DRAFT Living Well in Mitcham 2026 – 2031

City of Mitcham DRAFT Public Health Plan

September 2026

CITY OF MITCHAM

Acknowledgment of Country

The City of Mitcham acknowledges that we operate on the traditional lands of the Kaurna people, the Traditional Custodians of the Adelaide Plains.

We pay our respects to Kaurna Elders past and present and recognise their continuing cultural, spiritual and ancestral connections to this land and its waters.

We acknowledge the enduring contribution of the Kaurna people to the life of this region and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within our community.

Executive Summary

The City of Mitcham is a welcoming and inclusive community that values its heritage, natural environment and strong neighbourhood connections.

Health is shaped not only by healthcare services, but by the places we live, the streets we walk, the parks we enjoy, the opportunities we have to participate, and the strength of our social connections.

This Public Health Plan 2026–2031 sets out Council's commitment to creating the conditions that enable everyone in Mitcham to live healthy, connected and fulfilling lives, building on the foundations established through Council's 2020–2025 Living Well Plan. Over the past five years, Council has strengthened healthy environments, community connections and preventive health actions.

Over the next five years, Council will focus on strategic and practical actions to strengthen community wellbeing, reduce health inequities, and support a safe, accessible and climate resilient city. We will plan for emerging challenges — including climate impacts, cost of living pressures and an ageing population — and apply what we have learned to set clearer priorities, build stronger partnerships and deliver measurable outcomes. In doing so, we will continue to deliver services and infrastructure guided by our commitment to being respectful, responsive, collaborative and accountable to our community.

Together, we will continue building a community where everyone can live well.

Our Role in Public Health

Under the *South Australian Public Health Act 2011*, councils are recognised as public health authorities responsible for protecting and promoting public health and preventing disease and injury at a local level. The South Australian State Public Health Plan identifies five priority areas:

- Promote healthy living to reduce chronic disease
- Improve mental health and wellbeing
- Prevent and control the spread of infectious diseases
- Reduce the risk, burden and severity of injury
- Healthy environments for healthy people

This Public Health Plan aligns directly with these priorities and translates them into meaningful local action for the Mitcham community.

Public health in the City of Mitcham is shaped by a wide range of community assets, services and activities. Figure 1 illustrates ways Council promotes and protects public health through many aspects of its work, including services and programs at libraries and community centres, community gardens, footpaths, walking and cycling trails, the way our communities are planned, recreation facilities, parks and shaded playgrounds, environmental health regulation, immunisation services, volunteering and community involvement, and climate and risk management planning.

Community sporting clubs, recreation groups and sporting facilities also play an important role in public health by providing opportunities for physical activity, volunteering, social connection and community participation.

Figure 1: Illustrates what Public Health includes at a local level



Council's Role in Action

Council contributes to public health through land use planning, infrastructure delivery and maintenance, environmental health regulation, community development and partnerships. Our role varies, depending on the nature of the issue and the most effective point of influence, and include:

- Planner – shaping healthy, safe and accessible environments through land use planning, infrastructure and urban design.
- Service Provider – delivering and supporting programs, facilities and services that promote health, connection and inclusion.
- Regulator – protecting public health through environmental health regulation, compliance and enforcement.

- Partner – working collaboratively with communities, government agencies, service providers and other councils to achieve shared outcomes.
- Advocate – promoting policies, resources and systems that support health and wellbeing beyond Council's direct control.

By applying the most appropriate role in each context, Council seeks to maximise impact, avoid duplication and support coordinated action across the public health system.

Public health is a whole-of-Council responsibility and requires strong partnerships with community, health services and government agencies. Our strategic alignment of plans is illustrated in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Strategic Plan alignment



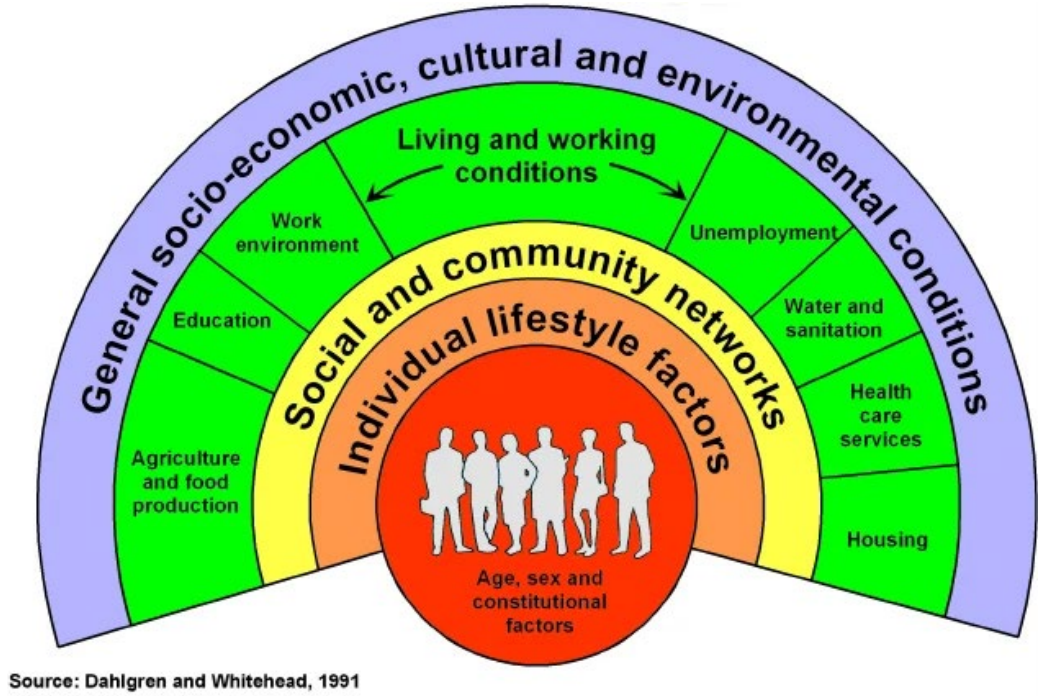
PUBLIC HEALTH PLANNING PRINCIPLES

This Plan is guided by established public health principles that support effective, equitable and sustainable action at a local level and align with contemporary public health practice in South Australia.

