



# SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

An equitable and resilient Parramatta



| PARRAMATTA

2024 – 2033



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

First Nations acknowledgement	04
Lord Mayor’s message	05
Strategy at a glance	06

## 01 INTRODUCTION

Overview	09
Our journey so far	10
How we developed this Strategy	12
How we plan	14

## 02 PEOPLE & PLACE

Our community	17
Our diverse neighbourhoods	19

## 03 THE STRATEGY

Our vision, principles and priorities	21
1 - A socially connected community	24
2 - A safe, inclusive, and welcoming City	30
3 - A community where people can live healthy lives	36
4 - A City with affordable and diverse homes for all	42
5 - A City of learning and opportunity	48

## 04 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Glossary	54
References	55

# FIRST NATIONS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Nunanglanungdyu baramada gulbanga mawa  
naa Baramadaḡal daruḡ ngurrawa badura  
baramada daruḡ

We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional  
Owners of the land and waters of Parramatta,  
the Baramadaḡal Clan of the Dharuḡ Nation.

For more than 60,000 years, Parramatta has been home to the Dharug people, the Traditional Owners of the land we call the City of Parramatta today. The Dharug people care for and nurture the habitat, land, and waters and maintain an ongoing connection to Parramatta and its surrounding areas.

Parramatta has always been an important meeting place for First Nations peoples, particularly the Parramatta River, which has provided life and vitality since the beginning of time. The name Parramatta is derived from the word Baramada/Burramatta or 'place where the eels lie down' (breeding location for eels within the Parramatta River). City of Parramatta recognises the significance of this area for all First Nations peoples as a site of early contact between First Nations people and colonists, and that Parramatta remains an important meeting place for First Nations peoples.

First Nations peoples continue to play a vital role in the ecological, economic, social, cultural life of Parramatta, while maintaining distinct cultures built on the principles of caring for Country, the primacy of family, and the dignity and governance of Elders. As a community, we can learn from the knowledge and community spirit of First Nations people to best ensure a sustainable City for all.

At City of Parramatta, we aspire to a future where the cultures, histories, and rights of all First Nations peoples are understood, recognised, and respected by all Australians. In advancing First Nations voices and aspirations, we seek to address the legacy of our past and ensure a great quality of life for First Nations people now and into the future. City of Parramatta is proud to acknowledge the ongoing stewardship of Country by Dharug and other First Nations people, and to celebrate their enduring culture and wisdom.

**Always Was, Always Will Be, Aboriginal Land**



# LORD MAYOR MESSAGE

On behalf of the City of Parramatta, I am pleased to present our Social Sustainability Strategy. At the heart of this Strategy is a vision for an equitable and resilient city where residents are safe, socially connected and have what they need to live with dignity and to thrive.

Parramatta is proud to be a city that puts people first. A socially sustainable community strengthens cohesion within our diverse communities and allows all members to thrive. There is no doubt our city is transforming into an economic powerhouse, with our population set to reach 446,000 residents by 2041. Council seeks to guide growth so that the benefits are realised by all. In our city, 16.5% of households live on less than \$800 a week. We must work to reduce inequality and ensure our City is a place where everyone can participate.

To inform the Strategy, we conducted extensive engagement with the community through community workshops, pop-ups, and via the Participate Parramatta platform. We also engaged with delivery teams across Council and key external partners through interviews, focus groups, and detailed action planning. Through this engagement we were able to understand the key issues facing our community.

The Strategy has been developed in consideration with other Council Strategies and Plans, ensuring alignment of priorities over the next 10 years to 2032. Some of the key priorities canvassed include:

- Access to quality green spaces and community facilities - these enable social interaction and foster a sense of belonging. We will work towards this objective by updating Council's Community Infrastructure Strategy and exploring innovative approaches to delivering public open space as the population grows.

- Working to improve health outcomes for our community - we will work towards this objective by conducting research to inform future action, including around improving health outcomes for First Nations community members.
- Ensuring that our City welcomes everyone - we will develop a socioeconomic inclusion framework to improve outcomes for people experiencing barriers to social and economic participation in our community.

We will work together with our community to achieve our aspirations. Our commitment is to monitor progress on our action plan annually, to ensure we are achieving our goals and also responding to opportunities as they emerge.

I look forward to working with our community to ensure the City of Parramatta continues to transform into an equitable and resilient city.

**Councillor Pierre Esber, Lord Mayor**



# STRATEGY

## > AT A GLANCE



## VISION

Building on the long-term vision established in our Community Strategic Plan 2018-2038 (CSP), and further developed through consultation with our community and stakeholders, the Social Sustainability Strategy's vision is for an equitable and resilient Parramatta.

***Through effectively managing the challenges associated with change and growth, Parramatta will be an equitable and resilient city, where residents are safe, socially connected, and have what they need to live with dignity and to thrive.***

## PRINCIPLES

The Social Sustainability Strategy is founded on six principles. These principles guide the implementation of our actions:

- **Equitable**  
Addressing systemic inequalities and the barriers that different people face.
- **Inclusive**  
Enhancing inclusion for individuals who experience greater barriers to participating in our City.
- **Courageous**  
Embracing the challenge and responsibility that comes with governing our City and taking action on complex problems.
- **A holistic understanding of health**  
Recognising that health is not merely the absence of disease; it is a state of complete physical, mental, and social wellbeing.
- **Collaborative and democratic**  
Ensuring all individuals and communities can be involved in shaping decision-making on issues that affect them.
- **Transparent and accountable**  
Communicating how and why decisions are made.



## PRIORITIES

To achieve our vision of an equitable and resilient Parramatta, this Strategy establishes five priorities for the next 10 years:

- > **A socially connected community.** We will deliver quality public spaces, facilities, and programs that allow Parramatta's residents to build strong social networks.
- > **A safe, inclusive, and welcoming City.** We will work to ensure that residents and visitors feel empowered to participate in our City.
- > **A community where people can live healthy lives.** We will deliver places and services that support the health and wellbeing of our residents.
- > **A City with affordable and diverse homes for all.** We will plan and advocate to ensure access to quality and affordable housing that meets the needs of our residents at all stages of life.
- > **A City of learning and opportunity.** We will create opportunities for our residents to learn, grow, and thrive through all phases of their lives.

These priorities build on the strengths of our City, leverage ongoing growth and investment, and will guide decision-making.

## ACTIONS

The 'What we are doing' sections identify actions that Council will undertake over four years to help us reach the objectives established within our five priorities and position our City for continued success.

Council has developed indicators to measure progress towards the objectives established within each of the five priorities. These indicators will measure the outcomes of the Strategy's implementation, rather than simply tracking whether actions have been delivered.



# 01 INTRODUCTION

**"The richness of the  
members of our community  
is immeasurable"**

*Paul Moussa, Parramatta Mission*





# OVERVIEW

## WHAT IS SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY?

Social sustainability means strengthening cohesion within our diverse communities. A socially sustainable community allows all members to thrive, while being resilient to climate change, pandemics, and other stresses.

In a socially sustainable community, we 'actively support the capacity of current and future generations to create healthy and liveable communities.'<sup>1</sup> A socially sustainable community puts people first, and this is the core of our vision for City of Parramatta.

## WHAT DOES AN EQUITABLE AND RESILIENT PARRAMATTA LOOK LIKE?

Through extensive community consultation and best practice research, Council identified a range of factors that impact people's quality of life and sense of connection. These factors are '**social determinants of health**' and have informed the development of this Strategy.

Social determinants of health are non-medical factors that impact health outcomes for our residents. These include:

### > **Access to community infrastructure and green open space**

Access to these shared spaces improves health outcomes and provides opportunities for social interaction. They also offer places to spend time without a need to spend money and provide access to important public amenities such as internet and toilets.

### > **Accessibility**

Every person, regardless of their age or ability, should be able to fully participate in our City. This means hassle-free access to all places residents need to go in their everyday lives.

### > **Access to education and employment opportunities**

Lifelong learning and employment are associated with positive health and wellbeing outcomes, but not all residents have equal access to these opportunities.

### > **Housing**

Access to adequate housing is a human right and a key social determinant of health. As more residents live in high density dwellings and continue to face cost of living pressures, we recognise the need to ensure affordable and diverse housing options are available.

### > **Safety**

Positive experiences and perceptions of safety are essential for creating a welcoming and lively city.<sup>2</sup> While our community express that they tend to feel safe in our City, people from other areas still have negative perceptions of safety in Parramatta.

# OUR JOURNEY SO FAR



Council's Socially Sustainable Parramatta Framework (SSPF) was endorsed in 2017 and established the vision of sharing the opportunities of growth with all members of the community.

There have been significant changes in our City since the SSPF was developed, with the population increasing by more than 12% between 2016 and 2021, significant transport infrastructure projects underway, and Parramatta Square coming to life. Our community has also been impacted by COVID-19, unprecedented lockdowns, and increasingly severe weather events.

## LOCAL GROWTH AND CHANGE

There is significant NSW Government investment, a growing population, shifting demographics, and increasing housing density in Parramatta. This presents challenges as we work to meet the needs of an estimated 446,000 residents by 2041.<sup>3</sup>

Significant transport infrastructure projects, such as Parramatta Light Rail and Metro West, are currently underway, which will improve connectivity between suburbs across the LGA, and to Sydney CBD.

Investment and growth have brought significant benefits to Parramatta and Greater Sydney, including increased access to employment and tertiary education opportunities. However, we recognise that many residents face barriers to full participation in these offerings. In City of Parramatta, 16.5% of households live on less than \$800 a week, 4.2% live in social housing, and 5.7% of residents are unemployed.





