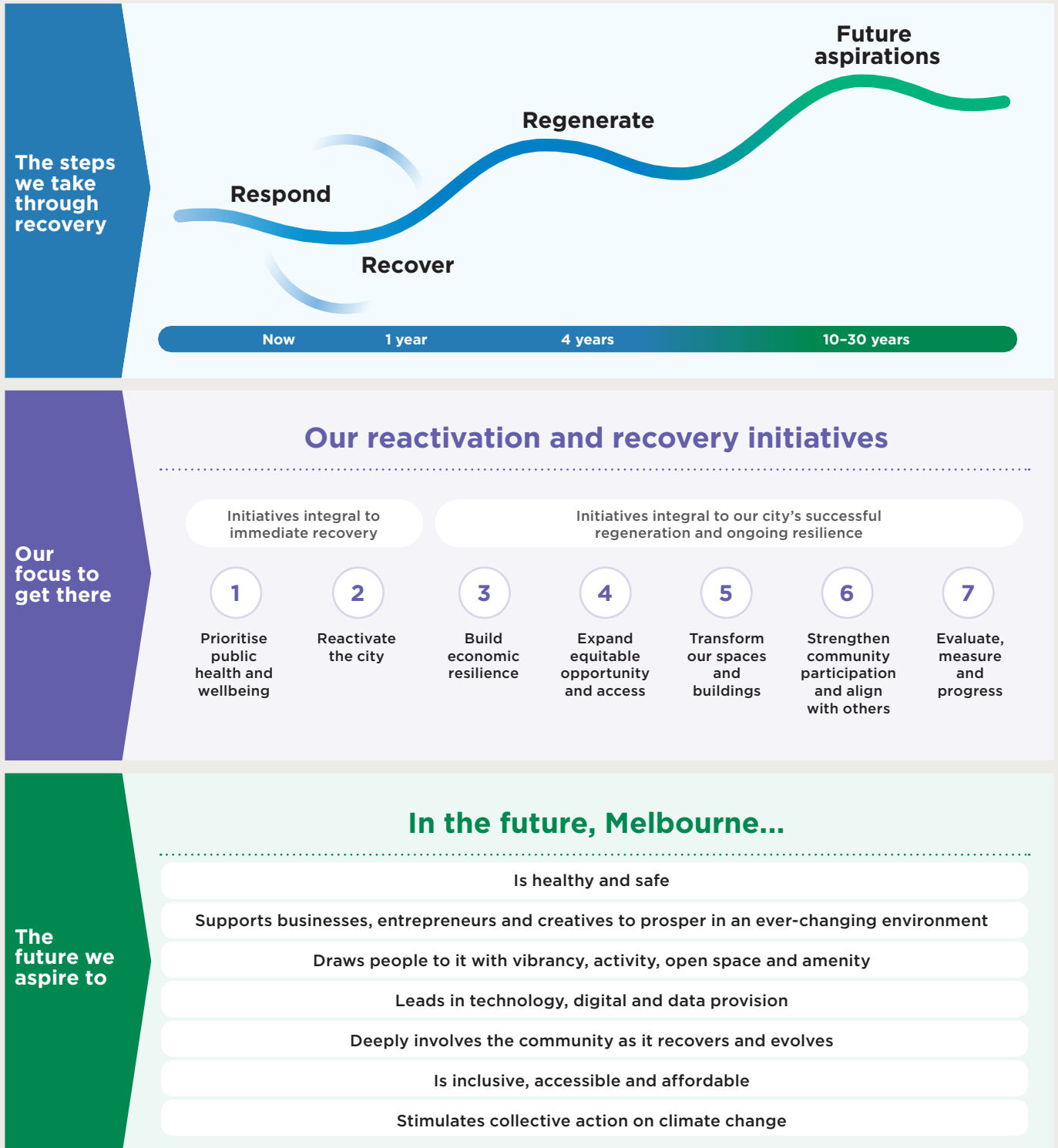
Given the unique and profound impact this pandemic has had on the economy of the central city, immediate stimulus funding is required from the Victorian and Australian Governments. In addition to our reactivation and recovery initiatives, this plan also puts forward priority projects that represent significant opportunities to advance Melbourne’s future and inject critical stimulus in the city’s, the state’s and the country’s economy.

As we begin the hard work of recovery, we will need to be flexible and responsive in our approach as we learn and actively prioritise our resources to maximise our impact. We will utilise the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a framework for prioritising our effort to assist us to recover even stronger and create a more resilient, prosperous and sustainable Melbourne.



This Reactivation and Recovery Plan highlights the immediate actions we must take to support Melbourne’s recovery and shape the future Melbourne we aspire for.

COVID-19 Reactivation and Recovery Plan summary



Priority recovery actions

1

Prioritise public health and wellbeing

Adjust our civic spaces to make physical distancing easier, including expanding footpaths, reducing speed limits and converting selected streets into pedestrian priority zones.

Work with the Victorian Government, Metro Trains and Yarra Trams to build confidence in the public transport network as safe, frequent and reliable, to support city workers returning to the city.

Deploy cleaning teams to continue sanitising frequently touched surfaces as people return to the city.

Promote physical distancing and hygiene measures through our wayfinding signage and city campaigns to encourage COVID-safe behaviour as people come back to the city.

Deliver a highly visible COVID-safe communication campaign emphasising the City of Melbourne as a safe place to work, live, study and visit.

Deliver additional bike lanes and pedestrian walkways to provide safe and active transport options for people, to connect travel into and through the central city.

Continue to provide safe accommodation for people experiencing homelessness in partnership with the Victorian Government ending rough sleeping and homelessness including advocacy for wrap around services.

2

Reactivate the city

Boost businesses ahead of the crucial Christmas peak period. We will deliver enhanced Christmas festivities and activations which encourage exploration and engagement with the city, and steer customers towards city businesses.

Sponsor events to attract people back to the city. Melbourne is the sporting and events capital of Australia. The City of Melbourne will accelerate and increase support for existing and new events and festivals. Our Events Partnership Program and Arts and Creative Investment Partnerships build on longstanding relationships with Melbourne's arts organisations, creative communities and festivals.

Promote and stimulate city businesses through our "What's On" marketing program; through social media, blogs, newsletters and digital advertising. We will invest to ensure an uplift from an average 3.2 million audience impressions each week to more than 7 million in the lead up to Christmas.

Expand dining opportunities when and where it is safe to do so. Laneways and outdoor dining have shaped the distinctive character and atmosphere of our city. Drawing on this, we will encourage some of Melbourne's 2390 cafes and restaurants to apply to expand outdoor dining in different ways such as extending their footprint, using on-street parking bays where safe and extending hours of operation.

Activate the little streets and laneways. We are trialling new street configurations that will allow pedestrians to move more freely and take advantage of outdoor dining and other activities. Starting with sections of Little Collins and Little Bourke Streets, the rest of the 'Little Streets' program includes Flinders Lane and Little Lonsdale Street. Transforming these streets will support the recovery and activities of hundreds of businesses.

Suspend fees for street trading permits. We've already waived 776 street trading permit fees for businesses across the municipality, and will continue to do so until 30 June 2021 to encourage greater outdoor activity.

Shopkeeper - working with owners, landlords, banks and retail associations to support new and creative retail businesses, community services and social enterprises to occupy vacant shops. This may include the City of Melbourne taking out tenancies in some locations.

Return to Workplace Pledge - working with the private and government sectors, we will support the coordination of staff returning to workplaces safely. Higher worker and visitor numbers in the city will stimulate commercial and retail activity. This phase will include asking CEOs to pledge to develop a solid plan for the staged return of their workforce to the central city.

Enliven vacant shop frontages and provide financial support to precinct associations, community groups, creative industry and businesses to reactivate retail strips with art installations, live performances and other pop-up activities.

Support the live music industry. We will reimagine Melbourne Music Week to deliver a new program of live performances, hosted within our city's existing music venues and new outdoor spaces throughout the city while adhering to COVID-19 measures. This will be led by performers supported to undertake online streaming throughout COVID-19 restrictions, therefore supporting recovery and bringing physical attendance and the city's live music scene back to life.

Reimagine Melbourne Fashion Week. Deliver smaller and more frequent events and activities, including new digital experiences, to reactivate retail and support the industry. Targeted advertising campaigns will encourage a safe return to the city and reignite people's passion to enjoy exciting experiences in our city.

CONTENTS

Executive summary	3
COVID-19 Reactivation and Recovery Plan summary	4
Priority recovery actions	5
Introduction	7
Purpose of this document	8
City of Melbourne's role	9
Reactivation and Recovery Plan development	10
Current context	12
Impacts of COVID-19	13
Existing challenges	17
Our response to date	18
Reactivation and Recovery Plan	20
Critical stimulus	22
Reactivation and Recovery initiatives	23
Future aspirations for Melbourne	38
Leveraging existing strengths	39
Community and expert insights	40
In the future, Melbourne...	42
Next steps	44
References	46
Appendix	48
City Economy Advisory Board	49

September 2020

Disclaimer

This report is provided for information and it does not purport to be complete. While care has been taken to ensure the content in the report is accurate, we cannot guarantee it is without flaw of any kind. There may be errors and omissions or it may not be wholly appropriate for your particular purposes. In addition, the publication is a snapshot in time based on historic information which is liable to change. The City of Melbourne accepts no responsibility and disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information contained in this report.

INTRODUCTION



Purpose of this document

The primary purpose of the COVID-19 Reactivation and Recovery Plan is to develop a consolidated understanding of the current crisis, in particular Melbourne’s critical challenges, and our shared aspirations for the future of the city.

The document also outlines how the City of Melbourne aims to approach city reactivation and recovery, given the high levels of uncertainty and ambiguity related to this crisis; and the actions available to drive a robust regeneration of our city over time. The immediate and short-term actions outlined in the plan form part of the Annual Plan and Budget endorsed by Council for 2020-21 ensuring that they can be implemented.

This Reactivation and Recovery Plan integrates with the City of Melbourne’s planning framework and existing strategic plans, leveraging the deep consultation, review processes and progressive policies integral to these.



City of Melbourne's role

As a local government authority and major capital city in Australia, the City of Melbourne will be central to the overall recovery and regeneration of our municipality, Victoria and Australia.

To do this we will leverage:

- constructive partnerships and relationships with local residential and business communities and educational and research institutions
- constructive partnerships with the Victorian and Australian Governments and their agencies
- the expertise of Melbourne's business community via the City Economy Advisory Board
- our long-standing record on service delivery
- the facilities we own and manage
- the ability to make or facilitate decisions about places and spaces
- the trust in our brand/organisation.