Population Health Approach

Council adopts a population health approach that seeks to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for the whole community while reducing inequities experienced by specific population groups. This approach recognises that health is shaped by social, economic and environmental factors, often referred to as the social determinants of health in Figure 3.

Figure 1: Social Determinants of Health.



Source: Dahlgren and Whitehead, 1991

Health in All Policies

Health outcomes are influenced by decisions made across many areas of Council business, not only health-specific services. Through a Health in All Policies approach, Council considers the potential health and wellbeing impacts of policies, plans, projects and services across all functions, embedding health considerations into everyday decision-making.

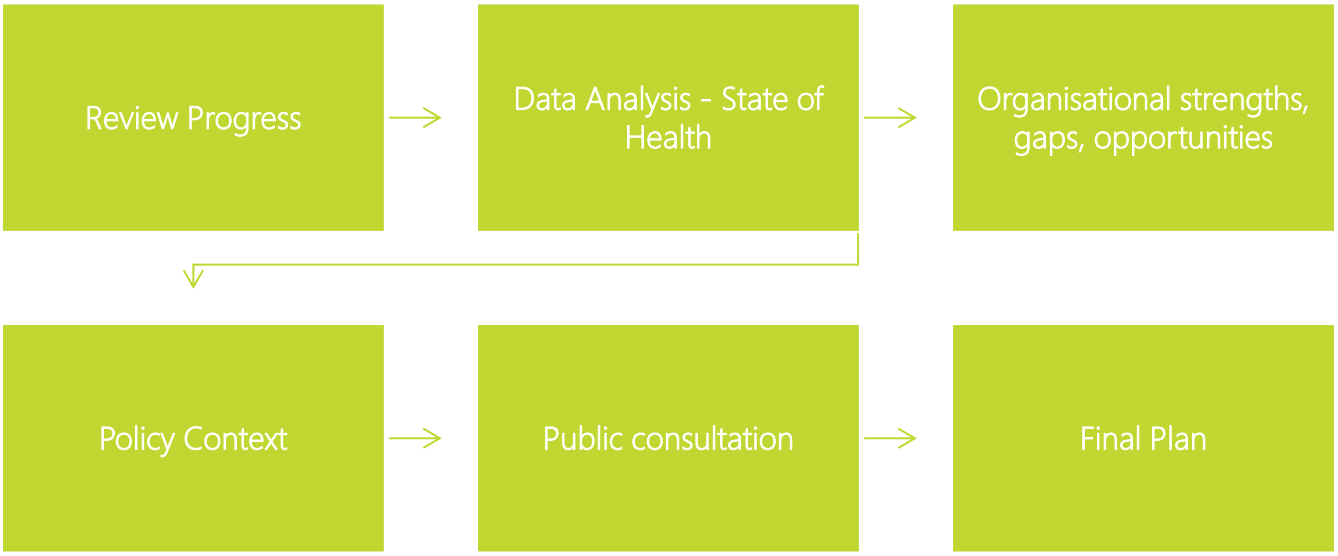
Life-Course and Place-Based Approaches

Health and wellbeing needs change across different stages of life, and the places where people live, work, learn and recreate play a significant role in shaping outcomes. This Plan considers the different needs of people at different stages of life, alongside the unique characteristics of Mitcham's neighbourhoods and communities.

DEVELOPING THIS PLAN

This Plan was developed through a structured, evidence-based, and community-informed process, as illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 2: Developing the plan



Policy and Legislative Context

This Plan has been developed in accordance with the *South Australian Public Health Act 2011* and has regard to the South Australian State Public Health Plan. It aligns with relevant national, state, regional and local strategies that influence health and wellbeing outcomes. This includes alignment with relevant climate adaptation, access and inclusion, transport, emergency management and strategic planning frameworks.

By maintaining alignment with these broader policy frameworks, the Plan supports coordinated action, meets statutory requirements and ensures Council's public health efforts contribute to shared outcomes across levels of government.

Stage 1 – Reviewing the local state of health

A comprehensive Research Report was prepared to establish a strong evidence base for the Plan.

The Research Report analysed the local state of health, including a review of:

- Local demographic trends and population characteristics
- Chronic disease risk factors and prevention priorities
- Environmental health data and regulatory responsibilities
- Built environment influences including walkability, accessibility and open space
- Climate resilience and emergency preparedness considerations

- Alignment with National and South Australian public health priorities
- Council's progress under the 2020–2025 Living Well Public Health Plan
- Emerging challenges and opportunities for the next five years.

The Research Report identifies several key public health risks, trends and opportunities that align with the South Australian State Public Health Plan priority areas.

Key Public Health Risks, Trends and Opportunities

Prevent and Control the Spread of Infectious Diseases
Risk / Trend: Ongoing vigilance is required to maintain high immunisation coverage and public health compliance as service demand increases.
Opportunity: Council's strong environmental health regulation, regular immunisation clinics and effective public health communication provide a solid foundation to protect the community and respond to emerging risks.