## EXTERNAL FACTORS

Whilst our City faces some unique challenges, it is also impacted by broader issues that affect both Greater Sydney and Australia. These issues include climate change, COVID-19, the rising cost of living, increasing interest rates, and the rental housing crisis. Environmental and economic stressors threaten the social sustainability of our community and disproportionately impact vulnerable residents.

"Parramatta has fully emerged  
as a city centre"

*The Hon Rob Stokes,  
Six Cities Region Discussion Paper (2022)*

"Even when the vision for Sydney  
was expanded after the COVID-19  
pandemic into a six-city region  
running from Newcastle in the  
north to Wollongong in the south,  
Parramatta remained at the  
heart of it all."

*The Australian Financial Review (2023)*

# HOW WE DEVELOPED THIS STRATEGY

## COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Council conducted extensive engagement with the community and key stakeholders. This included pop-ups in each ward of the LGA, community workshops (including some targeting harder to reach groups), and engagement via the online community platform, Participate Parramatta. Engagement with stakeholders involved interviews, focus groups, and detailed action planning with Council delivery teams and key external partners.

The following challenges and opportunities were identified through the community and stakeholder engagement process.

### CHALLENGES

- There is not enough green open space to meet community needs as the population grows and high-density living becomes more prevalent.
- Rapid population growth and increased housing density is putting pressure on existing infrastructure, including schools.
- Housing is not affordable and the cost of living is high. Historically, people moved to Parramatta because it was more affordable, but this is no longer the case.
- As major public transport infrastructure is still under construction, some people still find it hard to get to Parramatta.
- More support is needed for vulnerable community members, including people experiencing homelessness or domestic and family violence, and people with disability.
- More needs to be done to protect the natural environment now and into the future.

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Improve parks, open space, and the public domain across the LGA through upgrades and supporting infrastructure, which would make people more inclined to visit and stay longer.
- Deliver a variety of activities, events, and programs across the LGA, not just in the Parramatta CBD.
- Ensure programming is inclusive and affordable so all people can participate and reap the benefits.
- Increase opportunities for community connection particularly as more residents live in high density dwellings.
- Improve connectivity and accessibility including access to public transport and active transport links.
- Celebrate Dharug peoples and culture, recognising that they are the Traditional Owners of the land that we call Parramatta.
- Recognise and embrace cultural diversity as City of Parramatta's strength.



## BEST PRACTICE RESEARCH

To develop an evidence-based Strategy, Council conducted research to identify best practice, including:

- **Literature review:** We conducted research on the factors that contribute to wellbeing, social sustainability, and liveable cities. Key insights were applied to the Parramatta context, informing the Strategy's principles and priorities.
- **Policy context review:** We reviewed existing policies and initiatives, on a local and global scale, to inform the Strategy.
- **Social strategy review:** We reviewed similar strategic documents from other local governments, both in Australia and abroad, to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the strategies.



Credit: Ken Leanfore

# HOW WE PLAN

## INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING

All planning at Council is conducted within the Integrated Planning & Reporting (IP&R) framework – a mandatory framework for all NSW councils (Figure 2).

City of Parramatta's Community Strategic Plan 2018 – 2038 (CSP) is the leading plan in this framework. The CSP sets out the City's long-term goals and outlines our vision to become:

***"Sydney's Central City: sustainable, liveable and productive – inspired by communities".***

The Social Sustainability Strategy has been developed to align with the CSP and addresses the challenges currently facing the community. It supports our CSP vision by establishing further priorities and action areas that foster an equitable and resilient Parramatta.

## COUNCIL'S ROLE

Council plays a very broad role in delivering strategy across the City, and our level of control over outcomes can vary. To support clarity around our levels of responsibility, this Strategy uses a 'deliver, partner, advocate' model.

### > DELIVER

Council delivers a wide range of programs and services including waste collection, libraries, childcare, maintenance of local roads and public spaces, recreation facilities and programs, community care, special events, and regulatory functions.

*Example - We can drive social sustainability outcomes through planning and delivering community infrastructure, services, and programs for our residents, where and when they need it.*

### > PARTNER

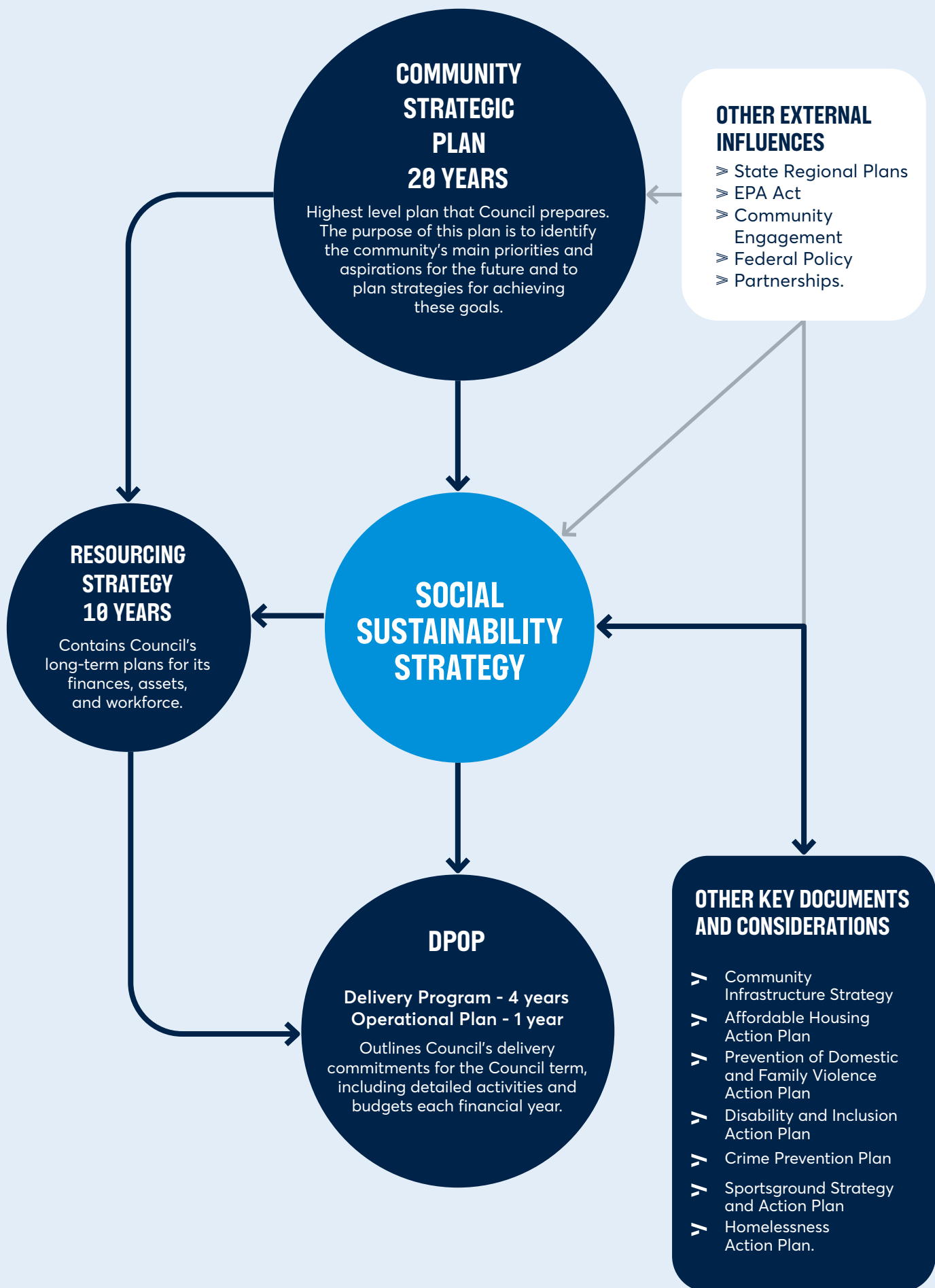
Council builds strategic partnerships with federal and state government agencies, the private sector, community organisations, and a range of other stakeholders that will contribute to delivering the Strategy's objectives.

*Example - We can partner with other organisations to collaboratively work towards shared goals and deliver long-term projects that are beyond the remit of Council alone, such as health, schools, housing, and homelessness.*

### > ADVOCATE

When we are not in partnership or do not have direct control over an issue, Council gives voice to the needs and aspirations of the community through advocacy. We advocate for action or policy change to government and industry to bring about the best outcomes for our community.

