



**Mitchell 2020**

# **Community Plan**

## About the Plan

The Mitchell 2020 – Community Plan describes the Council and community's vision and priorities for the next 10 years and establishes a shared basis for joint planning, service delivery and advocacy.

It is the foundation for Council's partnership development with its community, local businesses, community groups, service providers, and other Government organisations.

The Community Plan reflects ideas for the community and is based on community consultation undertaken in 2011. Through the community consultation process, participants were clear about their vision for the future based on an understanding of the strengths within the community and the opportunities for improvement.

The Community Plan will guide the development of the Council Plan and the Municipal Strategic Statement.

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## The Decade Ahead

The Shire faces a period of considerable change over the next decade and beyond.

### Population Growth and Changing Settlements

The Shire's population is expected to increase by 50% by the year 2020, and double by the year 2030. Most of this growth will be in the south of the Shire – the populations of Wallan and Beveridge could be in the order of 30,000 and 50,000 residents respectively.

While the southern growth areas will see a greater proportion of younger families, there is an expectation overall for a healthier, aging population, living longer with a greater proportion of persons over 60 years old. The Shire will also become culturally and linguistically more diverse.

### Climate Change

A key change over the coming decade and beyond will be an increase in climate volatility. Our local climate will become significantly hotter and drier, with fewer rain-days and more droughts, and although average annual and seasonal total rainfall is expected to decline, the intensity of heavy rainfall events is likely to rise in most seasons.

The impact of climate change is more likely to be felt through extreme events such as an increasing number and sequence of hot days, reductions in frost and changes in daily rainfall patterns. Bush fire risk is also expected to increase. Changes in climate will have a range of impacts on our water resources, bushfire frequency and intensity, primary

production and infrastructure. It will also affect the richness of our biodiversity and the health of our landscapes.

### Economic Challenges and Opportunities

The growth of Metropolitan Melbourne incorporating Beveridge and approaching Wallan will attract significant investment in regional transport and other infrastructure. The major highways through the Shire and the north-south rail link are strong strategic assets for the Shire. Growth in the Shire's population will generate demand for further infrastructure, housing and services that will in turn generate jobs and economic growth.

The economic future of the Shire over the next decade however, will likely be one of increased uncertainty, largely because the uncertain global economic outlook.

While the Australian economy is generally sound, the benefits are unevenly spread. Many wage earners live in poverty or financial stress, particularly those on low incomes with large utility, transport and food bills. There are however opportunities for Mitchell to take advantage of its natural competitive strengths and its location. Mitchell has the opportunity to leverage employment and investment opportunities that will be generated through population growth in the south and the further development of railway based townships in the remainder of the municipality.

At a local level, there is a growing small business activity focussed on a local market where earnings and profits stay in the Shire for longer periods.

### Changing Legal and Policy Frameworks

The next decade will see continual changes in Federal and State Government legal and policy frameworks and in the availability of resources to support growth and service delivery in the Shire.

In particular changes in State planning policy for Melbourne's metropolitan boundary and urban growth strategies will have substantial impact on the southern parts of the Shire.

### Peak Oil

Oil is central to our way of life – the systems for our food production, transport, manufacturing, consumables and so on are directly or indirectly reliant on oil.

Peak oil is the point at which global oil extraction peaks. From that point availability of oil will decline leading to an increase in the cost of extracting dwindling global oil reserves and rises in the price for oil and those activities reliant on oil.

It is generally agreed that this peak has either already occurred or will occur this decade.

Mitchell Shire is particularly exposed to rising oil prices since the population is largely car dependent. Our agriculture is vulnerable since both food production and food transport are dependent on oil. Peak oil is also a major social equity issue with the likelihood of cost of living increases.