Promote Healthy Living to Reduce Chronic Disease
Risk / Trend: While Mitcham performs well across many indicators, rising rates of obesity (children and adults), diabetes, long term health conditions and declining physical activity present increasing chronic disease risks. Cost of living pressures, housing stress (22.5% of low-income households) and reduced volunteering and activity levels further affect healthy lifestyle choices.
Opportunity: Strong existing community infrastructure, high levels of education and access to open space, combined with Council's delivery of free and low-cost physical activity programs and healthy by design infrastructure, provide a strong platform to increase participation in active living for people of all ages. Community sport and recreation organisations represent a significant component of the local volunteer sector and provide opportunities for leadership, soft skill development, social connection and helping people feel part of their community.

Improve Mental Health and Wellbeing
Risk / Trend: Psychological distress remains consistent with State averages, while increases in lone person households, unpaid caring (14%) and disability prevalence (5%) heighten the risk of social isolation and mental health impacts for some residents.
Opportunity: Council's community centres, libraries, volunteering programs, sporting clubs and inclusive facilities offer opportunities to strengthen social connection, resilience and targeted mental wellbeing support for priority populations.

Reduce the Risk, Burden and Severity of Injury
Risk / Trend: An ageing population, increased disability prevalence and changing housing density increase risks related to falls, mobility and safety.
Opportunity: Continued investment in accessible infrastructure, lighting, footpath renewal and inclusive design can reduce injury risk and support independence.

Ensure Healthy Environments for Human Health
Risk / Trend: Climate change, extreme heat, bushfire risk and increasing environmental health service demand pose ongoing risks.
Opportunity: Mitcham's high urban tree canopy (almost 40%), climate partnerships and environmental leadership create strong opportunities to enhance climate resilience, cooling and environmental health outcomes.

Community Snapshot

The City of Mitcham is home to 70,484 residents and is characterised by strong neighbourhood identity, high levels of education and employment participation, and comparatively low socio-economic disadvantage.

At the same time, demographic patterns such as lone person households, unpaid caring roles, housing stress and disability prevalence shape the local public health context.

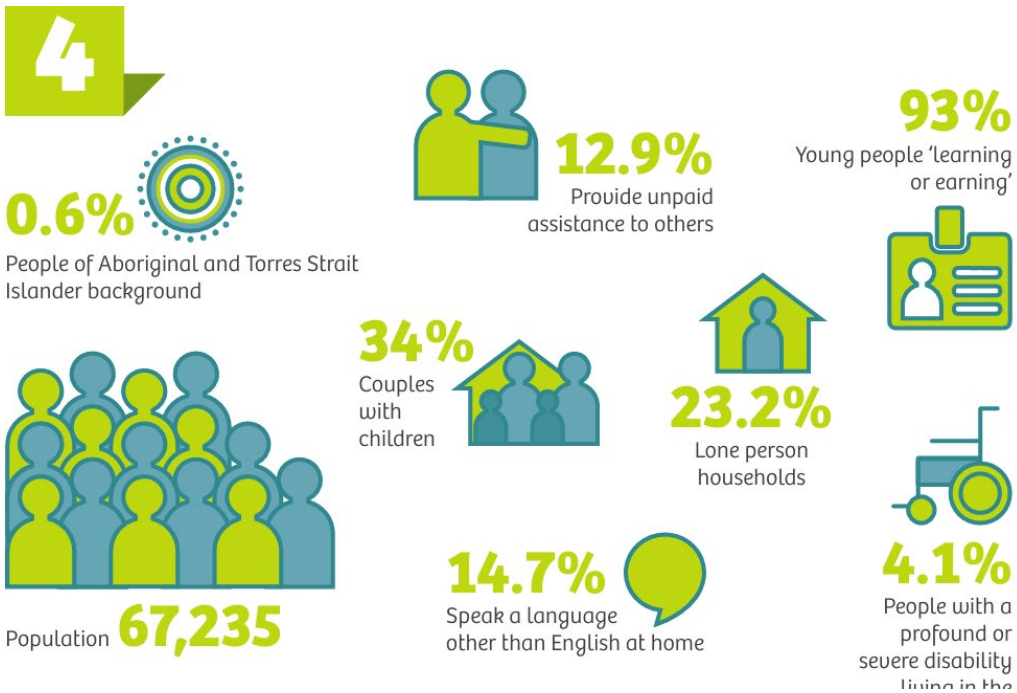
Key Indicators:

The City of Mitcham continues to have a low level of disadvantage compared to other South Australian council areas (3rd on SEIFA Index) meaning that in general people experience a good quality of life.

The earning or learning participation rates of young people continue to remain high at 93%.

The percentage of Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander peoples remains consistent at 0.6% of the local population.

- Lone person households – 23%
- Provide unpaid assistance – 14%
- Speak a language other than English at home – 15%
- People living with profound or severe disability – 5%
- Low-income households in mortgage or rental stress – 22.5%
- Tree canopy coverage – approaching 40%



Priority Populations in Mitcham

Mitcham performs strongly across many indicators, local data and engagement findings highlight several population groups that require focused consideration to ensure equitable health outcomes.

Older Residents

Mitcham's ageing population is growing – currently 20% of the population is aged 65 years and over. Older residents are more likely to live alone and may experience increased risk of social isolation, mobility limitations and falls. Safe, connected footpaths, accessible infrastructure and opportunities for social participation are critical to supporting ageing in place. Participation in sport, recreation and physical activity programs also contributes to healthy ageing by supporting physical health, independence, cognitive wellbeing and social connection. Through this Plan, Council seeks to help reduce the gap in health outcomes experienced by older residents by strengthening access, inclusion and community connection.

People Living with Disability

Approximately five percent of residents live with profound or severe disability. Over 14% of the population provide unpaid care to a person living with disability. Accessible infrastructure, inclusive communication and community transport options are essential to enabling participation and independence. Council recognises the need to close the gap in access and participation experienced by people living with disability by embedding universal design and inclusive practice across infrastructure, services and communication.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples experience persistent health inequities, shaped by historical and contemporary factors including the impacts of colonisation, systemic disadvantages and intergenerational trauma. Less than 1% of our population identifies as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, and we recognise the importance of culturally safe environments, meaningful engagement and partnership in supporting health

and wellbeing outcomes. Supporting self-determination, cultural connection and inclusive community spaces is essential to improving equity and strengthening wellbeing.