Not all of the actions we have identified for recovery and regeneration will be City of Melbourne's responsibility to deliver.

In many instances we can leverage skills, platforms, resources, services from other providers such as the Victorian and Australian Governments, private enterprise, social enterprise and community organisations. Using resources effectively we will avoid duplication.



Reactivation and Recovery Plan development

Delivered by the City of the Future Taskforce, the development of the Reactivation and Recovery Plan took a design-led approach. This entails alternate phases of broad exploration of topics and issues with analysis and synthesis of information into actionable outcomes. Inherent to the design-led approach was to take a holistic and systemic view of the city.

During the project a broad cross-section of community and experts participated in a variety of activities to generate an evidence base and to identify the aspirations, opportunities and issues when considering possible futures for a post COVID-19 Melbourne. Different groups generated ideas for bold action forming the basis of the Reactivation and Recovery Plan. These activities are outlined on page 11.

The actions documented in the Reactivation and Recovery Plan act as a guide for the City of Melbourne in achieving our future aspirations. These will continue to be iterated and prioritised in response to changing conditions in pursuit of city regeneration.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

We have aligned our actions in the Reactivation and Recovery Plan to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to ensure the future we build is prosperous and sustainable for all.

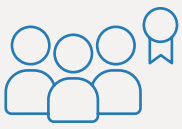
The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals are a collection of independent but interconnected global goals established in 2015 that provide a framework for achieving a better and more sustainable future for all by 2030. They address poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice.

The City of Melbourne is undertaking work to interpret the SDGs and their accompanying indicators at a local level. This will enable the organisation to track progress in meeting the goals, highlight gaps and assist with decision making and the prioritisation of resources.

The 17 SDGs are listed below.



Research and engagement activities undertaken in July and August 2020



Expert opinion

pieces developed and published

External subject matter experts drafted 17 opinion pieces in direct response to the critical issues facing Melbourne due to COVID-19. Each expert presented and participated in two public forums (Melbourne Conversation events), provoking dialogue with the community on these topics.



120 community members

120 community members interacted with local and international experts at two Melbourne Conversations events on the critical issues and opportunities for Melbourne due to COVID-19.

Community members shared their reflections on the COVID-19 pandemic and their aspirations for the future of the city with 72 submissions on Participate Melbourne, 395 likes, 65 comments and 42 shares.



A four-week online research campaign



20 diverse community members

A diverse cross section of 20 community members took part in two workshops to more deeply understand their lived experience, needs and aspirations during the pandemic.



City of Melbourne workshops

Throughout the project City of Melbourne Councillors have facilitated numerous workshops with businesses and community groups as well as contributing to a workshop which captured feedback they have received from the community and businesses, along with their own reflections on the crisis and aspirations for the future.

City Economy Advisory Board

Formally endorsed by Council and Chaired by the CEO

Strategic input from 16 external representatives across the Victorian and Australian Governments, economic advisors, university and private sectors. Seven sub-committees feed into the Advisory Board to provide data on the impacts of COVID-19 on the central city economy and form a view on the most significant opportunities for recovery (see Appendix).

42 local and global experts

A diverse group of 42 multidisciplinary experts, both international and local, participated in three rounds of a digital research activity to surface the key opportunities for recovery.



25 industry and student leaders

25 participants representing Fintech, Startups, International Students and Biomed industries took part in four discussions to understand the needs of affected cohorts.



more than 11,500

businesses contacted and seeking assistance

through our expanded COVID-19 Business Concierge Service reinforcing our understanding of the needs of local business.

78 artists and creatives



A short survey gathered 78 responses to understand more about the current state of the creative industry and their thoughts for the future.

CURRENT CONTEXT



Impacts of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the most significant public health and economic challenge Melbourne has faced in over a century. The full extent of these impacts are unknown and will depend directly on the ongoing public health response to the pandemic and behaviour changes—both temporary and permanent—that arise from our experience with the virus. The following section describes the current known impacts at the time of this document's publication.

Public health

COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by the newly discovered severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The virus can spread from person to person through close contact with an infectious person (including in the 48 hours before they had symptoms), contact with droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze, touching objects or surfaces that have droplets from an infected person, and then touching one's mouth or face (who.int, 2020).

As at 3 September 2020, globally there have been 25,602,665 confirmed cases and a total of 852,758 deaths.

COVID-19 was first confirmed in Australia in late January 2020. The COVID-19 outbreak in Australia is being managed as a health emergency. As COVID-19 is a new disease, there was no existing immunity in our community or an approved vaccine as of 2 September 2020 (Australian Government, Department of Health, 2020).

On 9 July 2020, Victoria entered stage 4 restrictions due to an increase in the number of people acquiring COVID-19 from community transmission. This increase was linked with multiple outbreaks across a range of settings in metropolitan Melbourne. On 4 August 2020 the number of daily recorded cases peaked at 687. Moving forward from this point infections and cases in Victoria began to decrease. At the time of publishing, in Victoria:

- There were 90 new cases reported on 1 September 2020, a decrease from 144 new cases reported on 25 August 2020 (Victorian State Government, Health and Human Services, 2020).
- While cases have spanned all age groups, the highest incidents of people recently diagnosed with COVID-19 in Victoria were aged 20 to 29 years and 80 to 89 years (Victorian State Government, Health and Human Services, 2020) and the majority of deaths in Australia have occurred for those over the age of 70 (Victorian State Government, Health and Human Services, 2020).

As at 3 September 2020, there were 19,224 confirmed cases and a total of 576 deaths in Victoria. More than 2.2 million tests have been conducted with 2,415 active cases. 406 people were in hospital and 18 people were in intensive care (Victorian State Government, Health and Human Services, 2020). As at 2 September 2020, the City of Melbourne Local Government Area has had 886 confirmed cases (Victorian State Government, Health and Human Services, 2020).



Economic recession

The intermittent implementation of restrictions in Melbourne to help mitigate community transmission of the coronavirus has included border closures, a nightly curfew and unprecedented limitations on economic activity. These measures are projected to result in a recession that is sharper, deeper and more impactful than any observed since Australia began collecting consistent economic data.

Not only is this recession larger than any recession in living memory, it is fundamentally different in that it is health-driven, global and sudden. Melbourne is disproportionately affected by the impacts of the pandemic due to its unique composition of industries and heavy reliance on a transient daily population of workers and visitors to the central city.

These impacts will be felt well beyond our municipal boundaries as the City of Melbourne is a major contributor to Victoria's and Australia's prosperity. In 2019, the City of Melbourne alone generated \$104 billion in economic value, representing 24 per cent of Victoria's gross state product and 7 per cent of Australia's gross domestic product (Melbourne.geografia.com.au, 2020). The cumulative loss to the City of Melbourne's gross local product (GLP) is expected to be up to \$110 billion lower than pre-COVID-19 projections over the next five years (City of Melbourne, 2020a, p. 1). This loss emphasises the importance of the City of Melbourne to the state economy as it represents a significant proportion of the estimated reduction in Victorian state-wide economic output of \$327 billion below pre-COVID-19 projections across five years (City of Melbourne, 2020b, p. 3).

Employment and business patronage

In 2018 there were 497,000 jobs across 17,000 business establishments in the Melbourne municipality (City of Melbourne, 2018, p. 2). Office employment accounts for almost two thirds of jobs in the municipality with more than 310,000 jobs in 2018 (City of Melbourne, 2018, p. 8). Victoria lost 128,000 jobs in April 2020, compared to 38,000 jobs in March 1991 which was the largest single month job reduction in Victoria in the 1990s recession (City of Melbourne, 2020a, p. 2). The City of Melbourne is projected to shed 15 per cent of jobs in 2020 (City of Melbourne, 2020a, p. 1).

Incorporating the ongoing impacts of remote working with these job losses is estimated to impact the average daily worker population over five years to 35 per cent below the pre-COVID-19 forecast (City of Melbourne, 2020b, p. 10). The current reduction in the daily population combined with physical distancing requirements has adversely impacted businesses in the city, particularly retail, accommodation and food services and arts and recreation services. The economic impacts look to disproportionately affect small discretionary retail businesses without an online presence which will force closure or temporarily suspend ability to trade (City of Melbourne, 2020a, p. 3). The arts sector will be particularly impacted due its discretionary nature and high proportion of casual, contract and part time workers. Research shows that more than half of those employed in the arts and recreation sector nationally could lose their jobs as a direct consequence of the pandemic (City of Melbourne, 2020b, p. 13).

The long term impacts of Melbourne's office workers working remotely are still unclear. Melbourne's CBD office vacancy rate is at 5.8 per cent, up from a historically low 3.2 per cent six months ago (propertycouncil.com.au, 2020). For people who can perform their duties from home, the most popular model is working two to three days a week from home across a five day week (41-60 per cent), pointing towards a mix of remote and centralised work in the future (Boston Consulting Group, 2020, p. 4), which could impact the demand and development for commercial floorspace.



In 2019, the City of Melbourne alone generated

\$104 billion
in economic value

The cumulative loss to the City of Melbourne's Gross Local Product (GLP) is expected to be up to

\$110 billion
lower than pre-COVID-19 projections over the next five years

The City of Melbourne is projected to shed

15%
of jobs in 2020

The visitor economy

In the year to March 2020, Victoria hosted 95.5 million visitors, including international and domestic overnight visitors, and those visiting Victoria for a daytrip only. The tourism expenditure for these visitors was \$31.3 billion which amounts to spending of approximately \$85.6 million per day in the state (City of Melbourne, 2020a, p. 3).

The dual crises from the 2019 bushfires and COVID-19 pandemic are estimated to impact 72 per cent of the state's tourism expenditure by the end of December 2020 (vtic.com.au, 2020).

In 2018, 54,519 flights travelled between Melbourne to Sydney making it the second busiest air route in the world (OAG Aviation Worldwide Limited, 2018, p. 18). It is not yet known how remote working and COVID-19 physical distancing measures will affect the demand and affordability of air travel, and whether the City of Melbourne will see the NSW overnight and mainland China markets resume their former value.


Immigration

From 2018 to 2019, the City of Melbourne's population increased by 8,638 residents (abs.gov.au, 2020, 3218.0). The overwhelming majority of these (99 per cent or 8,597) came from overseas net migration (abs.gov.au, 2020, 3218.0). Travel restrictions have reduced the number of overseas arrivals to near-zero, resulting in less housing demand from overseas migrants (abs.gov.au, 2020, 8731.0).

International students

Education is Australia's largest service export. Melbourne's world-class universities and research institutes are major contributors. According to 2018 higher education data, over 79,200 international students live or study in the municipality (melbourne.vic.gov.au, 2018).