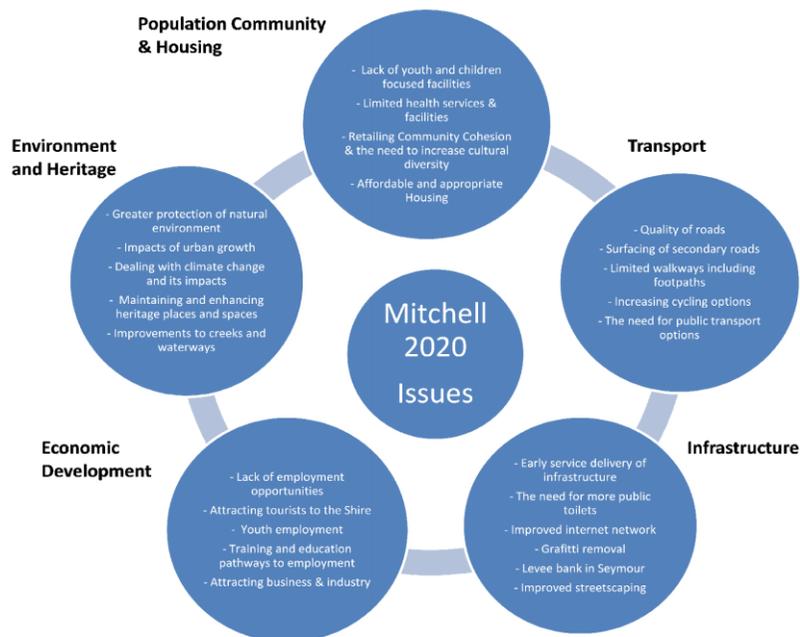
## Community Aspirations

The most valued assets in the community are Mitchell Shire’s country lifestyle, attractive rural landscapes, the sense of community well-being, relaxed style of living, access to trains and accessibility to Melbourne.

Those things most in need of improvement are road, pedestrian and bicycle path upgrades, the conservation and appearance of heritage towns, the range of local job and employment opportunities, and business and commercial opportunities.

As well as enhancing the amenity of the municipality for its residents, careful planning will be important in attracting visitors and tourists to boost economic development over the next decade.

The key issues identified during the community consultation were as follows.



In response to these issues, the community priorities were identified as:

- Plan for a broader range of education services, health and community services to meet our changing demographics.
- Diversify the housing stock to suit a range of household structures, age groups and lifestyles.
- Incorporate recycled water, sewerage and broadband as part of any major new development.
- Retain the character of towns and landscapes as a distinctive attraction of the Shire
- Make tourism a focus for future economic growth.
- Create a diversity of employment opportunities within the Shire that are not dependent on the Melbourne labour market.
- Preserve the rural character of Wallan and provide a full range of services while also retaining its country town experience.
- Seek and secure funding from a range of potential sources to provide infrastructure, community facilities and services in the major settlements.
- 
- Any new development in Beveridge is shaped by heritage protection and country-style landscape design
- Concentrate new urban growth and infrastructure development within the existing population centres of Mitchell Shire.
- Include bushfire management, enhancement of water catchments, enrichment of biodiversity, conservation of landscapes and farmland, more efficient use of infrastructure and reduced reliance on fossil fuels as high priorities for the planning and development of non-urban areas.
- Advocate and where possible improve access to public transport within and between the major towns
- Promote Seymour Township as an attractive investment opportunity for a range of businesses to become a key growth and employment area for the Shire.
- Extend new jobs and economic development opportunities beyond the designated growth areas in the south of the Shire.
- Provide hubs of integrated community services in the regional centres and larger towns.

## Implications for the Shire

The key issues for the next decade will be managing strong growth in the south of the Shire and changes in the demographic make-up of the Shire.

The community has clear aspirations to maintain and enhance the country character of the Shire while providing for growth and diverse service needs and expectations.

Within the context of adopted State and local planning policies the municipality faces a period of considerable change and growth over the next decade and beyond, that will challenge all stakeholders to identify and implement initiatives that are sensitive and responsive to the special and distinctive characteristics of the Shire.

The complexity and uncertainty of the economic, social and environmental changes over the next decade will require strong community leadership, a focus on long-term and sustainable development solutions and effective partnerships with the community and stakeholders for the design and delivery of services.