Residents Experiencing Housing and Cost-of-Living Stress
More than one in five low-income households experience mortgage or rental stress. Financial pressure and housing instability can impact mental wellbeing, access to recreation and community participation. Council recognises the importance of reducing financial and structural barriers to reduce the gap in health and participation outcomes for residents experiencing economic disadvantage.

Children and Young People
Early life experiences strongly influence long-term health outcomes. Safe active transport routes, inclusive recreation opportunities and supportive community spaces contribute to positive development and resilience. Community sport and recreation settings provide important opportunities for young people to build social connections, develop life and leaderships skills, gain early exposure to volunteering and foster a sense of belonging. Through early intervention and inclusive community planning, Council aims to help close the gap in health and wellbeing outcomes experienced by children and young people facing disadvantage.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Residents
Twenty three percent of residents were born outside Australia. The dominant countries of origin include England, India, China and New Zealand. Fifteen percent of residents speak a language other than English at home. Clear, accessible communication and inclusive community environments are essential to ensuring equitable access to services and participation. Council seeks to close the gap in access to information, participation and health outcomes experienced by culturally and linguistically diverse residents through inclusive communication and community engagement practices.

Stage 2 – Community and Council Engagement

A community engagement campaign was delivered:

“Living Well in Mitcham – Help Shape a Healthy and Inclusive Community.”

The purpose of the engagement process was to ensure the Public Health Plan reflects lived experience, identifies barriers to participation and access, and responds to the priorities of the Mitcham community.

A mix of engagement methods were used to capture both broad community perspectives and lived experience.

Engagement occurred across community settings including Tiwu Kumangka Community Centre, Pasadena Community Centre, local library services and secondary schools, alongside internal workshops with Council staff and leadership.

The engagement process sought to:

- Understand what health and wellbeing mean to residents
- Identify barriers to participation, access and inclusion
- Explore how the built and natural environment influence health outcomes
- Capture ideas for improving safety, accessibility and connection
- Ensure the voices of priority population groups were included.

Methods included:

Community Survey
A structured survey was used to gather broad community input on health, wellbeing, inclusion and participation. This method enabled residents to share experiences and priorities across a wide range of topics. Sixty-four surveys were completed and submitted in hardcopy or online.

Community Conversations and Focus Groups
Facilitated discussions and informal drop-in conversations provided opportunity for over forty residents to share more in-depth reflections on their lived experience, accessibility and community connections.

Youth Engagement
Thirty local secondary school students were invited to contribute their perspectives on what makes a healthy and inclusive community, ensuring youth voices informed the Plan.

Council Staff Engagement
Workshops with Council staff and leadership explored how Council services, infrastructure and planning functions influence public health outcomes and how health considerations can be embedded across Council operations.

Together, these methods ensured that the development of this Plan was informed by community insight, practical experience and cross-Council understanding.

Stage 3 – Engagement Outcomes Reporting

Findings were consolidated into the *Living Well in Mitcham – Engagement Outcomes Report (2025)* and directly informed the priorities and actions within this Plan.

What We Heard

Clear and consistent themes emerged across engagement.

Safe and connected footpaths matter.
Residents identified footpath condition, lighting, crossings and shading as essential to mobility and independence. Uneven surfaces and missing kerb ramps were described as barriers, particularly for older residents and people living with disability. Safe and connected walking routes were viewed as fundamental to active living, social participation and ageing in place across all stages of life.

Belonging and welcoming community spaces are critical.
Libraries and community centres were described as important places of connection and inclusion. Participants emphasised the value of safe and welcoming environments that reduce isolation and support mental wellbeing, particularly for older residents, carers and culturally diverse communities.

Affordability and inclusive design influence participation.
Cost of living pressures were recognised as affecting participation in programs and activities. Residents expressed support for low-cost options and infrastructure designed for all ages and abilities. Inclusive design was seen as essential to ensuring equitable access to community life.

Communication needs to be clear and accessible and delivered through multiple channels.
Participants requested clearer information about programs and services, delivered through multiple channels. Accessible communication was considered important to ensuring that all residents, including those experiencing digital or language barriers, can participate and stay informed.

Green, cool and climate resilient environments are highly valued.
Tree canopy, shaded spaces and biodiversity were consistently linked to physical and mental wellbeing. Residents also raised concerns about extreme heat and bushfire risk, reinforcing the importance of climate adaptation and preparedness.

Transport and connectivity remain barriers for some residents.
Limited transport options were identified as affecting independence and access to services, particularly for non-drivers. There was support for improved community transport and safer active travel routes to strengthen connection across neighbourhoods.

OUR PUBLIC HEALTH PRIORITIES 2026–2031

Each priority below aligns with the South Australian State Public Health Plan, responds directly to the key public health risks, trends and opportunities identified through the review of the local state of health, and reflects engagement outcomes identified through consultation.

Priority 1: Prevent and Control the Spread of Infectious Diseases

State Priority Area: Prevent and control the spread of infectious diseases

The State Public Health Plan highlights the importance of strong surveillance systems, immunisation programs, environmental health controls and coordinated emergency response to manage communicable disease risks.

While infectious disease management is led at the State level, Council plays a critical local role in protecting public health through immunisation services, environmental health regulation and clear communication during health events. The Research Report highlights Council's delivery of regular immunisation clinics, strong compliance across food safety inspections and extensive experience supporting the community during the COVID-19 pandemic. These functions are central to preventing and controlling the spread of infectious diseases at a local level, particularly for vulnerable populations. This priority builds on established service delivery and regulatory strengths, while recognising the ongoing need for preparedness, coordination and accessible communication in response to emerging communicable disease risks.