*Example - We can advocate for planning and legislation changes at state or federal government levels to better address housing affordability for our local community.*



**Figure 1:** Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework



# 02 PEOPLE & PLACE





# OUR COMMUNITY

## IF OUR COMMUNITY WAS MADE UP OF 100 RESIDENTS TODAY



### CITIZENSHIP STATUS

**69** Australian citizens

**31** Non-citizens residents



### SEX

**50** Women

**50** Men



### FIRST NATIONS

**1** First Nations person



### COUNTRY OF BIRTH

**53** People born overseas, of which:

- 11 were born in India
- 11 were born in China
- 4 were born in South Korea

**69** People who have two parents born overseas



### LANGUAGE

**56** People who speak a language other than English at home

**9** People who speak little or no English



### RELIGION

**39** Christian people

**30** Non-religious people

**13** Hindu people

**6** Muslim people



### WORK (PAID AND UNPAID)

**62** People who participate in the labour force

**11** Volunteers

**9** Carers



### EDUCATION

**32** Students (from preschool through to tertiary education)

**44** People with a Bachelor or higher degree

**11** People with a vocational qualification



### HEALTH

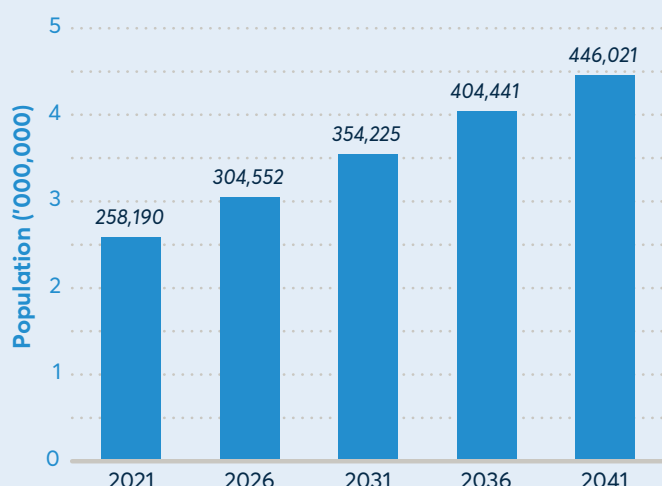
**23** People with a long-term health condition

**4** People need help in their day-to-day lives due to disability

# CITY OF PARRAMATTA'S COMMUNITY IN THE FUTURE

## OUR POPULATION WILL CONTINUE TO BE YOUNG AND FAST-GROWING

In 2041, it is estimated that over 446,000 people will be living in City of Parramatta, with 21% projected to be under the age of 18.



**Figure 2:** Population forecasts, 2021 to 2041, prepared by .id (informed decisions), December 2022.

## THE CITY WILL CONTINUE TO BE HOME TO A SIGNIFICANT PROFESSIONAL AND HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE

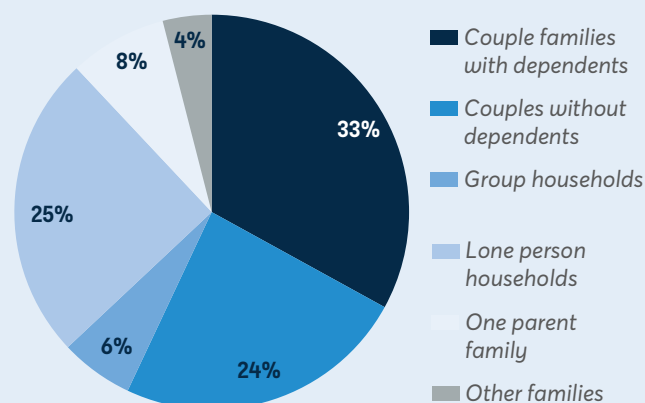
With significant health infrastructure and relocation of both public and private sector offices to Parramatta, there will be increasing opportunities in the sectors that employ the highest proportion of residents, which includes healthcare and social assistance (14%) and professional, scientific and technical services (13%).<sup>4</sup>

## OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS WILL CONTINUE TO BE UNIQUE

Each neighbourhood is different and requires a unique and tailored approach. Parramatta and Western Sydney will continue to be a centre of immigration for Australia, and a place where people are likely to call home.

## OUR CITY WILL CONTINUE TO BE HOME TO DIVERSE FAMILY COMPOSITIONS

In 2041, the most common household types will be couples with children and lone person households.



**Figure 3:** Household forecasts, 2021 to 2041, prepared by .id (informed decisions), December 2022.

## OUR RESIDENTS WILL CONTINUE TO BE WELL-EDUCATED

In 2021, 44% of residents had a Bachelor or higher degree, increasing from 37% in 2016 and 32% in 2011.<sup>5</sup> With this trend and the growing number of universities operating in Parramatta, our residents are likely to continue to be well-educated as the population grows.

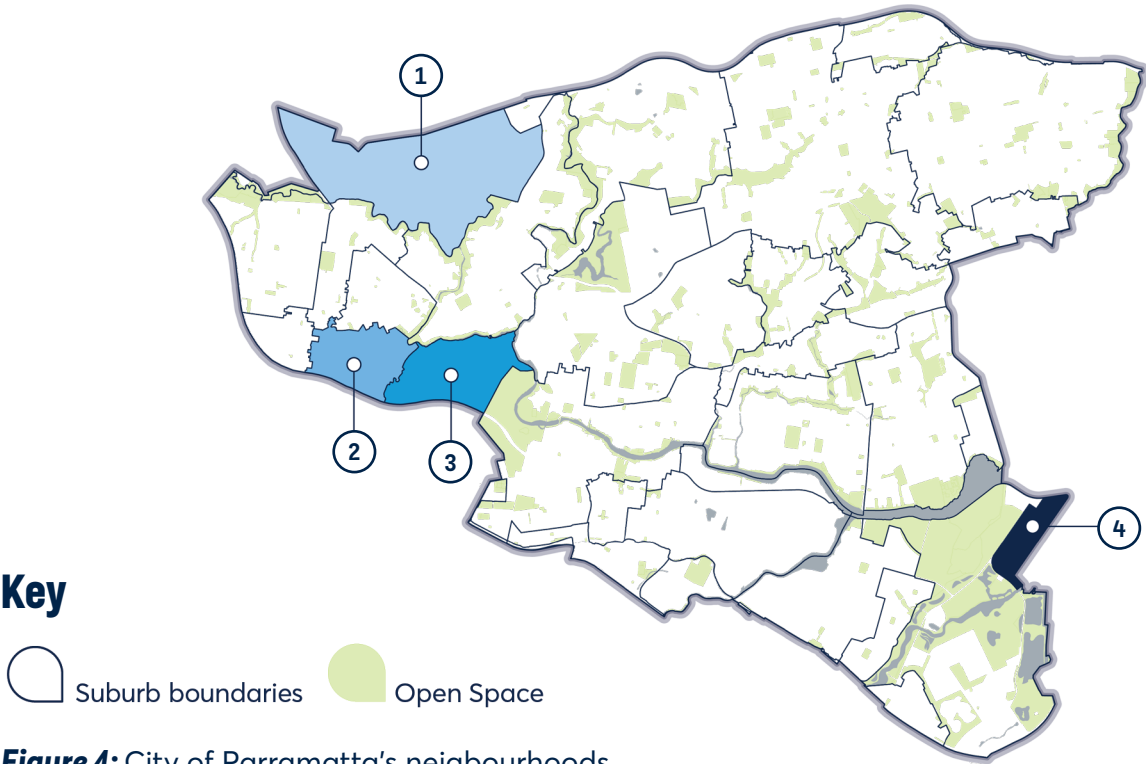
# OUR DIVERSE NEIGHBOURHOODS

City of Parramatta’s diversity is its strength, with people of different cultures, socio-economic backgrounds, ages, and family compositions choosing to call Parramatta home. Diversity across the LGA is evident when comparing the four suburbs below, which each start with the letter ‘W’ but are very different in terms of their communities and the way that people live.

Planning for the future of our City must respond to the various needs of our residents, recognising that one size does not fit all.

Suburbs	Cultural Diversity		Age		Housing		
	Speak Mandarin at home	Born in India	0-4 yrs	55+ yrs	High density dwellings	Households that rent privately	Households that fully own
1 Winston Hills	4.1%	3.5%	6.4%	30.1%	0.1%	12.6%	37.8%
2 Wentworthville	3.3%	23.6%	5.8%	26.3%	5.7%	34.9%	24.1%
3 Westmead	3.1%	40.3%	9.6%	12.1%	81.9%	64.9%	5.8%
4 Wentworth Point	23%	3.8%	8%	11.5%	98.8%	56.8%	7.6%

Source: .id (informed decisions) Community Profile (2021)



**Figure 4:** City of Parramatta’s neighbourhoods



# 03 THE STRATEGY





# OUR VISION, PRINCIPLES, AND PRIORITIES

## OUR VISION

### An equitable and resilient Parramatta.

We want to build a Parramatta that is equitable and resilient. At the heart of this vision is a 'socially sustainable' community, where we 'actively support the capacity of current and future generations to create healthy and liveable communities. Socially sustainable communities are equitable, diverse, connected, democratic, and provide a good quality of life'.<sup>1</sup>

Our goal is to manage the challenges associated with change and growth, so that individuals and communities can remain socially connected, live with dignity, and thrive.

While investment and growth have brought opportunities and benefits to Parramatta, we recognise these are not experienced by all residents equally. We know that some people do not have access to the necessary resources to foster resilience, meaning some groups are less equipped to deal with hazards and other stressors.<sup>6</sup> Equity means that no one gets left behind.

To become a more equitable city, we must support our diverse communities, including those experiencing disadvantage.

Our community is faced with challenges as we continue to recover from the ongoing impacts of COVID-19, and grapple with increasingly frequent and severe weather events driven by climate change.

To become a more resilient city, we aspire to be a place where people feel socially connected, secure, and equipped to survive and thrive in the face of change.

"Parra is a culturally diverse hub providing all sorts of facilities to residents including senior citizens and kids. The schools, parks, library, shopping, eating everything is top of the class. The Parramatta community is our blessing."

*Community member (2022)  
(not pictured)*

# OUR IMPLEMENTATION PRINCIPLES

The Social Sustainability Strategy is founded on six core principles established through best practice research. We aim to be a role model for change and leadership in our community. As the heart of the Central River City, we are well-placed to be a vocal advocate for our neighbourhoods, our City, and for Western Sydney as a whole. Working with our community, Council can and should act boldly to address our shared challenges and move towards becoming a more equitable and resilient Parramatta.