## Role of Council

Council has a significant impact on the lives of all members of the Shire.

Council's primary role is to provide services, strategic and orderly planning, leadership and good governance. It delivers services and facilities for the community and manages a significant proportion of the Shire's resources.

Council is also responsible for implementing many diverse programs, policies and regulations set by the Victorian and Australian governments.

Council has powers to set its own regulations and by-laws, and provide a range of services responsive to local community needs. Local laws developed by the Council deal with important community safety, and law and order issues. Local laws often apply to noise, fire hazards, abandoned vehicles, parking permits, street stalls, disabled parking, furniture on footpaths, graffiti, burning off, animals in public spaces and nuisance pets.

Many of the trends and issues that will affect the local community over the next decade are beyond the control or influence of Council. Responsibility is often shared between Council, the Victorian and the Australian government, for example with roads, environmental management and public health.

In responding to our future Council will seek to:

- Provide leadership in its own activities
- Use its planning powers and resource wisely to regulate the activities of landowners, residents and businesses
- Provide targeted services to support the community in partnership with the community, local businesses and other government agencies
- Partner, support or seek to influence other agencies where Council shares responsibility
- Advocate on behalf of the community issues of importance to the future of the Shire that are outside its control

## Vision

- Mitchell Shire in 2020 will be seen as a municipality that has embarked upon a journey of significant growth. In doing so it will have been recognised for achieving sustainable outcomes and prosperity for its distinctive communities. Mitchell will be a sought after location in which to actively live and work. Visitors will seek to explore the many and varied experiences within the Shire.
- Diverse housing opportunities, combined with high quality community, educational and recreational facilities, means that Mitchell will be seen as a destination offering unique opportunities to existing and future residents.
- Mitchell in 2020 will reflect and protect its natural environment, promoting a lifestyle that encourages community participation. Residents of all age groups will be engaged in active and passive recreation using the many tracks, trails, parks, cultural assets and sporting facilities that are a feature of the Shire.
- Mitchell will have utilised its natural advantages with regard to its strategic location and well planned infrastructure to attract employment and investment. The network of public transport options will create connectivity within and between communities in urbanised and rural environments.

## Principles

The principles that will guide Council’s planning and decision-making are:

<b>Stewardship</b>	Maintaining the integrity of what’s special about Mitchell Shire. Protecting our country lifestyle, rural and semi-rural character while providing modern, convenient, affordable and accessible services.
<b>Long-term Approach</b>	A long-term approach to the development of our Shire based on understanding of present and future risks and opportunities and the application of sustainable design principles and practices to all development.
<b>Community Engagement</b>	Inclusive approaches to community engagement in planning and decision-making that make it possible for all to participate.
<b>Partnerships</b>	Recognising that modern service delivery is complex and involves many stakeholders. Working in partnership to develop and deliver innovation solutions and exploring new, more efficient and effective ways of meeting the needs of the community.
<b>Accountability &amp; Transparency</b>	Reaching the highest standards in accountability and transparency in decision-making and reporting. Building better governance, greater trust in government and ultimately better outcomes for the community.
<b>Best Practice</b>	Aiming to be the best at what we do. Recognising that we learn from our experience and from the experience of others, listening to our community and investing in evidence based solutions.

## Directions & Community Priorities

### 1. Community Leadership

#### Community Goals

- Increased volunteering, civic involvement and opportunities for community leadership
- Support for the establishment and ongoing viability of local groups
- Opportunities for community members to enhance their leadership capabilities
- Recognition and celebration of leadership in the community
- Council leadership by example

#### Councils Role

Community leadership is vital to the fabric of community.

Throughout the Shire there are small pools of people who take on leadership roles within their local communities and more broadly.

Council plays an important role in strengthening a culture of volunteerism, supporting a diversity of leadership, building the leadership capacity of communities and nurturing emerging leaders.