Highlights from 2020–2025

- Led local community and business support and response to Covid pandemic
- Delivered regular public and school immunisation clinics.
- Achieved strong food business compliance rates.
- Increased public health messaging through Mitcham Community News.
- Strengthened emergency preparedness through regional collaboration.

What we heard from the community

Residents value clear and timely communication during health events and emergencies. Feedback highlighted the importance of accessible information, particularly for those who rely on offline communication channels, with concerns raised about *"limited program awareness among some residents"* and the need for clearer, multi-channel messaging.

Participants also linked public health to visible standards in community facilities, including *"adequate access to public toilets"* and maintaining good hygiene in shared spaces.

Our 2026 – 2031 Actions and Performance Measures

Focus	Action No.	Council will (Action)	Measure No.	Performance measure	Existing service/ function	Timeframe	Lead	Strategic Plan Goal & Theme (1, 2, 3, 4)
Public health & prevention	1	Promote immunisation uptake and health literacy.	1.1	Number of immunisation clinics delivered annually.	Existing	Annually	Environmental Health and Community Safety	1.2 Health & Wellbeing
			1.2	Attendance at Council-delivered immunisation services.	Existing	Annually	Environmental Health and Community Safety	1.2 Health & Wellbeing
			1.3	Number of health literacy messages across communication channels.	Existing	Annually	Environmental Health and Community Safety	1.2 Health & Wellbeing
Environmental health & compliance	2	Maintain strong environmental health inspection and	2.1	Proportion of food premises inspected in accordance with risk classification	Existing	Annually	Environmental Health and Community Safety	1.2 Health & Wellbeing

Focus	Action No.	Council will (Action)	Measure No.	Performance measure	Existing service/ function	Timeframe	Lead	Strategic Plan Goal & Theme (1, 2, 3, 4)
		compliance programs.		and regulatory requirements.				
			2.2	Compliance rates following inspections and re-inspections.	Existing	Annually	Environmental Health and Community Safety	1.2 Health & Wellbeing
Emergency management and preparedness	3	Strengthen emergency preparedness and coordination.	3.1	Participation in regional and State emergency preparedness activities.	Existing	Annually	Environmental Health and Community Safety	2.1 Climate change, mitigation & resilience
			3.2	Emergency response plans reviewed and updated in line with requirements.	Existing	Annually	Engagement and Governance	4.1 Good governance
Public health communication	4	Provide clear and accessible public health communication.	4.1	Public health communications delivered using accessible and multi-channel formats.	Existing	Annually	Environmental Health and Community Safety	1.2 Health & Wellbeing
			4.2	Community feedback on clarity and accessibility of	Existing	Annually	Customer and Community Services	4.3 Community Experience

Focus	Action No.	Council will (Action)	Measure No.	Performance measure	Existing service/ function	Timeframe	Lead	Strategic Plan Goal & Theme (1, 2, 3, 4)
				public health communication.			Environmental Health and Community Safety	

Priority 2: Promote Healthy Living to Reduce Chronic Disease

State Priority Area: Promote healthy living to reduce chronic disease

The State Public Health Plan emphasises prevention of chronic disease through increasing physical activity, improving nutrition, supporting healthy weight and enabling healthier lifestyles across different stages in life. It recognises that prevention requires coordinated action across environments, policy and community settings.

At a local level, this means creating neighbourhoods, programs and infrastructure that make healthy choices accessible, affordable and inclusive. Council influences prevention by shaping walkable streets, accessible recreation spaces, green corridors and community-based initiatives that support residents to live active and independent lives.

Mitcham has strong foundations for healthy living, supported by high levels of education and employment participation, established community infrastructure, and access to high-quality open space. Urban tree canopy coverage is approaching 40 per cent, contributing to walkability, shade and thermal comfort, while Council delivers a wide range of low-cost and inclusive physical activity programs that support active living across the life course. At the same time, local data highlights emerging challenges, including an ageing population, increasing unpaid caring roles and rising cost-of-living pressures, which can affect access to healthy food, physical activity and social participation. Community sport and recreation opportunities can play an important role in providing accessible pathways for physical activity, social connection and lifelong participation. This priority builds on existing strengths while responding to identified risks by focusing on environments, programs and infrastructure that make healthy choices easier, safer and more inclusive for all residents.

Highlights from 2020–2025

- Delivered free and low-cost physical activity programs including Tai Chi, guided walks and Move it Mondays.
- Applied healthy-by-design principles in park and playground upgrades.
- Increased urban tree canopy coverage to nearly 40%.
- Expanded community programming following the opening of Tiwu Kumangka.
- Supported environmental volunteering and horticultural programs that promote active ageing.

What we heard from the community

Engagement participants consistently highlighted the importance of safe, connected and shaded walking routes to support physical activity. Footpath condition, lighting and tree root damage were identified as barriers to walking and wheeling, with residents calling for *"safe footpaths connecting community spaces"* and *"well-lit footpaths."*

Staying active was described as essential to wellbeing, with one participant valuing *"movement to the best of your ability,"* while others emphasised the need for *"discounted gyms for seniors, walking clubs and safe walking spaces."* Affordable and accessible programs were seen as critical to enabling participation across all ages.