In delivering this Strategy, we will ensure that our decision-making and actions are:

## EQUITABLE

Equity means equal access and opportunity. This can be achieved by addressing systemic inequalities and barriers that different people face. We help those who need it most, strengthening the community as a whole and enabling everyone to thrive.

## INCLUSIVE

An inclusive city is a place where everyone is 'enabled and empowered to fully participate in the social, economic, and political opportunities that are on offer.'<sup>7</sup> We work to enhance inclusion for individuals and groups who experience greater barriers to participation in our City.

## COURAGEOUS

Council embraces the challenge and responsibility that comes with governing our City. We are not afraid to take action on complex problems. We are at the forefront of innovation, adopting creative approaches to address our challenges.

## A HOLISTIC UNDERSTANDING OF HEALTH

We build strong communities by prioritising the health and wellbeing of our residents. We adopt a holistic understanding of health, recognising that health is not merely the absence of disease; It is a state of complete physical, mental, and social wellbeing. We know that a range of non-medical factors contribute to people's health and quality of life. We seek to improve conditions of daily living where possible.

## COLLABORATIVE AND DEMOCRATIC

A healthy city ensures all individuals and communities can be involved in decision-making on issues that affect them and the places they live, work, and play.<sup>8</sup> We work with the community and key stakeholders across public, private, and not-for-profit sectors to develop solutions to address challenges and leverage opportunities.

## TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE

Council implements transparent and inclusive engagement processes to inform our decision-making. We clearly communicate how and why decisions are made.

# OUR PRIORITIES

To achieve our vision of an equitable and resilient Parramatta, this Strategy establishes five priorities to guide Council's actions, partnerships, and advocacy over the next 10 years.

## > **PRIORITY 1. A SOCIALLY CONNECTED COMMUNITY**

We will deliver high quality public spaces, facilities and programs that allow Parramatta's residents to build strong social networks.

## > **PRIORITY 2. A SAFE, INCLUSIVE, AND WELCOMING CITY**

We will work to ensure that residents and visitors feel empowered to participate in our City.

## > **PRIORITY 3. A COMMUNITY WHERE PEOPLE CAN LIVE HEALTHY LIVES**

We will deliver places and services that support the health and wellbeing of our residents.

## > **PRIORITY 4. A CITY WITH AFFORDABLE AND DIVERSE HOMES FOR ALL**

We will plan and advocate to ensure access to quality and affordable housing that meets the needs of our residents through all phases of their lives.

## > **PRIORITY 5. A CITY OF LEARNING AND OPPORTUNITY**

We will create opportunities for our residents to learn, grow, and thrive through all phases of their lives.



# A SOCIALLY CONNECTED COMMUNITY

We will deliver high quality public spaces, facilities, and programs that allow Parramatta's residents to build strong social networks.

City of Parramatta continues to transform and grow. Our population is projected to reach 446,000 by 2041, with an increasing proportion of residents living in high density housing.

These changes, in combination with other economic and health stressors, mean that our shared spaces and programs are more important than ever.

Social connection is about fostering strong relationships and positive interactions. In City of Parramatta, the shift toward higher density living and the impacts of COVID-19 lockdowns have exacerbated social isolation and loneliness. In our community, young people, people living with disability, culturally and linguistically diverse people, and people who live alone were more likely to report experiencing social isolation and loneliness.<sup>9</sup>

Council plays an important role in delivering infrastructure and programs that facilitate formal and informal opportunities for interaction, supporting social inclusion and connection within our community. This includes 'third spaces', which are communal spaces outside of a person's home (first place) or their work (second place). We must provide the right spaces and opportunities for people to interact and ensure that they are universally accessible.



Credit: City of Parramatta

Additionally, green open space plays an essential role in providing an opportunity to connect with nature and each other. Council's parks and sports grounds generate significant social benefits for the community, including enhanced social connections, belonging, and improved emotional wellbeing.<sup>10</sup>

Residents who live in high density dwellings have less access to open space at home. These residents are more reliant on our City's green spaces and community facilities, which function as a shared backyard or lounge room. There is a strong link between higher density living and a reduced sense of connection to community.<sup>11</sup> With 70% of dwellings forecast to be high density by 2036, Council's role in delivering and programming third spaces will be vital to enabling socially connected communities.<sup>12</sup>

**In 2023, 64% of residents felt that they belong to their local community and 90% had helped another member of the community that does not live with them within the previous 12 months.**

*Our City My Life Survey (2023)*



## WHAT WE HEARD

Our community has told us that:

- Parks are an important place for social gathering, which was highlighted in the context of COVID-19 lockdowns
- Higher density living, increased development, and a growing population are putting pressure on our community infrastructure
- There needs to be more green space in Parramatta CBD
- There is a need for more affordable and inclusive programs and activities.

**For every dollar invested in City of Parramatta's parks and sportsgrounds, \$10 of social value is experienced by parks and sportsground users and other stakeholders over a year.**

*City of Parramatta's Social Return on Investment Evaluation (2018)*

## WHAT COUNCIL IS ALREADY DOING

Council's Social Inclusion Program supports residents who are at greater risk of social isolation, including older people, people living with disability, and their carers.

The program supports people to meet their individual goals, which may include reconnecting with family and friends, joining a club, participating in learning opportunities, or connecting with a volunteer that shares a common interest.

Group activities delivered under the Social Inclusion program include book clubs and social outings, such as dinners and movie visits.

**In 2023, the top three areas of community satisfaction were with Council's library services, parks and green spaces, and PHIVE.**

*City of Parramatta's Community Satisfaction Survey (2023)*

# CASE STUDY

## INNOVATIVE WAYS TO CREATE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE: PRAHRAN SQUARE, MELBOURNE

Prahran Square was a \$60 million project that transformed an above-ground car park into a parkland. Increasing the provision of open space was a priority for the City of Stonnington as it had the second lowest provision in Victoria.<sup>13</sup> The Council-owned car park on Cato Street was converted into almost 10,000m<sup>2</sup> of multi-functional urban parkland that sits atop a 500-space carpark.<sup>14</sup>

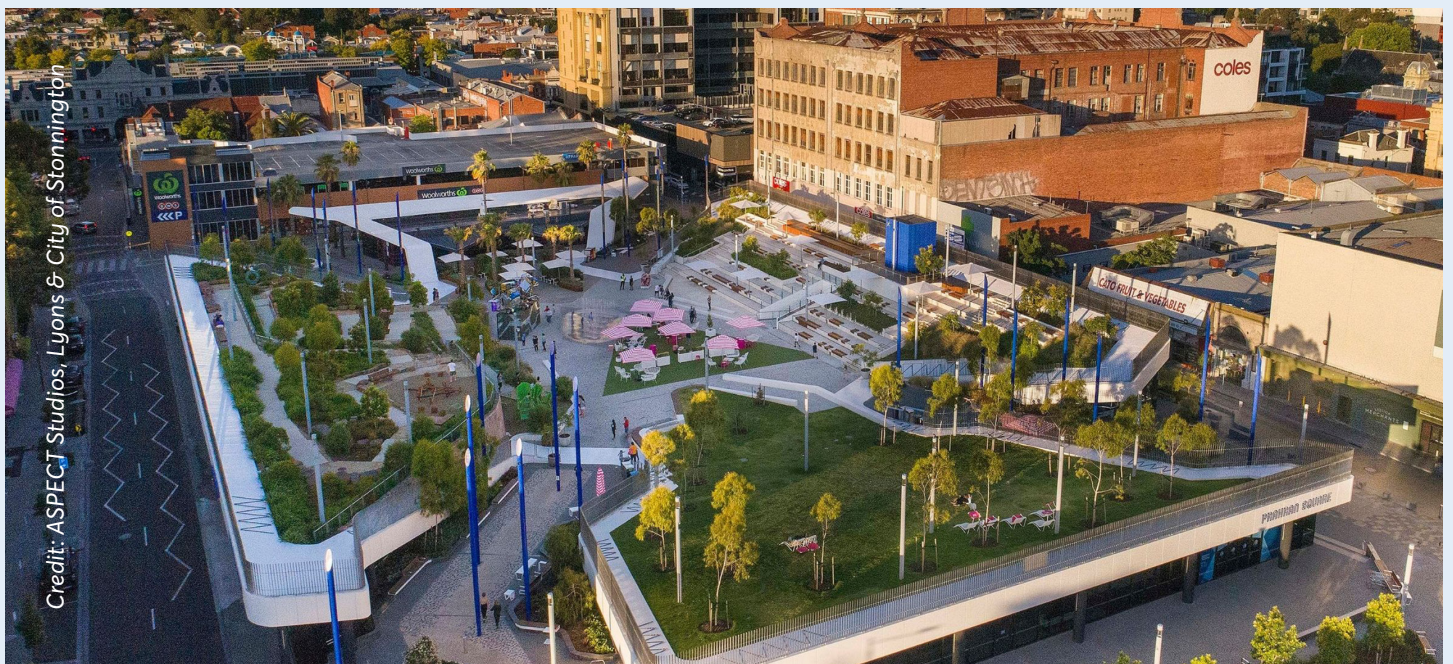
Opened in 2019, Prahran Square has created much needed open space for recreation, events, festivals, and markets, whilst also providing a 20% increase in parking spaces at the site.

“Prahran Square has become the new cultural and recreational heart of Prahran with spaces to relax, catch up with friends and take a breather from the hustle and bustle of nearby Chapel and Greville Streets...[it has] been vitally important in becoming a ‘Backyard’ to the densely populated Prahran Precinct.”