#### Community Priorities

Short Term (1 – 2 years)	
<b>Service delivery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support leadership programs for young people through Council’s youth services and community grants programs.</li> <li>• Support local community groups by providing information, training, meeting facilities and financial assistance through the community grants program.</li> <li>• Establish community networks and hold networking events where different community groups can share ideas and learn from each other.</li> <li>• Support and develop sports networks to enhance opportunities for the development of clubs.</li> <li>• Develop and facilitate access to leadership and training programs that are flexible in approach, especially for newly arrived and marginalised communities.</li> </ul>
<b>Advocacy and Community Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise leadership in the community and promote the community’s achievements through Council’s publications and awards.</li> <li>• Advocate for increased government funding for community capacity building projects for a variety of communities.</li> </ul>

## 2. Governance & Advocacy

### Community Goals

- Best practice accountability and transparency of all Council operations
- Long term and evidence based approaches to assessing risk, planning and decision-making
- Strong engagement of the community in planning and decision-making
- Community priorities are strongly represented to other levels of government and key stakeholders

### Council's Role

Effective local government relies on public confidence in elected Councillors and appointed officers. Good governance strengthens credibility and confidence in our public services.

Good governance structures enable Council to pursue the community's vision effectively as well as underpinning that vision with mechanisms for control and management of risk. The function of governance is to ensure that Council fulfills its purpose, achieves the intended outcomes for citizens and service users and operates in an effective, efficient, economic and ethical manner.

Good governance leads to good management, good performance, good stewardship of public money, good public engagement and, ultimately, good outcomes for citizens and service users.

These concepts will guide all Council's governance activity.

Council aims to meet the standards of the best governance arrangements.

Council also has a key role in advocating on behalf of the community as well as ensuring the delivery of high quality services. Many issues the community face and want addressed are outside Council's direct control. Council will work with the community and community leaders to advocate on key issues and concerns.

Community Priorities

	Short Term (1 – 2 years)	Medium Term (2 – 5 years)	Long Term (5 – 9 years)
<b>Planning and Policy Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare and implement 10-year capital works and financial plans.</li> <li>• Maintain an up-to-date strategic risk assessment register and communicate this broadly to staff, stakeholders and the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the relationship between Council policy, service delivery, advocacy and community priorities</li> </ul>	
<b>Service Delivery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish and support Council Advisory Committees, Networks &amp; Forums to reflect and represent the interests of different groups in the community</li> <li>• Provide excellent customer service, including provision of timely, accurate information and advice for community members</li> <li>• Keep the community informed about the outcomes of consultation and regularly report Council's performance to the community</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for community groups, community organisations, service providers and other stakeholders to share ideas, plan and implement programs, projects and services together</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constantly monitor and regularly issue advice to relevant government agencies to enable adaptation and targeting of programs and projects to be relevant to the emerging, ethnically more diverse community</li> <li>• Build the capacity of Council officers to effectively communicate and consult with all members of the community including the use of interpreters and translations.</li> </ul>
<b>Advocacy and Community Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide opportunities for the community to participate in decision making and advocate for the future of their neighbourhood and municipality</li> <li>• Advocate on behalf of service providers and the community to other levels of government on emerging community priorities</li> <li>• Increase the capacity for community members to be involved in planning of their local areas</li> </ul>		

### 3. Sustainable Development

#### Community Goals

- Protection and enhancement of the distinctive sense of places, cultural identity and landscapes of the Shire
- Diverse, active and connected communities living in sustainable, well-designed, safe, accessible places with high participation in community life
- A place of diversity and choice in living environments and employment opportunities
- Design of vibrant, liveable settlements set among well-maintained expansive rural areas

#### Council's Role

Sustainable development is about planning and providing for the needs of individuals and communities without undermining the reasons we live in the Shire or damaging the environment.

Council has a role to drive and shape the character of future development as well as refine and evolve existing development. It can do this through a number of mechanisms including determining:

- New development locations
- Land use and program mix
- Density and floor area ratio
- Open space plans
- Place making plans
- Infrastructure plans
- Green building requirements
- Transportation systems and regulations

Council will seek to achieve sustainable development through a long-term approach to planning and the application of sustainable design principles and practices in partnership with developers, state government agencies and the broader community.