Due to restrictions, university classes are currently being held online. This results in a significant reduction in the number of students coming into the city to study, impacting university revenue and spending in retail and hospitality in the city. Various pedestrian sensors within the city can be used as a proxy for certain types of pedestrian activity. The sensor on Swanston Street and Monash Road provides an indication of student activity in the city. It shows that activity is down 95 per cent compared with August 2019 (pedestrian.melbourne.vic.gov.au, 2020).



Travel restrictions during the pandemic have reduced overseas arrivals to


near-zero

Estimated lost visitor expenditure by end of December 2020





72%

Over 79,200 international students lived or studied in the municipality in 2018.



University classes are currently being held online





Pedestrian sensors are

95%

down in student activity areas compared with August 2019.

Societal wellbeing

Melbourne is the only Australian city to face a second lockdown to date due to an increase in community transmission of the virus. This has highlighted existing inequality and has disproportionately affected the health and income of our most vulnerable communities. People experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage have a greater health risk of contracting COVID-19 due to underlying health issues (Australian Government Department of Health, 2020, p. 12). In addition, people from lower socio-economic areas are more likely to be financially strained (Melbourne Institute, 2020, p. 4) making them particularly vulnerable in a recession.

More broadly, our community’s health and wellbeing is being impacted by COVID-19 worsening mental health challenges and the safety of women, children and Aboriginal people. Research has found that levels of psychological distress have been elevated and worsened since the outbreak. A study by Black Dog Institute has revealed that more than three-quarters of people claim their mental health has worsened since the outbreak of COVID-19 (blackdoginstitute.org.au, 2020) with loneliness and increased job and financial volatility contributing factors. There has been a 33 per cent increase in children and young people in Victoria presenting to hospital with self-harm injuries (pm.gov.au, 2020) in comparison to 2019. During June and August 2020 Victorian use of Beyond Blue services was 90 per cent higher than the rest of Australia, 22 per cent higher for Lifeline and 5 per cent higher for Kids Help Line (pm.gov.au, 2020).

There have been more cases of family violence during COVID-19. A Monash University report, which surveyed 166 family violence agencies, indicates that incidents of violence against women have increased by 59 per cent during the pandemic (Fitzner et al., 2020, p. 6). Along with the heightened health risks that Aboriginal people face due to COVID-19 there are currently no culturally appropriate facilities for Aboriginal people who need to self isolate.

The digital divide

COVID-19 has increased the use of digital devices and the need for people to access the internet, further exacerbating the digital divide. Since COVID-19 was detected, people are spending 33 per cent more time shopping online and 44 per cent more time using a digital device according to ABS data from June 2020 (abs.gov.au, 2020, 4940.0). Research suggests many groups, such as low-income households, people aged over 65, people who did not complete secondary school, people with a disability, and people not in the labour market, have significantly less ability and opportunity to use online technologies effectively (Thomas et al., 2018, p. 29). In addition, one in seven parents of school aged children report that a poor internet connection is disrupting their children’s online learning (abs.gov.au, 2020, 4940.0).

In comparison to 2019 there has been...



33%

increase in children and young people in Victoria presenting to hospital with self-harm injuries.



90%

higher use of Beyond Blue services in Victoria than the rest of Australia during June and August 2020.

In comparison to pre-COVID-19 restrictions there has been...



59%

increased frequency of incidents of violence against women during the pandemic.

33%

increase in people spending more time shopping online.



44%

more time using a digital device.



Existing challenges

A number of existing stresses were facing Melbourne before the pandemic and will influence our capacity to recover:

- climate change and extreme weather make it more likely we will experience local emergencies such as drought, heatwaves, flooding events and bushfires
- reconciling with our past and integrating our city's ancient and continuous Aboriginal culture, knowledge and thinking in every facet of our city including collaboration, fostering partnerships among agencies, Aboriginal governance, cultural safety and connection, service provision and equitable employment
- social justice issues, including racism towards minorities and people of colour, homelessness (with the highest rates of presentation for homeless assistance by Aboriginal people in Australia) and critical shortages of affordable, accessible and quality housing
- impacts of gentrification, rents and increased cost of living on the creative community and the viability of small and independent business in the central city
- global trends in retail moving to digital environments
- significant population growth increasing the demand for infrastructure and open spaces, noting that previous projections for population growth are expected to change once the longer-term impacts of COVID-19 on migration are confirmed.

Many of these challenges are well-documented in City of Melbourne strategies and plans. These have been a critical input in developing this Reactivation and Recovery Plan.



Our response to date

City of Melbourne has invested \$50 million in rapid response initiatives

Since March 2020, when the pandemic emerged as a significant international public health risk and Victoria entered stage 3 restrictions, the City of Melbourne has implemented a number of immediate response measures to assist residents, businesses, artists and creatives, international students and community groups.

City of Melbourne has invested \$50 million in rapid response initiatives (melbourne.vic.gov.au, 2020). These measures were designed to act as an immediate lifeline to those members of the community most affected by the immediate impacts of COVID-19.



COVID-19 outbreak prevention

- **Worker redeployments** including expanded 'City Cleaning' and 'City Greening' programs.
- **COVID-19 testing sites** coordination with the Victorian Government.
- **COVID-19 outbreak support** such as North Melbourne, Kensington and Carlton public housing towers.



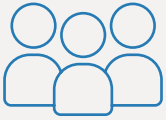
Support for businesses

- **Zero per cent rate cap increase for properties** in the City of Melbourne.
- **Grants to support small businesses** to develop online and e-services.
- **A COVID-19 Business Concierge Service Hotline** to provide one-on-one advice and support providing rent relief for tenants in Council-owned and managed buildings.
- **A \$10m business grants package** via partnership with the Victorian Government.
- **A business mentoring program** for businesses who have identified specific needs to obtain training and guidance.
- **A virtual business support summit.**
- **Suspending fees for street trading permits** for three months.
- **Reduced registration fee for food businesses.**
- A new **Rates Financial Hardship Policy.**
- A new **General Financial Hardship Policy.**
- **Free cleaning and sanitising of high-touch areas** for retail traders.
- **Hospitality parking permits** to help businesses with delivering takeaway food.



Support for artists and creatives

- **Grants to artists and creatives** to invest in new works, and digital presentation of works and performances.



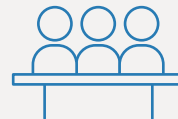
Support for community—residents, international students and community groups

- **General Financial Hardship Policy** for residents impacted by COVID-19.
- **Zero per cent rate cap increase for properties** in the City of Melbourne.
- Funding the Salvation Army's Night cafe which is **delivering food to the vulnerable.**
- **Connecting people sleeping rough with support.** With the Victorian Government we offered accommodation to every person who was sleeping rough. **The number of people sleeping rough dropped from about 300 to 30.**
- Funding Frontyard Youth Services to **support vulnerable youth.**
- **Community response grants** to fund innovative ideas that foster community connection and support vulnerable people impacted by COVID-19.
- **Free parking permits for frontline workers.**
- **Online wellbeing programs** to connect and inform international students, experts and friends to discuss the challenges of COVID-19 and support available.
- The **'Our Shout' retail voucher program** to support **11,270 international students** affected by job losses and housing insecurity and **drive economic activity in the Queen Victoria Market.**
- **Ready-made meals, supplies and mask distribution for vulnerable families and individuals,** from a distribution centre at North Melbourne Community Centre.
- **Ongoing Maternal Child Health and Aged Care support,** including for those people living at the public housing towers.



Sustainability and planning stimulus

- Partnering with Working for Victoria to **plant 150,000 trees, shrubs and grasses** to green our city **providing jobs to 64 people** who would otherwise be unemployed as a result of COVID-19.
- Capital works stimulus to **fast track 40kms of bike lanes, enhance public open space in the central city, improve accessibility and gender-neutral sports facilities** and construction of a **new city library.**
- **Planning stimulus to fast track processes for planning approvals,** such as construction-related permits and approvals, to prioritise and expedite 'shovel ready' state and locally significant projects.



Establishment of the City Economy Advisory Board

Ensures the City of Melbourne harnesses strategic input from relevant industry and government representatives as we respond to the impacts of COVID-19 and begin recovery.

Membership includes representatives from the Victorian and Australian Governments, economic advisors, education institutions, and private sector representation including:

Austrade, Australian Hotels Association, Australian Retailers Association, Deloitte Access Economics, Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Department of Treasury and Finance, Melbourne Central, NAB, Property Council, RMIT, Telstra, Urban Development Institute of Australia, University of Melbourne, Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Visit Victoria.

There are a number of sub-committees which feed into the work of the Advisory Board:

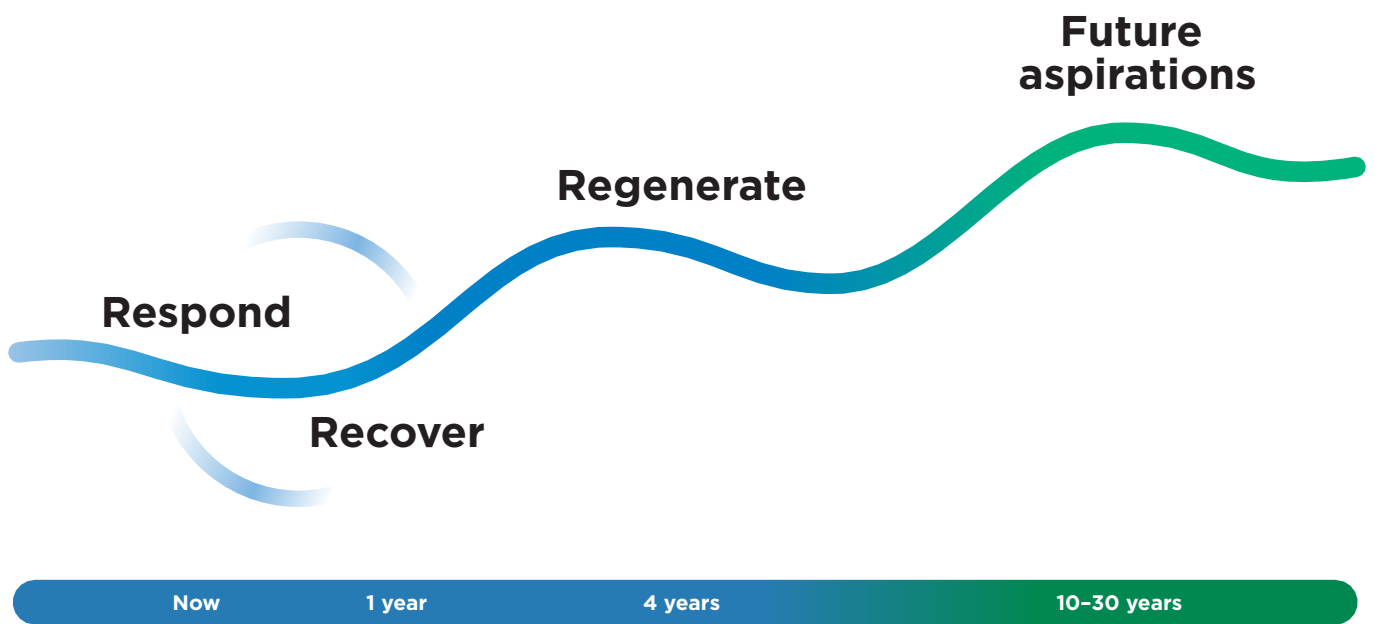
Functionality of the City, Economic Infrastructure, Bringing People Back to the City, City Events and Activation, Retail and Hospitality, Knowledge City and International Education and Economic Strategy.