*Rick Kwasek, Director of Environment and Infrastructure at City of Stonnington<sup>13</sup>*

“The design for Prahran Square is a great model for change – it puts pedestrians first by locating cars underground, returning valuable open space to people.”

*Jill Garner, Victorian Government Architect<sup>13</sup>*





## WHAT WE ARE DOING

These are Council's objectives and actions relating to a socially connected community.

NO.	ACTION	YEAR
<b>OBJECTIVE 1.1</b>	<b>Our community has access to quality green spaces and community facilities that enable social interaction and foster a sense of belonging</b>	
1.1.1	Evaluate and update Council's Community Infrastructure Strategy (CIS) and release a regular report card on progress	2
1.1.2	Undertake gap analysis of open space across the LGA and conduct research to identify innovative approaches to increasing the provision and quality of open spaces.	1
1.1.3	Work to optimise community access to open space and community facilities in cases of joint use (owned by Council) and shared use (owned by the Department of Education and Sydney Olympic Park Authority)	2
<b>OBJECTIVE 1.2</b>	<b>Our community has access to programs, services, and information that enable social interaction and foster a sense of belonging</b>	
1.2.1	Trial an intergenerational connections project that links older Australians and children that are enrolled in Council's early learning centres	4

## HOW TO READ THE ACTION PLAN

**Response to CSP** reflects the relevant CSP goal that this work will contribute to (Fair, Accessible, Welcoming, Green, Thriving, and Innovative).

**Council's role** refers to the Deliver (D), Partner (P), Advocate (A) model of work adopted in the CSP.

**Indicator** refers to how we will measure progress towards achieving our objectives.

RESPONSE TO CSP	COUNCIL'S ROLE	INDICATOR	4 YEAR TARGET	BASELINE DATA
Fair	D	% of residents living within 400m of useable green spaces	96%	91% (2019)
Fair	D	Total area of community facilities per 1,000 residents, excluding Scout and Guide Halls	80m <sup>2</sup> per 1,000 residents	52m <sup>2</sup> per 1,000 residents (2019)
Fair	P			
Fair Welcoming	D	% of residents who are satisfied with Council's library services	85%	74% (2023)
		% of residents who feel they belong to the local community	80%	64% (2023)



# A SAFE, INCLUSIVE, AND WELCOMING CITY

We will work to ensure that residents and visitors feel empowered to participate in our City.

The diversity of City of Parramatta is its strength. As the population continues to grow and change, we must work to better understand the varied experiences and needs within our community, to inform the way we plan for a more inclusive Parramatta.

Great cities celebrate their diversity, enabling all people to feel welcome. This means that people of all cultures, languages, abilities, socioeconomic statuses, sexualities, and gender identities are safe and empowered to be themselves. Social cohesion is vital for an equitable and resilient Parramatta, with key components of social cohesion including acceptance and celebration of diversity, sense of belonging to community, social justice, and participation within the community.<sup>15</sup>

Cultural and linguistic diversity is fundamental to Parramatta's identity, with 53.3% of our City's residents born overseas and 56.4% speaking a language other than English at home.<sup>16</sup> By fostering a safe, inclusive, and welcoming City, Council stands firmly against racism and works to ensure that diversity is celebrated.

To become a safe, inclusive, and welcoming City, we must also address gender diversity and equity. Domestic and family violence is a significant issue that disproportionately affects women. In 2023, there were 811 reported incidences of domestic violence related assault in our City. This equates to 314 instances per 100,000 people.<sup>17</sup> Council is committed to addressing gender inequity and strengthening community groups, services and businesses' capacity to respond to domestic and family violence (DFV).



Credit: City of Parramatta

The design and programming of places can determine whether people have positive experiences and perceptions of safety, and is an essential for creating a thriving city. Overall, our community feels safe, but some have concerns, particularly that Parramatta CBD feels unsafe at night. Various factors can shape people's perceptions of crime, including their gender, age, where they live, and previous experiences of crime. In our City, negative perceptions of safety are felt most acutely by people experiencing homelessness, women, young people, and social housing tenants.<sup>18</sup>

A safe, inclusive, and welcoming city allows all individuals and communities to participate. This means informing residents about the decisions that affect them and the places where they live, work and play.<sup>8</sup> Council is committed to best practice community engagement to ensure that the needs and aspirations of our residents are at the core of what we do. We recognise some groups are harder to engage or experience barriers to having their say.

Children and young people have the right to voice their opinions and be heard on issues that affect them. However, their views are often not given proper consideration in decision-making.<sup>19</sup> It is important to elevate the voices of children and young people, so their perspectives can inform planning and decision-making for the future of our City.

**"Sydney is considered to be one of the most multicultural cities in the world, and Parramatta might just be at the centre of it."**

*Community workshop participant (2022)*



## WHAT WE HEARD

Our community has told us that:

- There should be continued focus on cultural community events in both the Parramatta CBD and our neighbourhoods.
- Community members from diverse cultural backgrounds are often not aware of services available in the area.
- There are still negative perceptions of Parramatta, but this often changes once people have visited the area.
- Anti-social behaviour and poor lighting contribute to feeling unsafe at night, particularly in Parramatta CBD.
- There is a need for more domestic and family violence support services, particularly culturally sensitive support programs that ensure people are safe in their homes.
- There is a need for improved disability access and sensory safe places.

In 2023, 90% of residents agreed that it is a good thing for society to be made up of people from different cultures and 84% of residents agreed that their local community is welcoming of people of different cultures.

*Our City My Life Survey (2022)*

City of Parramatta residents rated feeling safe as the most important aspect of a good place to live.

*.id informed decisions (2023) <sup>20</sup>*

## CASE STUDY

### AMPLIFYING THE VOICES OF YOUNG PEOPLE - Y4Y ACTION TEAM, CENTRAL COAST COUNCIL

Central Coast Council established its Y4Y (Youth for Youth) action team in 2018 to improve engagement with young people and empower them have their voices heard.<sup>21</sup>

The Y4Y action team is made up of 12 young people aged 14 to 24, who live, work or study on the Central Coast. Y4Y team members are elected for 15-month terms, to represent young people and youth-related issues on the Coast.<sup>22</sup>

Y4Y team members engage in leadership and skills development opportunities, empowering them to act, advocate, and advise on local matters. They are also involved in running an annual youth forum and organising local youth-focused programs.

The Y4Y Action Team provides an example of how local government can create a direct link between Council and young people, ensuring that their voices are heard and considered in decision-making that impacts them. It also equips young people with valuable leadership skills beyond their term in the Y4Y action team.

## WHAT COUNCIL IS ALREADY DOING

City of Parramatta is championing a project called 'Welcome Here' to demonstrate commitment to increasing the inclusion and well-being of people who identify as LGBTQIA+. The project, run by health promotion organisation ACON, focuses on supporting local business owners and services to create and promote environments that are visibly welcoming and inclusive of LGBTQIA+ people.

Local businesses throughout the Parramatta LGA were invited to participate. They needed to register and undertake training to be involved. Participating businesses now display the 'Welcome Here' sticker in a prominent place at their sites and on their websites. Additionally, all of Council's libraries, PHIVE, Wentworth Point Community Centre, Riverside Theatres, and Parramatta Artist Studios have been trained to be 'Welcome Here' sites.



Credit: City of Parramatta

# WHAT WE ARE DOING

These are Council's objectives and actions relating to a safe, inclusive, and welcoming City.

NO.	ACTION	YEAR
<b>OBJECTIVE 2.1</b>	<b>Our City welcomes everyone and is enriched by its diversity</b>	
2.1.1	Conduct research on the experiences of our community in the City's public spaces, with a focus on particular groups such as LGBTQIA+ communities, women, and young people	3
2.1.2	Develop community profiles for each library and conduct market research into the cultural and linguistic needs of our community to better understand barriers to communication and improve the reach of our library collections, services, and programs	2
2.1.3	Conduct research on cultural considerations to inform the design of Council's facilities, using Epping Aquatic Centre as a case study	1
2.1.4	Develop a new program that focuses on inclusive and accessible programs at Council's aquatic and wellness facilities by addressing barriers to participation	1
2.1.5	Develop a framework that addresses barriers to socioeconomic inclusion, such as low income, employment status, and education, for vulnerable residents	1
<b>OBJECTIVE 2.2</b>	<b>Our community and visitors feel safe in our City, in both public and private spaces</b>	
2.2.1	Advocate for increased high visibility policing in Parramatta CBD during daylight savings	2
2.2.2	Refresh the Crime Prevention Plan 2019-2023	1
2.2.3	Establish baseline for community attitudes towards violence against women in Parramatta, to inform targeted policy and interventions	1
2.2.4	Develop a Child Safe Policy in line with the Child Safe Standards	1
<b>OBJECTIVE 2.3</b>	<b>Our community is empowered to have their say and shape the future of our City</b>	
2.3.1	Develop a Youth Inclusion Framework to support and enhance Council programs and services that impact young people	1
<b>OBJECTIVE 2.4</b>	<b>Our City is designed to make young people feel welcome</b>	
2.4.1	Evaluate the provision of youth-friendly spaces in Parramatta CBD to identify gaps and inform future action	2



## HOW TO READ THE ACTION PLAN

**Response to CSP** reflects the relevant CSP goal that this work will contribute to (Fair, Accessible, Welcoming, Green, Thriving, and Innovative).