Community Priorities

	Short Term (1 – 2 years)	Medium Term(2 – 5 years)	Long Term(5 – 9 years)
<b>Planning and Policy Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a Development Contributions Strategy which establishes a strategic approach to the collection and allocation of open space contributions from developers</li> <li>Review Mitchell’s Municipal Strategic Statement to reflect the priorities identified in the Community Plan</li> <li>Participate in the preparation of the Growth Area Framework Plan and a suite of Precinct Structure Plans for that part of the northern growth corridor of metropolitan Melbourne that incorporates the Shire of Mitchell, including Beveridge.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen planning policy to encourage Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD)</li> <li>Implement structure plans and urban design frameworks aimed at enhancing the liveability of Mitchell Shire</li> <li>Apply environmentally sustainable design principles and practices to all development.</li> <li>Review and implement processes and actions that ensure Council’s own operations are a model of leadership in this regard.</li> <li>Support the development of a new major activity centre, proximate to Beveridge.</li> <li>Prepare Structure Plans for the regional centres and major towns.</li> <li>Plan for the collection of development contributions and for the orderly delivery of capital works projects.</li> <li>Establish urban growth boundaries around each primary settlement to cater for expansion over the next 50 years.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a planning policy which recognises the demand for smaller rural allotments in areas proximate to the primary settlements, and which will ensure urban expansion boundaries provide for long term growth.</li> </ul>
<b>Service Delivery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement and enforce Council’s planning policies which aim to achieve sustainable development</li> <li>Ensure that sustainable outcomes underpin the structure and design of new communities.</li> <li>Seek opportunities to secure alternate renewable sources of energy that enhance sustainability and reduce carbon emissions.</li> <li>Protect distinctive landscape and environmental features of Shire from inappropriate development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilise Council’s property portfolio strategically to further the sustainable development of the municipality</li> <li>Support the integration of significant natural resources into the regional open space systems of the area.</li> <li>Support sensitive infill development.</li> <li>Preserve and enhance the established and strong sense of identity and character of each settlement.</li> <li>Conserve and enhance the built form and heritage that distinguishes each town by supporting respectful infill which contributes to the character and identity of settlements.</li> <li>Recognise the longer-term strategic changes and improvements in the accessibility of the southern part of the shire.</li> <li>Address capacity, safety and conflict issues particularly on the Northern Highway through Wallan and Kilmore.</li> <li>Support the provision of a high quality wireless and or fibre network into emerging new communities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the diversity of available housing options to meet the diverse and changing needs of the community</li> <li>Support a sustainable approach to the growth and development of settlements and rural land use through the adoption of a hierarchy of settlements with clear primary roles.</li> <li>Ensure each settlement in Mitchell is a compact and distinctive place as well as being great places to visit and or live.</li> <li>Support efforts to attract visitation and tourism based on Mitchell’s heritage character.</li> <li>Improve the integration of railway stations with the proximate community, particularly at Kilmore and Wallan, as well as Seymour, Broadford and Wandong Heathcote Junction</li> <li>Support enhancements to the primary arterial road network.</li> <li>Ensure walking and cycling infrastructure is incorporated into the design and development of new neighbourhoods.</li> <li>Support the competitive advantage of the rail connections throughout the Shire.</li> <li>Develop a Design Awards scheme to promote high quality architectural design</li> <li>Conserve and enhance public art, historic buildings and places in Council ownership</li> </ul>

**Advocacy and  
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- Advocate to retain country character and protection of natural landscapes and cultural heritage
- Advocate for State Government planning policies that support sustainable development and create greater certainty for land owners
- Advocate for the early delivery of infrastructure development to ensure it keeps pace with our ever growing and changing community.
- Secure State and developer based infrastructure funding.
- Advocate for the improved presentation of major infrastructure such as freeways and rail corridors in the Region
- Promote Mitchell's historic buildings and places through publications, the media and interpretive signage