REACTIVATION AND RECOVERY PLAN



This Reactivation and Recovery Plan represents our city’s plan for recovery and regeneration following the COVID-19 pandemic. We will advocate for critical stimulus from all levels of government to drive economic activity and are committed to deliver seven key initiatives, which were identified through the research activities referred to earlier (page 11).

The projects and initiatives in this plan will be staged over time.



Respond	Our immediate response to the shock of the pandemic crisis, focussed on critical needs.
Recover	Our short-term response to the continuing impacts of the pandemic as we begin the reactivation and recovery from the initial shock. We need to be prepared for cycles of response and recovery.
Regenerate	The medium-term regeneration we build as we understand what was temporary and what will have lasting impact, putting in place the foundations for the long-term future we want.
Future aspirations	The longer-term vision that guides us to the Melbourne we value for the future.

Critical stimulus

Immediate stimulus funding from the Victorian and Australian governments will be required to address the significant impacts of COVID-19 on Melbourne's economy.

These projects represent significant opportunities to advance Melbourne's future and inject critical stimulus in the city's, the state's and the country's economy. These city-shaping opportunities cannot be delivered by the City of Melbourne alone. We need alignment and significant support and commitment from the Victorian and Australian Governments to see these come to life.

Priority Infrastructure Projects

Queen Victoria Market precinct redevelopment

Investment in the precinct renewal program will secure a sustainable future for a cherished Melbourne and national heritage listed icon while delivering social and economic transformation of the city's north. The redevelopment includes: New trader shed, climate controlled storage, toilets and showers, centralised waste and recycling facilities, covered loading docks, public realm expansion, new pavilion adjacent to 1.75 hectares of public open space to provide retail, hospitality, cultural and community facilities.

Southern Development Site

Redevelopment of the southern site of the Queen Victoria Market to incorporate the heritage Franklin Street stores which will frame the soon to be delivered Market Square. This mixed use development, on the largest unbuilt site in the CBD, will provide added stimulus to the city's north, the Queen Victoria Market, universities and the important biotech and medical precinct.

Kensington Recreation Centre Redevelopment

Investing in the redevelopment of Kensington Community Centre which will provide improved community infrastructure, including an increase in the number of indoor ball courts, improved and increased gym and pool areas and community gathering spaces.

Acceleration of the Arden and Macaulay renewal precincts

Facilitate the delivery of the high quality transformation of Arden and Macaulay renewal precincts.

Reconstruction of Central Pier, Docklands

In light of the closure of Central Pier work with Development Victoria to identify specific initiatives that will increase visitation to Victoria Harbour and disbursement throughout Docklands hospitality and retail offerings. Explore opportunities for water transport and tourism and a strategic feasibility study of a maritime heritage museum experience.

New City Library

Accelerate delivery of a new city library that responds to a rapidly growing and diversifying population and changing behaviours as a result of COVID-19.

National Aboriginal Cultural Centre

Commencement on the staged development of Federation Square East through the delivery of a National Aboriginal Cultural Centre and open space linkages from the Yarra Birrarung river into the east end of the CBD.

Tram link to Fishermans Bend

Accelerate investment in transport infrastructure by delivering a tram extension from the CBD to Fishermans Bend via Collins Street. This connection is critical to unlocking the potential of Fishermans Bend as current public transport connections do not meet minimum standards of access.

E-Gate

The accelerated development of a medium density mixed use precinct connecting West Melbourne and Docklands through E-Gate with a bridge link from North Melbourne Station to Footscray Road. The opportunity could include a secondary school to service the rapidly growing population of this part of the city.

Revitalisation of the North Bank of the Yarra Birrarung

Transformation of the North Bank of the Yarra Birrarung river through improved linkages of its parks, cultural and heritage places and new northern connections to the growth areas of Docklands, E-Gate, Arden and Macaulay.

City Road Urban Regeneration project

The City Road Urban Regeneration project addresses ways to better balance the road's roles as an important transport corridor for various modes, and a place that supports local street life. The project includes initiatives that will make City Road more environmentally sustainable and contribute to a liveable and resilient city.

Make Room project

The Make Room project comprises the conversion of council owned buildings to provide ongoing accommodation and support services for individuals experiencing homelessness.

Reactivation and Recovery initiatives

Initiatives integral to immediate recovery:

Our immediate focus as the city emerges from lockdown.



1

Prioritise public health and wellbeing

Our recovery must prioritise establishing Melbourne as an exemplar of safety, assisting people with immediate health and safety needs and building our individual resilience.



2

Reactivate the city

Reactivating and reinvigorating Melbourne as a thriving destination to live, work, study, visit and invest will stimulate the economy, create jobs and fuel tourism.

Initiatives integral to our city's successful regeneration and ongoing resilience:

Building on our initial quick responses to reactivate the city and ensure public health and safety, further initiatives act as the next steps towards our aspirational future.



3

Build economic resilience

We will work with industry and the Victorian Government to build a thriving innovation ecosystem that is a leader in sustainability, attracts and retains talent, grows jobs and affirms Melbourne's reputation as a global innovation leader.



4

Expand equal opportunity and access

Inclusive, accessible and affordable services, information and infrastructure improve health, wellbeing and prosperity. Our recovery will be faster and stronger when there is more opportunity for all.



5

Transform our spaces and buildings

By creating new opportunities for flexible, diverse and sustainable places and spaces we will bring activity and vibrancy back to the city.



6

Strengthen community participation and align with others

Diversity of ideas supports better decision-making and solutions for social equity and economic growth. We must align with all levels of government, organisations, businesses and the community for a co-ordinated and targeted recovery.



7

Evaluate, measure and progress

Holistic measurement and ongoing analysis that acknowledges the interdependence of health, wellbeing and the economy assists people to participate to their full potential, supporting a prosperous city.



Prioritise public health and wellbeing

The COVID-19 pandemic is a public health crisis. Our recovery must prioritise establishing Melbourne as an exemplar of safety, assisting people with immediate health and safety needs and building our individual resilience. We will focus immediate efforts in making sure our city is safe to live, work and visit.

By prioritising this initiative our future city will:

- be healthy and safe for all
- be inclusive, accessible and affordable.

Key SDGs this initiative aligns to:



Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.



Make cities and human settlements inclusive, resilient and sustainable.



Reduce inequality within and among countries.

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE: Continue to deliver or commence in the next three months

Sanitise frequently touched surfaces across the city

Make the city safer by fast tracking 40km of bike lanes and expanding footpaths

Promote physical distancing and good hygiene

Continue to provide safe accommodation for people experiencing homelessness

Deliver COVID-safe communication campaign

RECOVER: What we have planned and budgeted to do over the next 12 months

Improve cleanliness and safety in the city

- Deploy cleaning teams to continue sanitising frequently touched surfaces as people return to the city.
- Continue to provide safe accommodation for people experiencing homelessness including advocacy for wrap around services, in partnership with the Victorian Government.

COVID-safe communication campaign

- Deliver a highly visible COVID-safe communication campaign emphasising the City of Melbourne as a safe place to work, live, study and visit.
- Promote physical distancing and hygiene measures through our wayfinding signage and city campaigns to encourage COVID-safe behaviour as people come back to the city.

Understand social impacts of COVID-19 and embed community health and wellbeing priorities

- Develop the Urban Health and Wellbeing Profile 2020, including the COVID-19 impacts report.
- Undertake community engagement on the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-25.

Rapidly deliver measures that aid safe movement

- Work with the Victorian Government to build confidence in the public transport network as safe, frequent and reliable, to support city workers returning to the city, including peak and off peak pricing models and increasing the frequency of peak and off peak public transport services, especially trains to provide confidence in commuters ability to adhere to physical distancing requirements.
- Adjust our civic spaces to make physical distancing easier and movement safer including expanding footpaths, reducing speed limits and converting 'Little Streets' into pedestrian priority zones in line with priority actions of the Transport Strategy 2030.*
- Deliver additional bike lanes* as per priority actions of the Transport Strategy 2030* to provide safe and active transport options for people, especially less confident riders, helping to connect our residential neighbourhoods into and through the central city.
- Work with stakeholders to increase provision of bicycle parking and end-of-trip facilities for public use.

REGENERATE: Opportunities to consider implementing over the next four years

Develop improved public health and safety information standards by seeking feedback from the community to ensure information is accessible to all.

Continue to provide support to those in need, embedding feedback from immediate response measures. Develop or partner with social enterprises to improve support and pathways out of disadvantage.

Improve community wellbeing by encouraging emotional resilience and community connection.

Promote responses to key health issues elevated by the crisis including racial vilification, mental health, family violence, child safety, alcohol consumption and substance abuse, and increasing medical screening and routine health check-ups.

Advocate for the use of digital tools to test innovative ways to remind people of their health appointments (such as immunisation) and to access their health and wellbeing services.

Advocate for changes to the Planning Scheme and building codes for the introduction of mandatory wellness standards for commercial offices and medium to high density residential developments.

*Annual Plan Initiative that has been planned and budgeted for in the 2020-21 Annual Plan and Budget



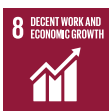
Reactivate the city

Melbourne’s \$104 billion economy and its diverse businesses, entertainment and creative sectors have been hit hard by COVID-19. As restrictions begin to lift, we will immediately reactivate and reinvigorate Melbourne as a thriving destination to live, work, study, visit and invest to stimulate the economy, create jobs and fuel tourism.

By prioritising this initiative our future city will:

- support businesses, entrepreneurs and creatives to thrive in an ever-changing environment
- draw people to it with vibrancy, activity, open space and amenity
- be healthy and safe.

Key SDGs this initiative aligns to:



Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.



Make cities and human settlements inclusive, resilient and sustainable.



Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation.

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE: Continue to deliver or commence in the next three months

Create COVID-safe spaces for on-street dining and trading in the city

Deliver innovative marketing campaigns to bring people back to the city

Activate Little Streets to give pedestrians and cyclists more space

Create COVID-safe opportunities for exhibitions, pop-ups and events in vacant shop fronts

Produce a program of events and activations to keep the city active

RECOVER: What we have planned and budgeted to do over the next 12 months

Encouraging people to return to the city through innovative marketing campaigns

- Increase brand marketing and destination advertising efforts to support economic recovery, remaining compliant with any changes in health advice and reconnecting people with the City.*
- Identify opportunities to strengthen Melbourne's position as a leading visitor destination to respond to the impacts of COVID-19.* Work with partners to position the 'Melbourne' brand as vibrant, inclusive and active.
- Continue to promote and stimulate city businesses through our "What's On" marketing program through social media, blogs, newsletters and digital advertising.
- Partner with Visit Victoria, AusTrade and industry to encourage and facilitate interstate and international tourism and business travel when safe to do so.

Bringing back vibrancy and excitement to the city through a program of events and activations

- Advocate to the Australian Government for an abatement of Fringe Benefits Tax for dining experiences for up to 2 years.
- Deliver and sponsor festivals, events and activations that are safe, accessible and inspire people to visit the city and boost business, with a focus on the crucial Christmas peak period.
- Optimise the use of public space for events to respond to the impacts of COVID-19* to deliver reimagined events such as multicultural celebrations, music, fashion, sporting and food and wine events.
- Build on longstanding relationships with Melbourne's arts organisations, creative communities and festivals via our Events Partnership Program and Arts and Creative Investment Partnerships.
- Partner with Aboriginal organisations to deliver cultural experiences, truth-telling discussions and Reconciliation Week events (pending public consultation of the Reconciliation Action Plan).
- Create experiences and events that position Melbourne as a must-see creative destination by testing and trialling new experiences in the arts, knowledge and entertainment in a range of unexpected spaces and places that enable participation and inclusion such as esports, immersive art installations, interactive performances and knowledge sharing.
- Revitalise the city's laneways, improve pedestrian amenity and stimulate economic recovery through a program of creative activations, lighting installation and live performance.
- Coordinate consistent footpath markings with retail and hospitality traders to support physical distancing and trade activity.

Work to enliven and utilise vacant shops

- Enliven vacant shop frontages and provide financial support to precinct associations, community groups, creative industry and businesses to reactivate retail strips with art installations, live performances and other pop-up activities.
- Shopkeeper - working with owners, landlords, banks and retail associations to support new and creative retail businesses, community services and social enterprises to occupy vacant shops. This may include the City of Melbourne taking out tenancies in some locations.

Expand dining opportunities

- Fast track applications from cafes and restaurants across the municipality to expand outdoor dining such as extending their footprint, using on-street parking bays where safe and extending hours of operation.

Suspension of fees for street trading permits

- Continuing to waive fees for street trading and busking permits until 30 June 2021 to ensure these activities can continue to contribute to local culture and economy.

Support the safe return of office workers to the city

- Return to Workplace Pledge - work with the private and government sectors, to support the coordination of staff returning to workplaces safely to increase worker and visitor numbers in the city in order to stimulate commercial and retail activity. This phase will include asking CEO's to pledge to develop a solid plan for the staged return of their workforce to the central city.
- Continue to strongly advocate for a temporary suspension of the Victorian Government Congestion Levy for off street car parks due to COVID-19 restrictions to make them affordable and accessible for vulnerable Victorians.

Re-purposing the CBD's little streets to support more outdoor business, dining and pedestrian activity

- Trial new street configurations on Melbourne's 'Little Streets' that will allow pedestrians to move more freely, supporting physical distancing, outdoor dining and other city activation.

Providing guidance and support to businesses

- Continue providing information to businesses on funding and support services available directly from the City of Melbourne, state and federal governments along with programs offered by other organisations.
- Continue to evolve the Business Concierge service to meet ongoing needs.
- Deliver information for businesses through the Business in Melbourne newsletter, social media, Business Concierge, City of Melbourne website and Melbourne magazine.
- Support small business owners to access mental health services.

Providing vouchers to enable small businesses to access to business support services

- Provide vouchers to small businesses so they can gain advice and training on financial, business recovery, innovation, legal, marketing and communications, to help them respond to and recover from the challenges experienced as a result of COVID-19.
- Deliver support for Melbourne businesses that will enhance capability to respond to long-term impacts of COVID-19.*

Encouraging fresh ideas through the City Economy Advisory Board

- Coordinate with stakeholders through the City Economy Advisory Board to ensure Melbourne's industry bodies, government representatives, university and private sector work together in a considered and coordinated manner to respond to the impacts of COVID-19 on the central city.
- Report on the impacts of COVID-19 on the central city economy, including quantifiable metrics.
- Inform the Victorian and Australian Governments on the economic support the city economy requires, such as State Government Business Support Package - CBD Business Support Fund, grants for businesses and hospitality operators, mental health support, business mentoring and payroll tax relief.

REGENERATE: Opportunities to consider implementing over the next four years

Facilitate the affordable and flexible occupation of vacant spaces including commercial leases and short stay accommodation for small business and startups, community and residents.

*Annual Plan Initiative that has been planned and budgeted for in the 2020-21 Annual Plan and Budget

Activate public spaces to create a vibrant and inclusive public realm with a diversity of uses.

Quantify the impact of intensifying creative and cultural experiences in the city to direct further action and investment.



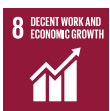
Build economic resilience

Innovation will be a key driver in Melbourne’s economic recovery. We will leverage our exceptional knowledge sector and work with industry and the Victorian Government to build a thriving innovation ecosystem that is a leader in sustainability, attracts and retains talent, grows jobs in emerging industries and affirms Melbourne’s reputation as a global innovation leader.

By prioritising this initiative our future city will:

- support businesses, entrepreneurs and creatives to prosper in an ever-changing environment
- draw people to it with vibrancy, activity, open space and amenity
- stimulate collective action on climate change.

Key SDGs this initiative aligns to:



Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.



Make cities and human settlements inclusive, resilient and sustainable.



Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation.



Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE: Continue to deliver or commence in the next three months

Advocate for investment in city-shaping critical stimulus projects	Commence development of a pilot Aboriginal Business Hub to support Aboriginal owned start ups	Expand 5G and Internet of Things trials creating strong digital infrastructure
Leverage the expertise of the City Economy Advisory Board	Provide training for businesses to develop Ecommerce and online capabilities	Continue work on the development of the Fishermans Bend innovation and employment district

RECOVER: What we have planned and budgeted to do over the next 12 months

Support Aboriginal-owned businesses to thrive

- Develop an Aboriginal Procurement strategy (pending public consultation of the Reconciliation Action Plan).
- Pilot an Aboriginal Business Hub to support Aboriginal owned startups (pending public consultation of the Reconciliation Action Plan).

Create robust infrastructure to support economic growth

- Pursue a COVID-19 economic recovery stimulus infrastructure program.*
- Trial 5G and Internet of Things (IoT) urban infrastructure and services.*

Support growing industry sectors

- Enhance support for industries that are primed for future growth, providing job opportunities and economic activity.

Progress the development of innovation precincts

- Facilitate high quality urban renewal in Arden.*
- Progress the planning and delivery of the Fishermans Bend Employment Precinct.*
- Continue to develop Queen Victoria Market as a low cost entry point for new businesses.
- Encourage the Victorian Government to bring forward the development of E-Gate linking North Melbourne to Docklands.

Partner with industry to further drive recovery

- Partner with impacted industries to create recovery pathways.
- Continue to deliver initiatives that drive economic recovery and growth.

REGENERATE: Opportunities to consider implementing over the next four years

Advocate for longer term service and financial support for impacted businesses from the Victorian and Australian Governments. Review ongoing fee structures for businesses while recovery is underway.

Continued support for retailers to evolve their business models using physical and digital environments to create transformed retail experiences using Ecommerce, click and collect, social media and mobile applications along with traditional bricks and mortar.

Identify and support new business opportunities and emerging industries by researching trends in the rapid switch to Ecommerce as a result of COVID-19. Partner with emerging industries (such as Biotech, FinTech and Information and Communications Technology) to identify how the City of Melbourne can support their continued growth to generate jobs.

Support startups to get off the ground by investigating and implementing procurement methods for City of Melbourne to become a crucial first customer for startups.

Advocate for jobs in growing innovation sectors by creating career pathways for students and people with disabilities into local startups and advocating for subsidised training programs for individuals and businesses that provide job pathways or business development.

Support businesses to become more sustainable by providing advice through the COVID-19 Business Concierge Service on renewable energy, energy efficiency, water and waste.

Continue to utilise Knowledge Week to showcase opportunities in the knowledge sector for students, researchers and innovators and the broader community, providing environments for connection and sharing of expertise.

*Annual Plan Initiative that has been planned and budgeted for in the 2020–21 Annual Plan and Budget

Accelerate development of Melbourne's innovation ecosystem and grow, elevate and facilitate coordinated investment in Melbourne Innovation Districts. Work with research and innovation sectors to understand their needs and the barriers to strengthening the innovation ecosystem. Continue to partner to trial and invest in digital networks and smart infrastructure. Investigate incentives to ensure product development and commercialisation of research, intellectual property and digital and physical products can take place in Melbourne.

Enhance the City of Melbourne's open data offering to encourage innovation via a contemporary policy position and by improving public understanding of using sensors to gather real time data. Create grassroots open datasets, working with select companies, researchers and students to pilot using open Application Programming Interfaces (APIs).

Embrace emerging technology opportunities by creating places for people to test and trial emerging technology aligned with community priorities.

Facilitate rapid adoption of renewable energy by advocating to the Victorian and Australian Governments for 100 per cent renewable energy by 2030. Develop innovative collaborative models to drive greater uptake of renewable energy by small and large businesses.

Ensure economic stimulus delivers climate outcomes in the built environment through funding large scale climate initiatives with green financing such as green bonds.

Accelerate implementation of the circular economy by embedding circular economy initiatives into Council operations and services, assessing its economic benefits and partnering with the private sector and other levels of government.



Expand equitable opportunity and access

The pandemic has disproportionately affected low income and marginalised communities in our city. Inclusive, accessible and affordable services, information and infrastructure improve health, wellbeing and prosperity. These attributes also amplify the benefits of diversity in our city. Our recovery will be faster and stronger when there is more opportunity for all.