**Council's role** refers to the Deliver (D), Partner (P), Advocate (A) model of work adopted in the CSP.

**Indicator** refers to how we will measure progress towards achieving our objectives.

RESPONSE TO CSP	COUNCIL'S ROLE	INDICATOR	4 YEAR TARGET	BASELINE DATA (2023)
Welcoming	D	% of residents who feel welcome living in our City	95%	84%
Fair	D			
Fair Welcoming	D			
Fair Accessible	D			
Fair	D			
Welcoming	A	% of residents who feel comfortable in public places in our LGA	95%	86%
Fair Welcoming	D			
Welcoming	D			
Fair Welcoming	D			
Fair	D	% of residents who feel that Council acts on their behalf	70%	58%
Fair	D	% of young residents (18-24 years) who feel that our City provides opportunities for them to live well	85%	74%

# A COMMUNITY WHERE PEOPLE CAN LIVE HEALTHY LIVES

We will deliver places and services that support the health and wellbeing of our residents.

Good health underpins a person's ability to live a happy life, making them better equipped to achieve their goals. Improving the health and wellbeing of all residents, particularly the most vulnerable, is critical to achieving an equitable and resilient Parramatta.

Healthy cities are designed for people first. Considering health in land use planning and development decisions means that the places people live are better connected, are pedestrian and bicycle-friendly, and located within proximity of community facilities, green open space, and health infrastructure. The design of cities therefore impacts people's access to medical services and other health-enhancing opportunities, such as organised sport, exercise classes, and preventative health programs. These factors play a vital role in enabling people to live well.

Some City of Parramatta residents enjoy better health than others. This is known as health inequity, which refers to the 'systematic differences in the opportunities groups have to achieve optimal health, leading to unfair and avoidable differences in health outcomes'.<sup>23</sup>

Inequity is evident in the health outcomes experienced by First Nations residents. In Parramatta, 17% of First Nations people live with a mental health condition, compared to 5% of the general population.<sup>24</sup> All levels of government have a role to play in improving outcomes for First Nations peoples, as established in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. To ensure all residents can live healthy lives in Parramatta, we must work to address health inequities within our community and better support First Nations residents.



Health inequity is also evident in access to fresh, nutritious, and affordable food, and experiences of food insecurity. In July 2023, 11% of our residents reported running out of food and could not afford to buy more in the last 12 months, increasingly significantly from 4% in 2021.<sup>25</sup>

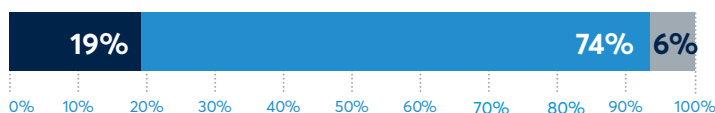
Healthy cities enable older people to age in place, supporting them to live independently and working to reduce experiences of social isolation as people age.<sup>26</sup> Whilst City of Parramatta is a young community with a median age of 35 (four years younger than the NSW median), we know that 22% of our residents are aged 55 or older.

Through prioritising health in designing and programming the City, we can ensure that Parramatta is a place for people to live well throughout their lives.

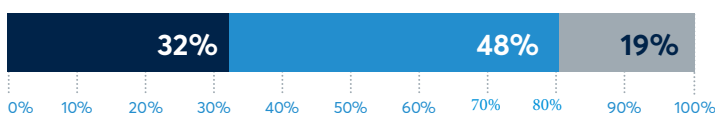
"Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease."

World Health Organization<sup>27</sup>

#### Total residents



#### First Nations residents



■ Reported a long term health condition  
 ■ Did not report a long term health condition  
 ■ Did not respond

Figure 5: ABS Census 2021



## WHAT WE HEARD

Our community has told us that:

- The City should be designed for people first.
- Nature is important for good health and wellbeing especially as we live in increasingly population-dense environments.
- There needs to be better support for mental health.
- There should be more active transport opportunities, such as separated cycle paths and recreational walking links.

"Supporting people's health has a big impact on their social wellbeing and ability to contribute in the community."

*Community workshop participant (2022)*

## WHAT COUNCIL IS ALREADY DOING

Council's Active Parramatta initiative is dedicated to delivering high quality health and fitness programs to support the health and wellbeing of our community.

Active Parramatta activities run all year round, and are suitable for many wellbeing goals and levels of fitness. The initiative works to increase our residents' awareness of the benefits of an active lifestyle, whilst provide opportunities for community connection.

The Active Parramatta Van delivers free community health programs that promote healthy lifestyles for people at all life stages, including programs for early childhood development, Mums N Bubs, primary school-aged children, young people, adults, and over 55s.



Credit: City of Parramatta

## CASE STUDY

### COMMUNITY FOOD RELIEF, CITY OF MELBOURNE

City of Melbourne has identified food insecurity as a growing health, social and economic issue which has largely been driven by poverty. Experiences of food insecurity and inequity of food access have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Between 2019 and 2021, food insecurity increased by 7.5% and demand for food relief increased by 47%.<sup>28</sup>

To address this health inequity issue, City of Melbourne aimed to develop and deliver initiatives and programs to provide food relief to vulnerable community members and improve local food production by supporting communities to grow their own food.

Community Food Relief 2021 - 2025: Planning for a food secure city, was endorsed in December 2021. This plan outlines City of Melbourne Council's role and commitment to improving access to food relief services through:

- Partnerships with food relief and other charities to provide groceries and meals to vulnerable residents
- Investigating community food enterprise models, to redirect surplus food that would otherwise go to waste
- Advocacy directed at state and federal government to raise income support above the poverty line and increase investment in social housing.

**"Food security is a situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life."**

*High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition 2021, City of Melbourne's Community Food Relief: 2021-2025.*

**"About half the people turning up for emergency food relief across charities actually work and they are just underemployed. So a lot of the people turning up when we are doing drive throughs are employed and they have kids in the car."**

*Food relief service provider, City of Melbourne*

## WHAT WE ARE DOING

These are Council's objectives and actions relating to a community where people can live healthy lives.

NO.	ACTION	YEAR
<b>OBJECTIVE 3.1</b>	<b>Our City is designed and programmed to support the health and wellbeing of residents</b>	
3.1.1	Update Council's Social Impact Assessment (SIA) Guidelines	1
3.1.2	Develop partnerships to enhance the existing Active Parramatta program	2
<b>OBJECTIVE 3.2</b>	<b>Our community has improved health outcomes due to decreased disadvantage</b>	
3.2.1	Conduct research on opportunities for Local Government to improve health outcomes for First Nations residents to inform future action	3
3.2.2	Conduct research on the harms associated with electronic gaming machines (EGMs) in City of Parramatta to inform future action	2
3.2.3	Conduct research on opportunities for Local Government to address food insecurity to inform future action	1
<b>OBJECTIVE 3.3</b>	<b>Our City provides opportunities for older people to live well</b>	
3.3.1	Evaluate Council's services and programs for older people to identify and respond to gaps in provision	1 - 4



#### HOW TO READ THE ACTION PLAN

**Response to CSP** reflects the relevant CSP goal that this work will contribute to (Fair, Accessible, Welcoming, Green, Thriving, and Innovative).

**Council's role** refers to the Deliver (D), Partner (P), Advocate (A) model of work adopted in the CSP.

**Indicator** refers to how we will measure progress towards achieving our objectives.

RESPONSE TO CSP	COUNCIL'S ROLE	INDICATOR	FOUR YEAR TARGET	BASELINE DATA (2023)
Fair Accessible Innovative	D	Community sentiment regarding the degree to which our City provides facilities to live an active life	85%	75%
Fair	D P	Residents' self-reported mental health status	85%	73%
Fair Welcoming	D	% of residents who (either themselves or a member of their household) find it difficult to access health services	9%	19%
Fair Welcoming	D A			
Fair	D			
Fair	D	% of older residents (60+ years) who feel that their local area provides opportunities for them to live well	85%	76%

## PRIORITY 04

# A CITY WITH AFFORDABLE AND DIVERSE HOMES FOR ALL

We will plan and advocate to ensure access to quality and affordable housing that meets the needs of our residents through all phases of their lives.

Access to adequate housing is a human right and a key determinant of health outcomes. Individuals and households have varied needs throughout their lives in terms of cost, dwelling type, size, and tenure. Our City must provide a range of affordable and diverse homes to ensure that residents can continue to have their needs met within our LGA.

Housing affordability is a key challenge in City of Parramatta, with 30% of rental household and 23% of mortgage households were experiencing housing stress in 2021.<sup>29</sup> The cost of housing means that people are being priced out of the private rental market. In our City, 4.2% of households live in social housing and the waiting list for social

housing ranges from 5 to 10+ years.<sup>30</sup> With high housing costs and limited non-market housing options, it becomes harder for families to stay in the same neighbourhood where they grew up. This can have an impact on the maintenance of social networks and community connections, as well as access to work and study. Whilst many of the policy tools available to influence housing affordability are outside of Council's control, we recognise the significant impact that the housing affordability crisis has on quality of life and the need for Council to demonstrate leadership in this space.

Housing diversity is necessary to meet the needs of different individuals and households. The shift towards higher density living has impacted the availability of dwelling sizes, with the proportion of three-bedroom dwellings in our City decreasing between 2016 and 2021.<sup>31</sup> We must ensure that





high density dwellings are designed to meet the needs of larger households, including families with children. Our City must also provide adaptable housing options to ensure that housing responds to the evolving accessibility needs of individuals throughout their lives.

Great cities care for their most vulnerable residents, including people experiencing homelessness. Homelessness is a complex issue that has significant costs for both the individual and the community. Investing in quality programs and accommodation for people experiencing homelessness improves outcomes for everyone and reduces demand for costly support services in the long term.