Our 2026 – 2031 Actions and Performance Measures

Focus	Action No.	Council will (Action)	Measure No.	Performance measure	Existing service/ function	Timeframe	Lead	Strategic Plan Goal & Theme (1, 2, 3, 4)
Built environment & active transport	5	Improve walkability through safer, shaded and connected footpaths, crossings and active transport links.	5.1	Kilometres of footpaths upgraded or renewed to improve safety and accessibility each year.	Existing	Annually	Engineering	1.1 Transport Network
			5.2	Number of priority pedestrian crossings or active transport links improved.	Existing	Annually	Engineering	1.1 Transport Network

Focus	Action No.	Council will (Action)	Measure No.	Performance measure	Existing service/ function	Timeframe	Lead	Strategic Plan Goal & Theme (1, 2, 3, 4)
			5.3	Proportion of upgrades incorporating shade, seating or rest points.	Existing	Annually	Engineering	1.1 Transport Network 3.1 Placemaking
Physical activity & inclusion	6	Support accessible and affordable physical activity programs and opportunities for all ages and abilities.	6.1	Number of free or low-cost physical activity programs delivered annually.	Existing	Annually	Community Connection	1.2 Health & Wellbeing 3.2 City Vibrancy
			6.2	Participation levels across different age groups and abilities.	Existing	Annually	Community Connection	1.3 Services & Facilities 3.2 City Vibrancy
			6.3	Participant feedback indicating improved access and inclusion.	Existing	Annually	Community Connection	4.3 Community Experience
Healthy-by-design & planning	7	Embed healthy-by-design principles into infrastructure, open space and public realm upgrades.	7.1	Proportion of relevant capital projects applying healthy-by-design or universal design principles.	Existing	Annually	Engineering	1.2 Health & Wellbeing
			7.2	Evidence of health considerations documented in project planning and design processes.	Existing	Annually	Engineering	1.2 Health & Wellbeing

Focus	Action No.	Council will (Action)	Measure No.	Performance measure	Existing service/ function	Timeframe	Lead	Strategic Plan Goal & Theme (1, 2, 3, 4)
Food & nutrition	8	Promote healthy eating, food literacy and community-based nutrition initiatives.	8.1	Number of food literacy or healthy eating initiatives supported or delivered.	Existing	Annually	Community Centres	1.2 Health & Wellbeing
			8.2	Reach of community nutrition programs across priority population groups.	Existing	Annually	Community Centres	1.2 Health & Wellbeing

Priority 3: Improve Mental Health and Wellbeing

State Priority Area: Improve mental health and wellbeing

The State Public Health Plan recognises that mental health is influenced by social determinants such as connection, inclusion, employment, safety and housing. It calls for coordinated action to reduce psychological distress, strengthen resilience and improve access to support.

Local evidence and engagement findings highlight the importance of belonging, inclusion and access to welcoming community spaces in supporting mental wellbeing. While Mitcham performs strongly across many social indicators, demographic trends such as a high proportion of lone-person households, increasing disability prevalence and growing unpaid caring responsibilities increase the risk of social isolation for some residents. Council's experience delivering inclusive community programs, upgrading accessibility across Council facilities and implementing Psychological First Aid training demonstrates a strong platform for supporting mental health at a local level. Community sporting clubs and recreation organisations also play an important role in fostering belonging, reducing social isolation and strengthening community connectedness. This priority responds to both community feedback and evidence of need by strengthening connection, resilience and access to mental health information and support through community spaces, programs and partnerships

Highlights from 2020–2025

- Maintained social support programs during COVID-19.
- Upgraded accessibility across 57 Council buildings.
- Delivered inclusive holiday programs and community events.
- Implemented Psychological First Aid training for community-facing staff.

What we heard from the community

Community members spoke strongly about the importance of belonging and welcoming community spaces. Libraries and community centres were described as places where people feel *"seen and appreciated, you can be yourself, even on a down day."*

Participants highlighted the value of connection, describing programs that *"get me out of the house and moving,"* and noting that centres such as Pasadena *"help my wellbeing."* Social isolation, particularly among older residents and carers, was raised as an ongoing concern, reinforcing the role of inclusive and accessible community hubs.

Our 2026 – 2031 Actions and Performance Measures

Focus	Action No.	Council will (Action)	Measure No.	Performance measure	Existing service/ function	Timeframe	Lead	Strategic Plan Goal & Theme (1, 2, 3, 4)
Community inclusion & social connection	9	Foster welcoming, inclusive and accessible community spaces.	9.1	Number of community facilities meeting accessibility and inclusion standards.	Existing	Annually	Property & Facilities	1.3 Services & Facilities
			9.2	Community satisfaction with inclusiveness and welcoming environments.	Existing	Annually	Community Connection	1.3 Services & Facilities
Community inclusion & social connection	10	Reduce social isolation through targeted programs.	10.1	Number of targeted programs addressing social isolation delivered annually.	Existing	Annually	Community Connection	1.3 Services & Facilities
			10.2	Participation by priority populations identified in this Plan.	Existing	Annually	Community Connection	1.3 Services & Facilities
Mental health & wellbeing	11	Promote mental health awareness and help-seeking pathways.	11.1	Mental health awareness initiatives delivered or promoted by Council.	Existing	Annually	Community Connection	1.3 Services & Facilities

Focus	Action No.	Council will (Action)	Measure No.	Performance measure	Existing service/ function	Timeframe	Lead	Strategic Plan Goal & Theme (1, 2, 3, 4)
			11.2	Availability and visibility of help-seeking information across Council communication channels.	Existing	Annually	Engagement and Governance	1.3 Services & Facilities
Community resilience & emergency preparedness	12	Strengthen community resilience before, during and after emergencies.	12.1	Community resilience initiatives delivered or supported.	Existing	Annually	Engagement and Governance	2.1 Climate change, mitigation & resilience
			12.2	Post-event review findings identifying strengths and areas for improvement.	Existing	Annually	Engagement and Governance	4.1 Good Governance
Community spaces & activation	13	Activate parks, libraries and community centres as safe places for connection.	13.1	Number of activations, programs or events delivered in community spaces.	Existing	Annually	Community Connection	3.1 Placemaking
			13.2	Participation rates	Existing	Annually	Community Connection Open Space Operations	3.2 City Vibrancy