By prioritising this initiative our future city will:

- be healthy and safe
- draw people to it with vibrancy, activity, open space and amenity
- be inclusive, accessible and affordable; providing opportunity for all.

Key SDGs this initiative aligns to:



Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation.



Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.



Reduce inequality within and among countries.



Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE: Continue to deliver or commence in the next three months

Continue to work on increasing the supply of affordable homes for low to moderate income earners and key workers

Develop an Inclusive Melbourne Strategy

Continue to support accommodation and referral services to reduce homelessness

Develop a future libraries plan and finalise location for a new city library

Upgrade community facilities at Royal Park, Kensington community recreation centre, North Melbourne Community Centre

RECOVER: What we have planned and budgeted to do over the next 12 months

Integrate digital literacy services, facilities and initiatives in future library plans.

- A new city library.*

Accelerate opportunities for the City of Melbourne to support those who need accommodation.

- Reduce homelessness in the city.*
- Increase the supply of affordable homes in the City of Melbourne,* including advocating for the fast tracking of affordable housing projects in response to COVID-19.

Increase provision and improve amenity of community facilities

- Complete design documentation for Kensington Community Recreation Centre redevelopment ready for construction.*
- Increase and upgrade accessible and inclusive spaces for women in City of Melbourne sports facilities.*
- Deliver the Queen Victoria Market Precinct Renewal Program.*
- Plan for enhanced facilities, services and open space for the North Melbourne Community Centre precinct.*

Pilot unique support for vulnerable communities

- Support young African Australians to connect to leadership and professional pathways.*

Accelerate the creation of an Inclusive Melbourne Strategy

- Develop a ten year Inclusive Melbourne Strategy.*

Ensure transparent prioritisation of Melbourne's future infrastructure

- Create an infrastructure investment framework.*
- Implement the new strategic direction for the Creative Spaces Program.*

Improve Aboriginal recognition and take action on reconciliation

- Advance our commitment to reconciliation* by implementing actions from the Reconciliation Action Plan.
- Work with all levels of government to develop a National Aboriginal Cultural Centre at Federation Square East.

REGENERATE: Opportunities to consider implementing over the next four years

Continue to support vulnerable communities by co-designing support models with communities and developing resilience plans to reduce vulnerability in emergency situations.

Advocate for policy reform and investment in affordable housing to increase supply, continuing to require a significant proportion of affordable housing in all Council joint venture developments and establishing internal mechanisms to deliver new social and transitional housing.

Advocate for vacant property leases to transition people into long-term accommodation.

Ensure all residents have affordable access and appropriate skills and capabilities to engage online by identifying digital literacy and accessibility gaps at a local level. Develop services and infrastructure, such as utilising city libraries, to improve digital inclusion particularly for vulnerable groups.

Improve community connection and mental health by using Urban Health and Wellbeing Profile COVID-19 data to measure, monitor and identify inadequate access to services and develop targeted community connection and mental health initiatives.

Ensure all residents have access to essential services in a crisis by preparing service delivery plans for all service areas. Examine current and future demand for infrastructure and services to inform prioritisation and investment.

Improve access to affordable clean energy by replicating the Melbourne Renewable Energy Project to promote renewable energy purchasing models for residents and small to medium businesses.

Investigate ways to improve the affordability, participation and diversity of cultural events.

Improve local food production by identifying areas which could accommodate urban agriculture and supporting businesses to investigate food production.

Improve accessibility to services by continuing to transition selected Council services to digital channels and enhancing the Community Support Directory.

Create affordable creative spaces by investigating delivery of affordable live-work artist accommodation models.

*Annual Plan Initiative that has been planned and budgeted for in the 2020-21 Annual Plan and Budget



Transform our spaces and buildings

The pandemic has fundamentally altered how people work, play and move in Melbourne—impacting the use of office buildings, retail and hospitality venues, sporting and cultural venues and public open spaces. By creating new opportunities for flexible, diverse and sustainable places we will bring activity and vibrancy back to the city.

By prioritising this initiative our future city will:

- support businesses, entrepreneurs and creatives to prosper in an ever-changing environment
- draw people to it with vibrancy, activity, open space and amenity
- stimulate collective action on climate change.

Key SDGs this initiative aligns to:



Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation.



Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.



Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.



Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development.

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE: Continue to deliver or commence in the next three months

Create more public art

Accelerate City Greening program

Expand commercial waste collection hubs across the city

Implement dual naming of spaces to reflect Aboriginal cultural heritage of the area

Adapt vacant spaces for flexible, creative and experimental uses

RECOVER: What we have planned and budgeted to do over the next 12 months

Continue to protect, promote and celebrate stories of Aboriginal cultural significance

- Integrate Aboriginal significance through urban planning projects, dual naming of spaces to reflect Aboriginal cultural heritage of the area and commemorating Aboriginal history and culture (pending public consultation of the Reconciliation Action Plan).

Investigate integrating Caring for Country into urban design, sustainability and open spaces

- Consulting with local Traditional Owner groups (pending public consultation of the Reconciliation Action Plan).

Create and improve open spaces, public realm and infrastructure

- Activate Docklands with a focus on Victoria Harbour.*
- Plan for improved access in Alexandra Gardens.*
- Advancement of the Greenline.*
- Investigate the permanent extension of footpaths to create more open space for people, enabling sustainable and active transport and prioritising accessibility, biodiversity, trees and water.

Adapt vacant spaces for flexible and experimental uses

- Investigate changes in permits and regulations to allow a wider range of commercial and service related activities in retail zones.
- Facilitation of stakeholder groups to negotiate flexible lease options and experimenting with activations.
- Piloting diverse and inclusive uses with creatives, artists, startups, community groups and social enterprises. Share results broadly to influence investment.

Create more public art

- Invest in public art in the City of Melbourne.*

Accelerate action to create a prosperous circular economy

- Expand the waste and resource recovery hub network for city businesses.*
- Introduce organic waste management for residents.*
- Improve recycling options for residents to recycle, re-use and compost.*

Implement climate action and improve building performance

- Implement the Climate and Biodiversity Emergency Response.*
- Renew tree removal and planting policies to meet canopy cover targets.*
- Investigate a rates incentive system to reduce emissions from buildings in the municipality.*
- Embed ecologically-sustainable development in the planning scheme.*

Plan for future places

- Protect Melbourne's heritage.*
- Progress the next Municipal Planning Strategy.*

Ensure ongoing city accessibility for local businesses, visitors and residents.

- Minimise the impacts of city disruption.*

REGENERATE: Opportunities to consider implementing over the next four years

Encourage adaptive reuse of the city's heritage buildings and places, recognising their inherent adaptability and their role in our city's identity.

Continue to partner with local businesses and agencies to trial and deliver digital tools that communicate and enable reporting of disruption caused by construction and development activity in the city.

Continue to update the Melbourne Planning Scheme to ensure long term outcomes are secured for future generations.

Improve energy efficiency of building stock by communicating environmental performance of buildings using smart technology and enhance enforcement of sustainability provisions in the planning scheme.

Create climate ready building stock by retrofitting spaces and buildings to mitigate the impacts of a changing climate.

Continue to invest in smart infrastructure to improve service delivery and efficiency.

Continue to support the development of a 'digital twin' to enable better decision-making on the management of existing and future infrastructure in the municipality and to help test and trial potential future city scenarios.

Pilot a city operations centre and tools for real-time transparency and decision-making on city operations including public safety, transport and smart infrastructure, drawing on the open data platform, digital twin, and emerging technology initiatives. Continue to apply advanced analytics techniques in an ethical manner.

Develop and deliver place-based planning that responds to the community's existing and projected physical and digital infrastructure needs.

Investigate innovative funding options for council service and infrastructure delivery including partnerships, philanthropy and green finance to fund local infrastructure that delivers resilient spaces and places.

*Annual Plan Initiative that has been planned and budgeted for in the 2020-21 Annual Plan and Budget



Strengthen community participation and align with others

The pandemic has revealed and amplified existing inequalities in our city. Diversity of ideas supports better decision-making and solutions for social equity and economic growth. We must align with all levels of government, organisations, businesses and the community for a co-ordinated and targeted recovery.

By prioritising this initiative our future city will:

- lead in technology, digital and data provision
- be inclusive, accessible and affordable; providing opportunity for all
- involve the community as it recovers and evolves.

Key SDGs this initiative aligns to:



Reduce inequality within and among countries.



Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development.



Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE: Continue to deliver or commence in the next three months

Launch new community engagement hub in Melbourne Town Hall

Co-design 10-year Community Vision and 4-year Council Plan using deliberative engagement

Engage the philanthropic sector to support community priorities

Work with neighbouring municipalities to coordinate and amplify community benefit in recovery

Create an innovative program to maximise engagement with international students

RECOVER: What we have planned and budgeted to do over the next 12 months

Create places for the community to participate in government decision-making

- Design and deliver the Town Hall Commons on completion of the ground floor security upgrade.* Pilot use of space for community involvement in decision-making.

Continue to engage with our community

- Continue stakeholder and community engagement in all strategic planning matters.
- Develop and implement a program of engagement for international students.*
- Regular updates to community and business about progress during recovery along with avenues for providing feedback.

Partner with others

- Pursue Greater Melbourne local government partnerships, coordination and advocacy.*
- Engage the philanthropic sector to contribute to community priorities.*

REGENERATE: Opportunities to consider implementing over the next four years

Co-design our deliberative engagement process with the community to ensure continuous involvement in recovery. Consider more community involvement in the development of future strategies and plans with expert advisory boards to incorporate best practice thinking. Establish citizens committees and scale the use of the Town Hall Commons.

Support the community to participate through a simplified stream of quick response grants to turn ideas into action. Create opportunities for the community to volunteer, get involved in committees or associations, community-led initiatives and advocacy work.

Enable marginalised communities to lead recovery by co-designing response initiatives for their community with them.

Actively engage hard to reach community segments through the involvement of underrepresented groups; support emerging and existing local leaders, and engage children and young people in the City of Melbourne's decision-making processes.

Increase community trust and agency in data collection and the use of emerging technology with the co-design of an emerging technology charter and the creation of a community data trust. Ensure open data is easy to use and accessible and embed privacy into all digital projects to maintain ethics, data sovereignty and trust. Provide training and resources to upskill the community in understanding the value and use of data.

Uncover and promote stories of compassion and inclusion from across the municipality to promote diversity and inclusion.

Engage proactively with governments and organisations to focus on the most beneficial way we can use our resources, avoid duplication, leverage our strengths and collaborate with others in delivery.