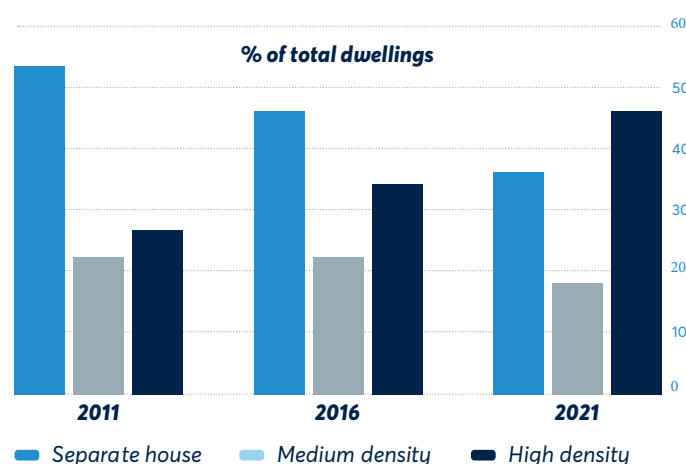


Figure 6. ABS Census 2011, 2016, 2021



## WHAT WE HEARD

Our community has told us that:

- Housing affordability and the cost of living are significant issues impacting quality of life.
- People cannot afford to live close to where they work, increasing commute times.
- The perceived increase in people experiencing homelessness in City of Parramatta is a concern.
- Council should play a greater role in addressing housing affordability and homelessness in City of Parramatta.
- Overdevelopment and overcrowding are key issues.

**"Diverse and affordable housing is important but needs state and federal support."**

*Community workshop participant (2022)*

## WHAT COUNCIL IS ALREADY DOING

Council conducts the Parramatta Homelessness Street Count each year to monitor homelessness in our local area. This data supports advocacy for increased service delivery and assists in determining the most appropriate strategies to reduce the prevalence of homelessness.

Council also has an Affordable Housing Action Plan 2023-25, which identifies the actions and advocacy positions that Council will take to address housing affordability, including pursuing Affordable Housing Contribution Schemes in appropriate precincts, investigating opportunities to deliver affordable housing on Council-owned land, and advocacy for State-level planning reforms.

**It is estimated that 6,697 households have an unmet need for affordable housing in City of Parramatta. This represents 7.3% of all households.**

*.id Housing Monitor (2021)<sup>32</sup>*

# CASE STUDY

## GREEN SQUARE AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAM, CITY OF SYDNEY

City of Sydney's Green Square Affordable Housing Program aimed to increase the supply of affordable rental housing to ensure that urban renewal did not erode social diversity in the area.

The program sought to increase the supply of affordable rental housing in Green Square through inclusionary zoning, which is a planning mechanism that mandates developer contributions towards affordable housing. Contributions can be provided in-kind (through dedicating units as affordable housing) or as a monetary contribution (held in a state government affordable housing fund to procure affordable housing in accordance with the relevant Affordable Housing Program).

In 2018, City of Sydney reported that 327 affordable housing dwellings had already been provided in Green Square and that, at that time, more than 60% of the projected development was still to occur.<sup>33</sup>

Since July 2021, contributions for developments in Green Square have been collected through a broader City of Sydney Affordable Housing Program, to ensure consistency with the approach to rates across the City.

*"A fundamental objective for the renewal of Green Square is to retain a socially diverse population as the area gentrifies and undergoes significant renewal. This can be achieved by ensuring that there continues to be housing available to a wide cross section of socio-economic groups."*

*City of Sydney (2021)<sup>34</sup>*





## WHAT WE ARE DOING

These are Council's objectives and actions relating to a City with affordable and diverse homes for all.

NO.	ACTION	YEAR
<b>OBJECTIVE 4.1</b>	<b>Our community has access to a range of affordable housing options</b>	
4.1.1	Update Council's Affordable Rental Housing Policy	1
4.1.2	Evaluate and update the Affordable Housing Action Plan (AHAP)	2
<b>OBJECTIVE 4.2</b>	<b>Our community has access to a diverse range of housing that meets their needs</b>	
4.2.1	Work with the Centre for Population Health (WSLHD) to incorporate healthy higher density living principles into a future Parramatta DCP amendment	1
4.2.2	Review existing Parramatta DCP dwelling mix requirements to inform potential amendments	3
4.2.3	Conduct research on the delivery of build to rent housing to inform advocacy and action	2
<b>OBJECTIVE 4.3</b>	<b>People experiencing homelessness have access to services and support in our City</b>	
4.3.1	Review the Homelessness Action Plan (2019-2023)	1

## HOW TO READ THE ACTION PLAN

**Response to CSP** reflects the relevant CSP goal that this work will contribute to (Fair, Accessible, Welcoming, Green, Thriving, and Innovative).

**Council's role** refers to the Deliver (D), Partner (P), Advocate (A) model of work adopted in the CSP.

**Indicator** refers to how we will measure progress towards achieving our objectives.

RESPONSE TO CSP	COUNCIL'S ROLE	INDICATOR	FOUR YEAR TARGET	BASELINE DATA
Fair	D	% of households living in housing stress (rental and mortgage stress)	10%	16% (2021)
Fair Innovative	D	% of people who feel secure in their housing situation	95%	86% (2023)
Fair Innovative	D	% of residents who feel that our City offers diverse housing options	60%	44% (2023)
Fair	D			
Fair	D A			
Fair	D	Number of people experiencing homelessness per 10,000 residents	7 people per 10,000 residents	11 people per 10,000 residents (2024)

# A CITY OF LEARNING AND OPPORTUNITY

We will create opportunities for our residents to learn, grow, and thrive through all phases of their lives.

Access to learning opportunities significantly influences quality of life and health outcomes. However, many members of our community experience barriers to accessing education.

From childhood through to older age, access to quality education and safe learning environments are essential for enabling people to live good lives. Lifelong learning helps people better understand the world they live in, empowering them to make informed decisions and give back to their community.

Early childhood is a vital stage of development. If we can provide good education in early childhood, we can expect children to thrive in school and throughout their lives.

Investing in a child's early years leads to increased social mobility, lifetime wages, and health and wellbeing outcomes. When we work to overcome the opportunity gap between children from low- and high-income families, we take important steps toward ending intergenerational disadvantage.

Our community is increasingly well educated. In 2021, 44.2% of residents had earned a bachelor's degree or higher, increasing from 37.2% in 2016.<sup>5</sup> However, many residents experience barriers to accessing learning opportunities, including language, disability, disengagement from formal education and employment, caring responsibilities, financial hardship, and digital literacy.

In our community, 9.4% of people do not speak English well or at all, 27.4% of people over 15 years





Credit: Maja Baska

have no vocational or tertiary qualifications, 6.8% of young people (15 – 24 years) are in neither education nor employment, and 4.1% of people need assistance with daily living activities due to disability.<sup>35</sup> We recognise the need to address these barriers to better support our residents to reach their potential and to ensure Parramatta becomes a more equitable city.

Further, businesses and other organisations are increasingly being asked to produce more than just financial outcomes, to also contribute to social and wellbeing outcomes. For some businesses, creating positive social impact is their core purpose. Council can play a role in generating opportunities for organisations in our City that provide social benefit within our community, such as social enterprises, First Nations-owned businesses, and other purpose-driven organisations.

**"Education and health and wellbeing are intrinsically linked. Education is strongly associated with life expectancy, morbidity, health behaviours, and educational attainment plays an important role in health by shaping opportunities, employment, and income."**

*The Lancet Public Health (2020)<sup>36</sup>*



## WHAT WE HEARD

Our community has told us that:

- Schools in City of Parramatta are overcrowded.
- Residents want more opportunities to learn from other cultures.
- Council could increase awareness of volunteering opportunities in City of Parramatta.
- More learning opportunities for adults are needed.

"It would be nice to learn from each other in a diversity-rich community."

*Community workshop participant (2022)*

## WHAT COUNCIL IS ALREADY DOING

Council provides lifelong learning opportunities through its range of library program offerings. The Tech Savvy Seniors program, which offers classes in both English and Mandarin, helps to build skills and confidence using computers, tablets, and smartphones. It equips older people with foundational digital skills, including cyber safety, how to use QR codes, and how to shop online.



Credit: City of Parramatta



# CASE STUDY

## GLENROY COMMUNITY HUB

Glenroy Community Hub in Victoria is an integrated health and lifelong learning centre designed to support, educate, and inspire locals at all stages of their life.<sup>37</sup> It is 'a one-stop shop' for residents to access Council and community-based services. This includes an early years centre, kindergarten, maternal child health, community health, neighbourhood learning activities, customer service centre, and a community garden.

This holistic and integrated approach to service provision recognises that the early years of a child's life – from birth until eight years old – are critical to forming the child's cognitive, emotional, and physical behaviour in later life. The centre acts as a social hub, providing a local place where families can go, build social networks, and get support from other parents with young children. It also acts as a service hub, providing access to

a wide range of services that support parents in developing positive parenting practices and assist in the early identification of health or developmental concerns. Early research suggests that this approach may contribute to children achieving positive outcomes, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds.<sup>38</sup>

The co-location of these vital community services brings together diverse groups of people and encourages inter-generational connections.

It also offers opportunity for life-long learning: the 'Neighbourhood House' at Glenroy Community Hub offers courses on topics such as employment skills and parenting techniques, as well as health and fitness activities and fun activities for kids and their families.



Credit: City of Merri-bek



## WHAT WE ARE DOING

These are Council's objectives and actions relating to a City of learning and opportunity.