#### 4. Economic Prosperity

##### Community Goals

- Efficient, well-placed and high quality infrastructure and services that supports local economic activity
- Best practice Council services for business
- Local businesses that support fair employment, inclusive communities and fair trade
- Educated and skilled workforce with local employment opportunities for residents
- Effective and strong business networks and collaboration
- Sound economic development while preserving residents' quality of life
- A strong regional reputation where Mitchell's businesses are well known for their capabilities and products and services

##### Council's Role

By fostering economic growth and developing programs that help local businesses achieve success, we strengthen our community.

Council's role is to support the local economy through good planning and service delivery, promoting local businesses and working with the community, education providers and other government agencies to build the capacity of our workforce and create future employment and business opportunities.

Community Priorities

	Short Term (1 – 2 years)	Medium Term(2 – 5 years)	Long Term(5 – 9 years)
<b>Planning and Policy Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Market the opportunities for new business in the area.</li> <li>Further develop the tourism offer in conjunction with complementary attractions in the broader region and neighbouring municipalities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement the Mitchell Economic Development Strategy</li> <li>Develop strategies aimed at increasing the employability of residents in the municipality</li> <li>Develop and implement marketing strategies, structure plans and urban design frameworks for Mitchell’s activity centres and industry hubs</li> <li>Ensure that sufficient suitably zoned land is provided to support the economic wellbeing of settlements.</li> <li>Understand that the anticipated growth in the community will be matched by greater diversity of need and expectation in the areas of health, education, community service and recreation.</li> </ul>	
<b>Service Delivery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support local business associations.</li> <li>Support the development of employment and training opportunities in the Shire.</li> <li>Encourage new business and employment opportunities throughout the Shire.</li> <li>Implement a Shop Front Improvement Program aimed at improving the presentation of shopping strips in partnership with traders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance the ability of local business associations to undertake coordinated marketing and management of shopping precincts.</li> <li>Facilitate access to volunteering, learning, mentoring and training opportunities as a pathway to ongoing employment.</li> <li>Support an expansion of the range and depth of educational facilities and services in response to growth and the needs of the community at all stages in its lifecycle.</li> <li>Support the development of the southern part of the Shire as a major centre of freight and logistics.</li> <li>Support the diversification in rural land practice and production to maintain employment and value in the Shire.</li> <li>Support the development of the equine industry, as a major economic, social, lifestyle and recreational sector in the Shire.</li> <li>Encourage the growth of tertiary employment opportunities in the major centres of the Shire.</li> <li>Support opportunities improve the quality of digital technology operating through the Shire.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate access to business training and networking and an online business development portal.</li> <li>Facilitate access to financial literacy education programs.</li> </ul>
<b>Advocacy and Community Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate for the identification and development of major, strategically located commercial and industry hubs in the Region to increase access to local employment.</li> <li>Develop a campaign to highlight Mitchell-based business and encourage the community to “buy local”.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make Mitchell more attractive to business by improving access to technology and services.</li> <li>Facilitate inter-sector collaboration to increase training and employment opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with the education sector to improve high school retention rates and increase the level of participation in further education.</li> </ul>

## 5. Social Well-Being

### Community Goals

- Active, sociable, meaningful lives that promote good health and well being
- Revival of local identity and wisdom
- Strong support for and participation in the arts

### Council's Role

Accessible health provision, learning and employment sites, a strong local economy, local shops, public transport, accessible natural environments – all help people to live good lives.

The heart of what local government is about is supporting a better life for people and helping to build resilient communities, now and over the longer term.