*Annual Plan Initiative that has been planned and budgeted for in the 2020-21 Annual Plan and Budget



Evaluate, measure and progress

The pandemic has highlighted that health, wellbeing and the economy are interdependent. People who can participate to their full potential in all aspects of life are the engine room of a prosperous city. Holistic measurement and ongoing analysis assist decision-making for a positive recovery.

By prioritising this initiative our future city will:

- lead in technology, digital and data provision to stimulate innovation
- be inclusive, accessible and affordable; providing opportunity for all.

Key SDGs this initiative aligns to:



Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.



Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development.

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE: Continue to deliver or commence in the next three months

Integrate the UN SDGs in strategies, planning and reporting

Continuously review and evaluate the impact of actions and initiatives within this Plan

Explore emerging trends and new opportunities and update this Plan as we learn more

Develop a measurement framework to track our progress and assess impact

RECOVER: What we have planned and budgeted to do over the next 12 months

Implement localised use of United Nations Sustainable Development Goals to drive economic investment and evaluation.

- Integrate the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.*

The COVID-19 Reactivation and Recovery Plan is current and adaptive.

- Develop a measurement framework to track progress and assess impact that includes key metrics such as pedestrian counts, payroll jobs, retail and hospitality spend, retail and commercial vacancy rates, new businesses and residential population.
- Continuously review and evaluate the impact of actions and initiatives within the COVID-19 Reactivation and Recovery Plan.
- Explore emerging trends and new opportunities and update this Reactivation and Recovery Plan as we learn more.

REGENERATE: Opportunities to consider implementing over the next four years

Create and share holistic measures and a measurement dashboard to indicate the City of Melbourne's progress towards SDGs including wellbeing, prosperity, understanding of Aboriginal culture and environmental indicators.

Continue to partner with local and global academic and research institutes to develop strong research and innovation capabilities.

Provide more safe open data and measurement to the broader community to enable decision-making and experimentation.

Embed strong test and learn methodologies into delivery by establishing baseline measurement in pilots, evaluate change, evolve solutions and share results to create broader impact.

*Annual Plan Initiative that has been planned and budgeted for in the 2020-21 Annual Plan and Budget

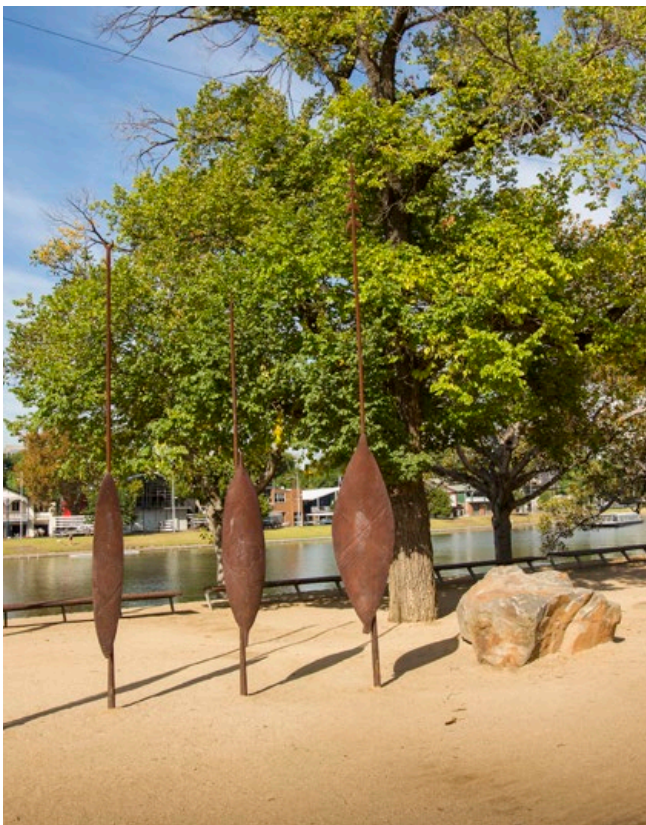
FUTURE ASPIRATIONS FOR MELBOURNE



As Melbourne navigates our path through reactivation, recovery and regeneration, short, medium and long-term planning will be complex.

The timeline around easing restrictions is evolving and it is likely that physical distancing will remain important for some time. Other uncertainties include when and how office workers might return to the city, what impact the increased use of video conferencing will have on interstate and international travel and how the demand for face to face meetings in the central city may change over time.

Flexibility and agility will be required to maximise the potential gains in moving towards recovery, as will drawing upon the city's existing strengths.



Leveraging existing strengths

The City of Melbourne sits on the ancient Aboriginal site of Tanderrum, where the five language groups of the Eastern Kulin Nation gathered around the site of the Melbourne Cricket Ground. Aboriginal people's connection to Australia is 60,000 years strong. Understanding our past can bring us together during these unusual times. Times that test our resilience and identity as a city and community, where concepts of what it means to be bold, inspirational, sustainable, prosperous and inclusive may be strained. The ancient ceremony of Tanderrum can have a modern interpretation that symbolises the coming together of one people in one place, where no one is left behind.

Modern Melbourne is a city for people; our high quality streets, laneways, parks and squares inspire our community and naturally bring people together. These assets have attracted an abundance of restaurants, cafes, shops, music venues, theatres, galleries and festivals. This has drawn people and businesses from around the world to visit or call Melbourne home, expanding our population, workforce and diversity—creating a vibrancy that has made Melbourne the extraordinary city we know today.

Melbourne is among the world's leading cities in sectors such as medical research, biotechnology, superannuation fund management and international education. These knowledge-intensive sectors are supported by major universities and emerging innovation districts located within walking distance of the central city. With ample land for development close to the central city, an educated, young and diverse population and workforce to draw from and a strong cultural life, Melbourne offers growing industries the perfect conditions for success.

Our renowned livability has strong connections to our long history of delivering ambitious climate action. We've increased energy efficiency and renewable energy uptake and cooled the city by growing our urban forest and investing in innovative water infrastructure. Our Climate and Biodiversity Emergency Response prioritises achieving zero emissions buildings, transitioning to 100 per cent renewable energy grid, further greening the city and embedding climate action into everything we do.

The city's successes have been well guided by rigorous and well considered strategies and plans that establish a bold and aspirational vision for the future of our city. The results of this foundation are witnessed in the strength of engagement, participation and public discussion in the strategy development process as well as in Melbourne's national and international recognition for liveability. We adopt a highly collaborative approach to strategy development, building on strong partnerships with industry, government, research institutions and the community. This approach enables the City of Melbourne to confidently lead and advocate for positive change on behalf of the community.

These existing aspects, skills and capabilities have been fundamental to our past successes and will form the bedrock of a resilient, prosperous and sustainable future.

Community and expert insights

While COVID-19 has caused major disruption in our city, it has also provided a unique window of opportunity to consider what we want for our future post-recovery.

The research we conducted with community and experts deepened our understanding of the issues and opportunities that are facing cities due to COVID-19, as well as inspiring us to think big as we actively plan for Melbourne's future. Through this extensive research, consistent themes and challenges emerged that resulted from, or were amplified by, the pandemic.

This is what we heard:

- A large proportion of participants felt strongly that there was an opportunity to make lasting and impactful change, but we should act now. It was acknowledged that the city would need to adjust to major impacts and economic recovery was crucial to our city's success.
- A significant theme was the creative sector's contribution to the city's economy along with its role in creating vibrancy, social cohesion and unique experiences. There was a consistent view that this sector must be a focus in recovery. Opportunities were also identified to accelerate growth through innovation and emerging businesses.
- Building resilience in our community is viewed as essential given ongoing uncertainty. Accelerating action on climate change and collective global action were seen as fundamental to economic recovery. We noted a strong desire to integrate our city's ancient and continuous Aboriginal culture and knowledge in responding to contemporary challenges.
- Great concern was voiced about the mental health, equity and wellbeing of our community, particularly vulnerable communities. Community and experts want to see inequality, affordability and inclusion addressed. The desire for more green spaces in our city was consistently linked with health and wellbeing outcomes.
- The digital divide was raised as an issue. Participants advocated for integrated digital infrastructure that would enable participation in an adaptable, digitally-inclusive and connected city.

The aspirations that follow on pages 42 and 43 draw on the collective hopes and desires expressed by the community members and experts we consulted. The most frequently shared insights took precedence as we developed the Reactivation and Recovery Plan. They ensure that, even as we tackle the immediate response to COVID-19, we are also building a future our community expects.



IN THE FUTURE, MELBOURNE...

Is healthy and safe

- Melbourne’s community supports each other to be healthy and resilient, particularly in times of crisis.
- Public health is viewed holistically; placing high value on air quality, climate conditions, access to open space, community connection and overall physical health, mental health and wellbeing.
- Our public spaces are safe, comfortable and accessible for walking and cycling, and public transport networks are efficient, reliable and active.

“Our cities were once designed with a multitude of spaces in which to naturally bump into neighbours and start a conversation, but over the past few decades it is arguable that we have designed and built our cities to be lonely.”
Research participant ES13

Stimulates collective action on climate change

- Climate change and biodiversity action is embedded and prioritised in everything we do.
- Aboriginal knowledge systems and ‘caring for country’ are integrated into climate actions, guided by Traditional Owners.
- Rapid progress towards a circular economy with waste reduction is prioritised and the electricity grid is powered by 100 per cent renewable energy.
- Business and industry work together to uplift sustainable practices and minimise use of resources.
- Data and knowledge that support community and business to implement solutions to climate change is accessible and open.
- Our community has agency to take action in ways that work for them.

“We can use this time as an opportunity to care for the country which through a First Peoples perspective includes caring for not just the land, the waterways, and the plants and the ecosystems but also all living creatures which includes us humans.”
Research participant ES42

Draws people to it with vibrancy, activity, open space and amenity

- Melbourne is a vibrant, safe and accessible gathering place—for entertainment, cultural experiences, business, education, sporting events and tourism.
- Aboriginal knowledge and history underpins our identity, spaces, events and experiences.
- Our liveability and unique identity attracts talent, innovation and investment which is strengthened by unified action by all levels of government and the private sector.
- Inner city neighbourhoods provide diverse options for central city living, as we continue to celebrate Melbourne’s distinctive character, and protect our natural and built heritage for future generations.
- Biodiversity and nature-based solutions enhance city liveability and mitigate the impacts of climate change.
- Our natural assets are highly valued and central to our identity and amenity.
- Spaces and buildings are dynamically reimaged for sustainable, adaptive and diverse uses, optimising existing and new infrastructure.