Focus	Action No.	Council will (Action)	Measure No.	Performance measure	Existing service/ function	Timeframe	Lead	Strategic Plan Goal & Theme (1, 2, 3, 4)
Workforce capability & wellbeing	14	Continue to implement Psychological First Aid training to community facing staff.	14.1	Proportion of relevant staff trained in Psychological First Aid.	Existing	Annually	People and Culture	1.2 Health & Wellbeing
			14.2	Staff confidence in responding to community distress (self-reported).	Existing	Annually	People and Culture	1.2 Health & Wellbeing

Priority 4: Reduce the Risk, Burden and Severity of Injury

State Priority Area: Reduce the risk, burden and severity of injury

The State Public Health Plan prioritises injury prevention across settings, including falls prevention, road safety and safer community design.

Injury prevention is closely linked to the safety, accessibility and design of the built environment, as well as community preparedness for emergencies and extreme weather events. Local data and community feedback consistently identify footpath condition, lighting, transport access and universal design as critical to reducing falls, improving mobility and supporting independence, particularly for older residents and people living with disability. Council's ongoing investment in infrastructure upgrades, inclusive playgrounds, emergency planning and regional coordination provides a strong foundation for reducing injury risk. This priority responds to both evidence and lived experience by strengthening safe environments, improving communication about safety upgrades and enhancing preparedness before, during and after emergencies.

Highlights from 2020–2025

- Delivered inclusive playground upgrades.
- Advanced footpath renewal and lighting upgrades.
- Supported bushfire risk mitigation initiatives.
- Strengthened regional emergency management collaboration.

What we heard from the community

Footpath safety emerged as one of the most frequently raised concerns during engagement. Residents called for *"improved footpaths and walkways,"* highlighting uneven surfaces, poor lighting and missing crossings as barriers to safe mobility.

Transport barriers for non-drivers were also identified, including the need for *"door to door service for people who can't drive anymore."* These concerns reinforce the importance of safe infrastructure, accessibility and injury prevention in supporting independence and participation.

Our 2026 – 2031 Actions and Performance Measures

Focus	Action No.	Council will (Action)	Measure No.	Performance measure	Existing service/ function	Timeframe	Lead	Strategic Plan Goal (1, 2, 3, 4)
Built environment & safety	15	Improve footpath safety, lighting and connectivity.	15.1	Number of footpath and lighting upgrades completed annually.	Existing	Annually	Engineering	1.1 Transport Network
			15.2	Reduction in reported hazards or complaints related to footpath safety.	Existing	Annually	Operations	1.1 Transport Network
Universal design & accessibility	16	Embed universal design principles in infrastructure planning.	16.1	Proportion of new infrastructure projects incorporating universal design.	Existing	Annually	Property & Facilities	3.1 Placemaking
			16.2	Accessibility considerations documented during planning and design stages.	Existing	Annually	Property & Facilities	4.2 Organisational Improvement
Active travel & transport	17	Strengthen community transport options and safer active travel routes.	17.1	Community transport services supported or facilitated.	Existing	Annually	Customer and Community Services	1.1 Transport Network
			17.2	Improvements delivered along identified active travel routes.	Existing	Annually	Engineering	1.1 Transport Network

Focus	Action No.	Council will (Action)	Measure No.	Performance measure	Existing service/ function	Timeframe	Lead	Strategic Plan Goal (1, 2, 3, 4)
Accessibility & safety communication	18	Enhance communication about accessibility and safety upgrades.	18.1	Accessibility and safety upgrade information published through Council channels.	Existing	Annually	Engagement and Governance	4.3 Community Experience
			18.2	Community awareness of recent accessibility and safety improvements.	Existing	Annually	Engagement and Governance	4.3 Community Experience
Emergency management & coordination	19	Strengthen emergency planning and coordination in partnership with State and regional agencies.	19.1	Emergency management partnerships maintained or strengthened.	Existing	Annually	Environmental Health and Community Safety	2.1 Climate change, mitigation & resilience
			19.2	Participation in joint planning or exercises.	Existing	Annually	Environmental Health and Community Safety	2.1 Climate change, mitigation & resilience
Emergency planning & preparedness	20	Maintain and regularly review emergency management plans to respond to bushfire,	20.1	Emergency management plans reviewed in line with legislative requirements.	Existing	Annually	Engagement and Governance	4.2 Organisational Improvement
			20.2	Lessons learned incorporated	Existing	Following event	Engagement and Governance	4.2 Organisational Improvement

Focus	Action No.	Council will (Action)	Measure No.	Performance measure	Existing service/ function	Timeframe	Lead	Strategic Plan Goal (1, 2, 3, 4)
		heatwave and severe weather events.		following emergency events.				
Emergency communication	21	Provide timely and accessible public information during emergencies, including clear guidance on available supports and services.	21.1	Emergency communications issued in a timely manner.	Existing	During event	Engagement and Governance	4.3 Community Experience
			21.2	Information provided in accessible formats and multiple channels.	Existing	During event	Engagement and Governance	4.3 Community Experience

Priority 5: Healthy Environments for Human Health

State Priority Area: Ensure healthy environments for human health

The State Public Health Plan recognises the strong link between environmental quality and human health, including the impacts of climate change, extreme heat and biodiversity loss.