Council, through the local partnerships it forms, has real power to affect change in the social well-being of our communities. It's key roles are to:

- Provide strategic leadership
- Design and deliver services with well-being in mind
- Measure and report wellbeing outcomes

Community Priorities

	Short Term (1 – 2 years)	Medium Term(2 – 5 years)	Long Term(5 – 9 years)
<b>Planning and Policy Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement an integrated service development and infrastructure planning framework for Council support services</li> <li>Develop and implement a Leisure Services Strategic Plan to respond the needs of all people living in Mitchell</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand that the anticipated growth in the community will be matched by greater diversity of need and expectation in the areas of health, education, community service and recreation.</li> <li>Develop and implement the Community Safety Strategy</li> <li>Implement State legislation and local laws aimed at enhancing public health and safety</li> <li>Work with other agencies and stakeholders to develop an integrated and coordinated approach to achieving positive health outcomes</li> <li>Endorse and implement a Public Art Policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate use of health impact assessments to inform Council decision making</li> </ul>
<b>Service Delivery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Celebrate our local history and diversity and encourage the community to take pride in local areas</li> <li>Support local community groups by providing information, training, meeting facilities and financial assistance through the community grants program.</li> <li>Establish community networks and hold networking events where different community groups can share ideas and learn from each other.</li> <li>Support and develop sports networks to enhance opportunities for the development of clubs.</li> <li>Facilitate access to formal and informal volunteering opportunities</li> <li>Extend use of community facilities to a range of groups via community and sports facility agreements, leases and licences which incorporate a flexible approach</li> <li>Provide information about community services and activities through publications, the media and the internet</li> <li>Recognise and celebrate community participation through Council publications and awards</li> <li>Provide leisure and recreation facilities and activities that cater to Mitchell's diverse community</li> <li>Build the capacity of sports clubs by providing support and facilitating access to training</li> <li>Enhance the safety of neighbourhoods by implementing crime prevention through environmental design principles, encouraging activity in public places, upgrading public lighting where needed and working with the police and other stakeholders on crime prevention and perceptions of safety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate access to volunteering, learning, mentoring and training opportunities as a pathway to ongoing employment.</li> <li>Enhance neighbourhood character through parks and civic spaces that are safe, practical and enjoyable places to rest and socialise.</li> <li>Support convenient access across the network of settlements to a greater range of health, educational, social and recreational facilities and services.</li> <li>Support hubs of integrated community services that will be provided in the regional centres and larger towns.</li> <li>Plan and deliver life stage services that meet the needs of Mitchell's changing population</li> <li>Support an expansion of the range and depth of educational facilities and services in response to growth and the needs of the community at all stages in its lifecycle.</li> <li>Develop and maintain community facilities that are multifunctional and accessible to the community in terms of cost, location, administration and design</li> <li>Implement immunisation programs</li> <li>Implement programs aimed at increasing active transport, such as Travel Smart and the Walking School Bus</li> <li>Implement healthy eating programs and policies</li> <li>Develop district, neighbourhood and suburban parks in strategic locations</li> <li>Ensure all public open space and indoor activity areas, including parks are accessible to people with limited mobility, are equipped with public amenities that meet the needs of the community and are maintained in accordance with best practice</li> </ul>	

**Advocacy  
and  
Community  
Education**

- Advocate to reduce the health inequities for vulnerable population groups such as Indigenous community members, recently arrived communities, homeless community members, people with disabilities and all people from culturally diverse backgrounds
- Advocate for resources for district/regional sports complexes
- Advocate for increased bulk billing medical services and Medicare offices to make claims processes more accessible
- Provide information about walking cycling and public transport services in Mitchell through publications and directional signage
- Develop and implement road and pedestrian safety education programs
- Seek the enhancement of the quality and frequency of rail services.
- Ensure that facilities and structures in open spaces are consistent with our diverse community needs.
- Develop walking and cycling paths along Mitchell’s creeks and rivers
- Enhance public open space areas through continuing installation of drought tolerant grass, synthetic grass, landscaping, sports ovals and provision of public art in parks
- Advocate for increased tertiary education facilities and programs in the Region.
- Advocate for the provision of a full range of preventative as well as reactive health services, in a timely manner and in accessible locations.
- Advocate for increased funding to close the life stage service gaps and to support key community groups through life stage transitions
- Advocate for flexible funding models for community support services to facilitate integrated service delivery
- Advocate for health interventions by utilising physical activity initiatives that extend use to hard to reach groups
- Extend the network of physical activity opportunities in open spaces to attract a wide range of residents
- Advocate for health services that meet the community’s cultural and life stage needs
- Advocate for more affordable spaces to be made available for artists and arts organisations
- Advocate for affordable transport options that are environmentally and socially sustainable
- Increase and promote alternative forms of transport such as cycling and walking
- Seek improvements to the urban quality of train stations and their links to town centres.
- Advocate for more frequent and weekend bus services to supplement the rail network and provide connection and integration of services for communities not located proximate to the rail line.