“The time is now: for business, civil society, and governments to come together and start the green recovery. This is about jobs creation and securing an equitable, biodiverse planet for future generations. It is up to all of us to take this opportunity and create the world we imagine.”
Research participant MC12



Leads in technology, digital and data provision

- A diverse and educated population and a reputation for knowledge-intensive sectors that provide a gathering place for expertise from around the world.
- Our community has strong digital literacy and easy access to services through inclusive, people-centred technology.
- Local startups, innovators and researchers are enabled to prototype emerging technologies to solve city problems with and for the community.
- City analytics tools and advanced analytics capabilities provide a robust evidence base to support city and community decision-making.
- Open city data and digital offerings that champion privacy and ethics, strengthen our community's trust of city operations, assist in making evidence based decisions and drive global innovation.
- Resilient, connected digital infrastructure including 5G links people and places, improves productivity and increases economic growth.

“The ultimate goal is to have ‘fully integrated intelligent infrastructure’ whereby each type of infrastructure is not only smart in its own right but it is also communicating with other infrastructure and people.”
Research participant MC17

Is inclusive, accessible and affordable

- Melbourne is an equitable and accessible city that addresses systemic inequality.
- Our community is inclusive and empathetic, improving social cohesion, connection and opportunity.
- Aboriginal culture and knowledge is understood, appreciated, and acknowledged.
- Safe, affordable, sustainable and inclusive housing is provided to support a diverse community.
- Our community has access to high quality community facilities and services.
- Spaces and places are easily accessed through digital infrastructure.

“Affordable housing is not only critical to ensuring quality of life and protecting the vulnerable, it is essential for maintaining the city’s diversity, vibrancy, creativity and overall sense of empathy.”
Research participant ES33

“The arts [help] us to develop understanding, empathy and to think about each other. Why do we want a better place? How can we invest more in this?”
Research participant CW13

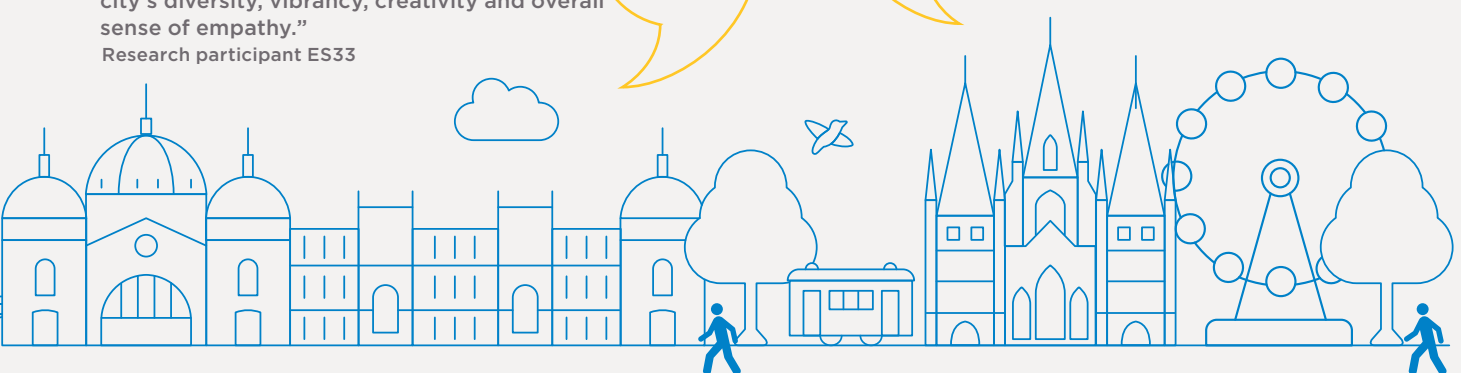
Supports businesses, entrepreneurs and creatives to prosper in an ever-changing environment

- Businesses are resilient and equipped with the skills, tools and mindsets to evolve as we encounter new challenges.
- Retail, service and entertainment businesses thrive in the central city by leveraging both digital and physical environments as part of a vibrant experience economy.
- New types of industries and jobs are created through automation, local manufacturing, emerging technology and experimentation stimulated by urban renewal environments.
- Our business sector is diverse and leverages end-to-end innovation in the city, from research through to investment, commercialisation, manufacturing and delivery.
- Business, innovators, researchers and government partner to solve city problems.
- Prosperity grows as every sector of the economy integrates inclusive, sustainable and creative practices.
- An active, diverse and leading creative sector delivers work at all scales and the broad benefits of a creative city, including economic contribution, community cohesion and societal health are widely acknowledged, protected and valued.

Deeply involves the community as it recovers and evolves

- Melburnians are empowered to make decisions about their city. Continuous opportunities exist to collectively reimagine, engage and tackle issues.
- Our community is known for how we care for and respect others, including our ancestors, future generations and the planet when we interact and solve problems.
- Melburnians adopt stewardship of the city.

“We now have an unparalleled moment to change course, lift quality of life for all citizens and build a society that is more enjoyable, inclusive and equitable.”
Research participant MC12



NEXT STEPS

This Reactivation and Recovery Plan integrates with the Council planning framework and City of Melbourne's strategic plans and is designed to help guide and shape our work now and into the future.

Implement immediate priorities and continuously assess impact

The City of Melbourne will continue to deliver the immediate actions highlighted in the 'recovery' phase of this Reactivation and Recovery Plan, all of which we have planned and budgeted in the FY2020-21 Annual Plan and Budget. Remaining flexible and agile in the way we deliver on these actions will be crucial to successfully navigate the ongoing uncertainty as the pandemic continues to unfold in Melbourne.

The City of the Future Taskforce ('the Taskforce') will actively review and analyse the impacts of the pandemic on our city and track and assess our progress in recovery. Based on this analysis, the Taskforce may provide recommendations to Council on new or changed priorities in the short-term. This work will be undertaken in partnership with other levels of government and industry, including the City Economy Advisory Board (see Appendix). Any budgetary impacts of this continuous review will be aligned to quarterly budget reviews and also brought to Council for consideration.

Advocate for critical economic stimulus with the Victorian and Australian Governments

Given the profound impact this pandemic has had on the economy of the central city, the City of Melbourne will continue to advocate for immediate and substantial stimulus funding from the Victorian and Australian Governments to help kick start Melbourne's economy for the benefit of all of Australia.

The health and prosperity of Melbourne's central city economy is critical to the overall prosperity of the state and the nation. The priority projects we are advocating for will provide crucial economic stimulus while also helping to lay the ground work for a more prosperous and sustainable future for Melbourne as we emerge from this crisis and begin the hard work of recovery.

Support development of 10-year Community Vision and Council Plan 2021-2025

This Reactivation and Recovery Plan provides a consolidated view on the trends, impacts and immediate response actions currently underway at the City of Melbourne due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It also sets out long-term aspirations for the future of our city, following community research and expert engagement. This information will form a critical role in inducting the incoming Council, following elections in October 2020. It is designed to support the incoming Council in developing a new 10-year Community Vision and 4-year Council Plan.

The future aspirations set out in this document will act as a foundation for the development of a Community Vision, while the medium-term opportunities and actions outlined in the 'regeneration' phase of this Reactivation and Recovery Plan will be presented to Council for consideration as part of their new Council Plan. In accordance with Local Government guidelines, the community will be engaged with the process for developing both the Community Vision and Council Plan in early 2021 using deliberative engagement practices.

The City of Melbourne will also leverage the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) framework to assist in prioritising opportunities and supporting the Council to develop a holistic Council Plan that drives a robust regeneration of Melbourne over its 4-year term.



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APPENDIX

City Economy Advisory Board

The City Economy Advisory Board ('the Advisory Board') ensures the City of Melbourne harnesses strategic input from relevant industry and government representatives as we respond to the impacts of COVID-19 and begin delivery of our recovery initiatives.

Membership includes representatives from State Government, Commonwealth Government, economic advisors, education institutions, social services sector and private sector representation, including Austrade, Australian Hotels Association, Australian Retailers Association, Deloitte Access Economics, Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Department of Treasury and Finance, Melbourne Central, NAB, Property Council, RMIT, Telstra, Urban Development Institute of Australia, University of Melbourne, Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Visit Victoria.

Sub-committees

Seven sub-committees will feed into the scope of the Advisory Board. Each sub-committee will consist of a self-nominated lead or co-lead arrangement and will include a City of Melbourne executive representative. The role of the sub-committee framework is to:

- gather qualitative and quantitative data to inform an understanding of the impacts of COVID-19 on the central city economy
- form a view of the most significant problems and opportunities
- ensure coordination of key interventions being progressed by relevant organisations
- consider advice and ideas from business and community leaders
- present these findings and insights back to the City Economy Advisory Board for consideration and discussion.

Membership of the sub-committees will be drawn from key experts and advisors identified from various influential bodies and organisations, but not limited to the Victorian Government, the Australian Government, economic advisors, education institutions, social services sector and private sector representation.

The seven sub-committees and their focus areas are listed below.

Functionality of the City

How might we influence the movement of people and goods across the city, including in and out of buildings in a safe and socially distanced manner? With a focus on varying facets of mobility: pedestrianisation, public transport, private vehicles, parking, freight, logistics, and wayfinding signage.

Economic Infrastructure

How might we influence and stimulate growth through physical developments in the public and private realm? With a focus on influences on the property market, the future of the construction industry and stimulus funding from federal and state governments.

Bringing People Back to the City

How might we bring back domestic, interstate and international visitors to the City of Melbourne? With a focus on attracting high-value visitor segments through marketing, branding and promotion.

City Events and Activation

How might we leverage our events ecosystem to ensure the city remains active? With a focus on international and national-scale events and consideration of what events should be held when. This may include cancellation of some major activations and prioritisation of others.

Retail and Hospitality

How might we ensure our street fronts remain vibrant and prosperous? With a focus on increasing foot traffic, addressing empty retail premises through the provision of activations, renegotiating leasing terms, and provision of information and advice. Working with retailers and the hospitality sector to transform business models and make the link to events and marketing activity.

Knowledge city and International Education

How might we revitalise Melbourne's international education sector and grow Melbourne's knowledge-based sectors? With a focus on immigration settings, industry support and innovative approaches.

Economic Strategy

How might we plan strategically to revitalise Melbourne's economy? With a focus on using all available metrics to evaluate our activities and drive our strategic response to recovery, including foot traffic numbers from pedestrian sensors, expenditure data and other key reports. Responses may range from regulatory reform, to investment in skills or industry development.

How to contact us

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Business hours, Monday to Friday
(Public holidays excluded)

Telephone:

03 9658 9658
Business hours, Monday to Friday
(Public holidays excluded)

Fax:

03 9654 4854

In writing:

City of Melbourne
GPO Box 1603
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Interpreter services

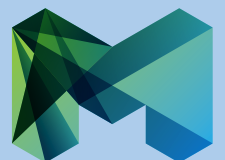
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