NO.	ACTION	YEAR
<b>OBJECTIVE 5.1</b>	<b>Everyone is supported to access learning opportunities to reach their full potential</b>	
5.1.1	Undertake analysis of current and future schools to identify gaps in meeting the needs of the future population and inform future advocacy	1
<b>OBJECTIVE 5.2</b>	<b>Children have equitable access to early childhood development opportunities</b>	
5.2.1	Investigate opportunities for Council's Early Learning Centres to deliver additional support for vulnerable children	2
5.2.2	Review Council's evidence base for best practice in childcare to inform updated Parramatta DCP childcare controls	3
<b>OBJECTIVE 5.3</b>	<b>Our City provides opportunities for organisations that enhance social outcomes</b>	
5.3.1	Assess how Council can enhance positive social impacts through procurement, investment and business activities	2
5.3.2	Renew the Social Investment Action Plan to support innovative approaches to delivering positive social outcomes	2

#### HOW TO READ THE ACTION PLAN

**Response to CSP** reflects the relevant CSP goal that this work will contribute to (Fair, Accessible, Welcoming, Green, Thriving, and Innovative).

**Council's role** refers to the Deliver (D), Partner (P), Advocate (A) model of work adopted in the CSP.

**Indicator** refers to how we will measure progress towards achieving our objectives.

RESPONSE TO CSP	COUNCIL'S ROLE	INDICATOR	4 YEAR TARGET	BASELINE DATA
Fair Innovative	D A	% of residents who feel that our City provides opportunities for people of all ages to learn and develop skills at any age	75%	62% (2023)
Fair	D	% of residents who feel that the City of Parramatta contributes to thriving children	75%	63% (2023)
Fair Innovative	D	% of developmentally vulnerable children across one or more domains according to the Australian Early Development Census	15%	21% (2021)
Fair Innovative	D	% of sustainable procurement within Council's spending	TBC*	N/A
Fair Innovative	D	% of organisations that found Council's support valuable	80%	N/A

\* Council will set a target after processes have been established to effectively measure sustainable procurement as a proportion of Council's total spending

# 04 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

## GLOSSARY

TERM/ACRONYM	DESCRIPTION
<b>CBD</b>	Central Business District
<b>Our City / The City</b>	All areas within the City of Parramatta local government area
<b>Our Community</b>	All residents of the City of Parramatta local government area
<b>Co-location</b>	Co-location refers to key organisations being located in close proximity to one another to provide opportunities for collaboration
<b>CSP</b>	Community Strategic Plan
<b>DCP</b>	Development Control Plan
<b>Equity</b>	Equity is about ensuring equal access and opportunity through addressing systemic inequalities and the diverse barriers that different people face
<b>Housing Stress</b>	Housing stress refers to households in prescribed income brackets, spending more than 30% of their gross household income on either rent or mortgage repayments. Income brackets for this definition are classified as Very Low (< 50% of median), Low (50% to 80% of median) and Moderate (80% to 120% of median).
<b>LGA</b>	Local government area
<b>LGBTQIA+</b>	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual
<b>Resilience</b>	Resilience is 'the capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, businesses, and systems within a city to survive, adapt, and thrive no matter what kinds of chronic stresses and acute shocks they experience.' <sup>39</sup>
<b>Social sustainability</b>	A community is 'socially sustainable' when its environment and relationships 'actively support the capacity of current and future generations to create healthy and liveable communities. Socially sustainable communities are equitable, diverse, connected, and democratic and provide a good quality of life.' <sup>1</sup>



# REFERENCES

- 1 McKenzie S (2004) *Social sustainability: towards some definitions*. Hawke Research Institute, Adelaide.
- 2 Gehl J (2010) *Cities for people*, Island Press, Washington DC.
- 3 .id informed decisions (2024) Population Forecast
- 4 .id informed decisions (2022) Community Profile – Industry sector of employment.
- 5 .id informed decisions (2022) Community Profile – Qualifications.
- 6 Meerow S, Pajouhesh P and Miller TR (2019) 'Social equity in urban resilience planning', *Local Environment*, 24(9):793-808.
- 7 Liang D, De Jong M, Schraven D and Wang L (2022) 'Mapping key features and dimensions of the inclusive city: A systematic bibliometric analysis and literature study', *International Journal of Sustainable Development & World Ecology*, 29(1):60-79.
- 8 de Leeuw E (2022) 'Healthy cities' in Kokko S and Baybutt M (eds) *Handbook of Settings-Based Health Promotion*, Springer, Cham.
- 9 City of Parramatta (2020) *COVID-19 Community Survey*.
- 10 City of Parramatta (2018) *Valuing our green spaces*.
- 11 Ethos Urban (2021) *Best practice community capacity building in high density: research report prepared for City of Parramatta Council*, Ethos Urban, Sydney.
- 12 City of Parramatta (2020) *Local Housing Strategy*.
- 13 Lyons Arch (n.d.) Prahran Square.
- 14 City of Stonnington (2019) *Prahran Square*.
- 15 Scanlon Institute (2022) Mapping Social Cohesion.
- 16 .id informed decisions (2021) Community Profile – Birthplace.; .id informed decisions (2021) Community Profile – Language used at home.
- 17 NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (2023) Local Government Area Trends - NSW Recorded Crime Statistics January 2023-December 2023, BOCSAR website, accessed 8 May 2024.

18	City of Parramatta (2019) <i>Crime Prevention Plan 2019 -2023</i> .
19	Child Friendly Cities (2023) <i>Guiding Principles</i> , UNICEF.
20	.id informed decisions (2023) <i>Community Views</i> .
21	Central Coast Council (2023) <i>Y4Y Action Team announced</i> .
22	Central Coast Council (2019) <i>Youth Strategy 2019 - 2024</i> .
23	National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (2017) <i>Communities in action: Pathways to health equity</i> .
24	Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) <i>2021 Census - Parramatta</i> .
25	Micromex (2023) City of Parramatta "Our City My Life" Research 2023.
26	Alidoust S, Gleeson N and Khalaj F (2022) 'A systematic review of planning policies for community wellbeing', <i>Journal of Urbanism: International Research on Placemaking and Urban Sustainability</i> , 1-19.
27	World Health Organization (1948) <i>Constitution</i> .
28	City of Melbourne (2023) <i>Community Food Relief 2021-2025</i> .
29	.id (2021) <i>Housing Monitor – Housing Stress</i> .
30	Department of Communities and Justice (2022) <i>Expected waiting times</i> , DCJ website, accessed 1 May 2023.
31	.id informed decisions (2021) <i>Community Profile – Bedrooms</i> .
32	.id informed decisions (2021) <i>Housing Monitor – Affordable Housing Need</i> .
33	City of Sydney (2018) <i>Attachment B - Planning Proposal - Affordable Housing Review</i> .
34	City of Sydney (2021) <i>Green Square affordable housing program</i> .
35	.id informed decisions (2021) <i>Community Profile (multiple)</i> .
36	The Lancet Public Health (2020) <i>Education: a neglected social determinant of health</i> , <i>The Lancet Public Health</i> 5(7): 361.
37	Merri-bek City Council (n.d.) <i>Glenroy Community Hub</i> .
38	Moore, T G (2021) <i>Core care conditions for children and families: Implications for integrated child and family services</i> , Murdoch Children's Research Institute, The Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne.; Moore, T G (2021) <i>Developing holistic integrated early learning services for young children and families experiencing socio-economic vulnerability</i> , Murdoch Children's Research Institute, The Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne.
39	Resilient Sydney (2018) <i>Resilient Sydney: A strategy for city resilience 2018</i> , Resilient Sydney.

---

**Address:** 126 Church St, Parramatta  
PO Box 32, Parramatta NSW, 2124

---

**Phone:** 1300 617 058

---

**Email:** [council@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au)

---

**Web:** [cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au](http://cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au)

---

**Social:** @parracity

---

@cityofparramatta

---

@cityofparramatta

---

 **For non-English speakers, phone interpretation services are available via TIS National on 131 450.**

#### KOREAN

본 소식지와 관련해 통역 지원이 필요하신 경우, TIS (131 450)에 전화하여 Parramatta Customer Service (9806 5050)를 연결해 달라고 요청하시면 됩니다. 업무시간은 월요일에서 금요일, 오전 8시 30분부터 오후 5시까지입니다.

#### CHINESE

如果你需要翻译协助阅读这份新闻简报, 请联系 TIS, 电话131 450, 要求他们代表你接通巴拉玛打市议会顾客服务处, 电话 9806 5050。顾客服务处的工作时间是每星期一至星期五, 上午8:30至下午5:00。

#### ARABIC

إذا كنت بحاجة للمساعدة في ترجمة هذه النشرة, اتصل بـ TIS على الرقم 131 450 واطلب منهم الاتصال نيابة عنك بخدمة زبائن باراماتا على الرقم 9806 5050 من الإثنين إلى الجمعة بين الساعة 8:30 صباحاً و 5:00 مساءً.

#### HINDI

यदि आपको यह सूचना-पत्र समझने में सहायता चाहिए तो कृपया TIS को 131 450 पर फ़ोन करें और उनसे कहें कि आपकी तरफ़ से पैरामाटा कस्टमर सर्विस को 9806 5050 पर फ़ोन करें। यह सेवा सोमवार से शुक्रवार, सुबह 8.30 बजे से शाम 5.00 तक उपलब्ध है।

---

## DISCLAIMER

While every reasonable effort has been made to ensure this document is correct at time of publishing, the City of Parramatta, disclaim any and all liability to any person in respect of anything or the consequences of anything done or omitted to be done in reliance upon the whole or any part of this document.



# SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

An equitable and resilient Parramatta



| **PARRAMATTA**

Discover more  
[atparramatta.com](https://atparramatta.com)