Mitcham's natural environment is a defining asset, with extensive biodiversity, valued open spaces and one of the highest levels of urban tree canopy coverage in South Australia. Local evidence demonstrates the strong connection between environmental quality, climate resilience and community wellbeing, alongside growing risks associated with extreme heat, bushfire and climate change. Council's leadership in tree planting, environmental health regulation, waste management and regional climate partnerships provides a strong platform for action. This priority focuses on protecting and enhancing healthy environments, strengthening climate resilience and ensuring safe, cool and accessible public spaces that support wellbeing now and into the future.

Highlights from 2020–2025

- Increased tree canopy coverage to nearly 40%.
- Delivered biodiversity corridor projects.
- Expanded renewable energy initiatives.
- Strengthened climate collaboration through Resilient South (an initiative of the Cities of Mitcham, Onkaparinga, Holdfast Bay and Marion. Aiming to strengthen the southern Adelaide region so that our communities, businesses and environments can bounce back from the challenges of climate change).

What we heard from the community

Participants strongly valued Mitcham's natural environment and expressed a desire for *"cool green streets"* and *"nice maintained outdoor spaces."* Tree canopy, shaded seating and well-kept parks were consistently linked to both physical and mental wellbeing.

Concerns about extreme heat and bushfire preparedness were also raised, reinforcing the need for visible measures and clear communication that strengthen community resilience.

Our 2026 – 2031 Actions and Performance Measures

Focus	Action No.	Council will (Action)	Measure No.	Performance measure	Existing service/ function	Timeframe	Lead	Strategic Plan Goal (1, 2, 3, 4)
Urban greening & shade	22	Increase urban tree canopy and shaded public spaces.	22.1	Tree planting and canopy enhancement activities delivered annually.	Existing	Annually	Open Space	2.3 Natural Environment
			22.2	Shaded areas incorporated into public realm upgrades.	Existing	Annually	Open Space	2.3 Natural Environment
Climate Adaptation	23	Implement Low Carbon Ambition Plan and Climate Risk Assessment Plan	23.1	Integration of climate resilience considerations into Council planning.	Existing	Annually	Strategic Projects and Programs	2.1 Climate change, mitigation & resilience
Community Climate resilience & preparedness	24	Strengthen community climate resilience and emergency preparedness.	24.1	Community climate adaptation initiatives delivered or supported.	Existing	Annually	Strategic Projects and Programs	2.1 Climate change, mitigation & resilience
Environmental health & protection	25	Protect environmental health standards.	25.1	Environmental health inspections conducted as scheduled and	Existing	Annually	Environmental Health and Community Safety	1.2 Health & Wellbeing

Focus	Action No.	Council will (Action)	Measure No.	Performance measure	Existing service/ function	Timeframe	Lead	Strategic Plan Goal (1, 2, 3, 4)
				compliance outcomes are observed across regulated activities.				
			25.2	Conduct investigations and respond to public health incidents in accordance with legislative requirements.	Existing	Annually	Environmental Health and Community Safety	4.1 Good Governance
Heat response & community safety	26	Provide cool refuges during extreme heat events.	26.1	Availability and activation of cool refuges during heat events.	Existing / partial	Annually	Community Connection	2.1 Climate change, mitigation & resilience
			26.2	Community awareness of refuge locations and operating arrangements.	Existing	Annually	Engagement and Governance	4.3 Community Experience

Implementation and Monitoring

Delivery of this Plan will occur through the Mitcham 2030 Strategic Management Plan, the Four-Year Delivery Plan and Annual Business Plans. Public health priorities will be embedded across relevant Council strategies, service plans and infrastructure programs to ensure a coordinated and whole-of-Council approach.

Progress will be monitored through indicators aligned to each priority area and reported in accordance with the *South Australian Public Health Act 2011*. Council will report progress to the Chief Public Health Officer as required under the Act. The Plan will be formally reviewed in 2031.

Governance and Accountability

Implementation of this Plan will be supported through a whole-of-Council governance approach to ensure shared ownership, coordination and accountability. Public health priorities will be embedded across relevant Council strategies, service plans and operational activities.

A cross-disciplinary internal governance group will support implementation by:

- coordinating action across Council functions
- monitoring progress against agreed measures
- supporting integration with other strategic plans
- identifying opportunities for continuous improvement.

This governance approach recognises that public health is a shared responsibility across Council and requires collaboration, leadership and sustained commitment over the life of the Plan.

Evaluation and Learning

The City of Mitcham will provide biennial implementation reports to the South Australian Chief Public Health Officer. Biennial progress updates will also be provided to Council to support oversight of the Plan’s implementation and outcomes. Monitoring and evaluation will support accountability, learning and continuous improvement, with findings used to assess effectiveness, identify emerging issues and inform future public health planning.

This adaptive approach ensures Council’s public health actions remain responsive to changing community needs, emerging evidence and lessons learned over time.

Glossary

Health Equity
Health equity means ensuring that everyone has a fair opportunity to achieve their highest attainable standard of health, regardless of social, economic or environmental circumstances.

Public Health
Public health refers to the collective actions taken by society to create the conditions that enable people to be healthy and well.

Resilience
Resilience is the capacity of individuals and communities to adapt to change, cope with challenges and recover from adversity.

Social Determinants of Health
The social determinants of health are the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age, and the broader social, economic and environmental factors that shape these conditions. They include factors such as income, education, employment, housing, access to transport, social connection, discrimination and the quality of the built and natural environment. These determinants have a significant influence on health outcomes and contribute to health inequities across communities.

Universal Design
Universal design is an approach to the design of environments, services, infrastructure and information so they can be used by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialised design. Universal design aims to ensure places and services are accessible, safe and usable for people of all ages and abilities, including people living with disability, older people, carers and families. When applied effectively, universal design benefits everyone and supports inclusion, independence and participation

Wellbeing
Wellbeing describes a state in which individuals and communities are able to thrive physically, mentally, socially and emotionally.

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CITY OF MITCHAM