## 6. Environmental Sustainability

### Community Goals

- Effective skills and capacity of Council, communities and individuals to care for and manage the environment
- Protection and restoration of existing biodiversity and natural habitats through appropriate land use and integration into the built environment
- Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions
- Energy efficient buildings and enterprises powered by increasing amounts of renewable energy technologies
- Reduction of waste, reuse where possible, and ultimately sending zero waste to landfill
- Low carbon modes of transport to reduce emissions, and reducing the need to travel
- Facilitate and encourage the development of more home based businesses that reduce the need for residents to endure long journey to work travel patterns
- Sustainable and healthy products, such as those with low embodied energy, sourced locally, made from renewable or waste resources
- Efficient water use in agriculture, in industry, in buildings and in the products we buy; tackling local flooding and water course pollution

### Council's Role

Our environment provides the essential services and resources for virtually all our social and economic activity, including clean air and water, temperature regulation and nutrient recycling. It holds natural habitats, plants and animals that are part of an irreplaceable heritage.

Council's role in collaboration with the community and other government agencies is to promote, strengthen and provide stewardship of our natural environment for our own benefit and for the benefit of future generations.

Community Priorities

	Short Term (1 – 2 years)	Medium Term(2 – 5 years)	Long Term(5 – 9 years)
<b>Planning and Policy Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimise risk to people and property from fire</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop policies, programs and management plans, aimed at increasing the biodiversity and conservation value of land within the municipality</li> <li>Develop and implement planning policies aimed at protecting and enhancing Mitchell's natural landscapes</li> <li>Enhance the health of watercourses and the biodiversity of the area.</li> <li>Protect agricultural land and floodplains.</li> <li>Conserve and protect valued natural resources, including water, land, flora and fauna.</li> <li>Identify suitable locations for the revegetation and connection of bio-links, including along watercourses.</li> </ul>	
<b>Service Delivery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administer waste services aimed at minimising the amount of waste transferred to landfill</li> <li>Provide incentives such as financial assistance to encourage sustainable land management practices on private land</li> <li>Undertake conservation works including weed and pest animal control on Council owned land</li> <li>Maintain and improve Council's drainage infrastructure to improve the quality of water discharged into Mitchell's creeks and rivers</li> <li>Implement the Storm Water Management Plan aimed at reducing the negative impact of storm water on Mitchell's creek and rivers</li> <li>Implement water sensitive urban design principles in the design of public places</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote environmentally sustainable practices through information, education and awards programs</li> <li>Promote home grown and local food production</li> <li>Enable opportunities for community members to contribute to community education based on their experiences of living sustainably</li> </ul>	
<b>Advocacy and Community Education</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support local environment groups, including "Friends of" groups</li> <li>Promote the environmental, historical and cultural values of Mitchell's natural landscapes</li> <li>Provide relevant information so the community can make informed choices to help minimise our environmental impact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate for higher mandatory Ecologically Sustainable Design standards</li> <li>Advocate for transport solutions that support reduced car use</li> <li>Advocate for State and Federal investment in habitat and open space corridors in Mitchell</li> <li>Facilitate community participation in environmental programs and events such as water monitoring, development of wild flower gardens, tree planting and conservation works</li> </ul>