



July 2024

Resilient Wyndham 2021 – 2025: Report on Progress 2021 - 2023



Acknowledgement of Country

Wyndham has a rich Aboriginal history. For tens of thousands of years, the Werribee River has been a significant meeting place for Aboriginal people to build community, exchange resources and share responsibility for its lands.

Wyndham City Council recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first Peoples of Australia. We acknowledge the Bunurong and Wadawurrung Peoples as Traditional Owners of the lands on which Wyndham city operates.

The Wadawurrung and Bunurong Peoples have and always will belong to the Werribee Yalook (river), creeks, stars, hills and red clay of this Country. We pay respect to their Ancestors and Elders who always have, and always will, care for Country and community today and for future generations.



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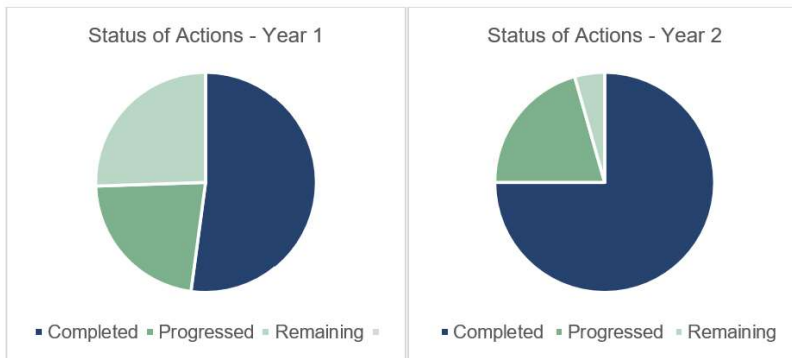
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Executive Summary

Resilient Wyndham 2021-2025, (the Strategy or Resilient Wyndham), is designed utilising the global City Resilience Framework that interrogates the resilience of a city's systems in relation to identified acute shocks and ongoing stresses. The Strategy's annual action plans deliver progress for the organisation and our community towards 35 targets across 5 themes – Our People, Our Environment, We Are Prepared, Our Places and Our Future.

A mid-term evaluation was undertaken for the Strategy. This included utilising most significant change interviews to track progress along the long-term Resilient Wyndham Targets. During the first two years of the strategy the majority of actions against each target were completed or progressed. The breakdown of action progress year to year is represented in the chart below.



Most significant change stories were prepared for 15 actions delivered within the first two years of the Strategy. These have been included in this report.

Key achievements of the first two years of delivery of Resilient Wyndham are -

- The establishment of the SPARK innovation hub.
- The delivery of the SUSTAIN Food Security capacity building project
- CALD community outreach and biocultural workers program coordinated by the Pandemic Response Office
- The Victorian Energy Collaboration contract influencing Victoria's renewable energy system and reducing Council's carbon footprint
- Establishment of the Wyndham Seed Library
- Establishment of the Youth Climate Leaders program
- Establishment of the My Smart Garden program within Wyndham
- Delivery of Exercise Walkaway

Key findings from the mid-term evaluation report are -

- It is evident that Resilient Wyndham is a well-designed strategy developed with a whole of organisation focus.
- The Strategy shows an understanding of the multiple drivers of city resilience yet reflects Wyndham's sphere of influence.
- The Strategy builds city resilience and reaping resilience dividends.
- The Strategy is framed by high-level targets yet is implemented through agile yearly actions.
- Challenges in implementation have included maintaining organisational knowledge and engagement.
- Long term monitoring of resilience may consider the value of additional information.

Introduction

Resilient Wyndham 2021 – 2025 (‘the Strategy’ or ‘Resilient Wyndham’) aims to enable our community to better prepare for, respond to and recover from disruptions. It focuses on actions that will drive change and make a positive difference to how we interact, how our natural and built environments thrive, and how we embed resilience principles in our decision making.

The Strategy prioritises actions where co-benefits (resilience dividends) can be delivered, such as improving and extending natural and open spaces that benefit our physical health and mental wellbeing, provide ecosystem services, cultural and community connection.

Urban resilience is defined as the capacity of individuals, institutions, businesses and systems within a city to adapt, survive and thrive no matter what kind of acute shocks and chronic stresses they experience. Urban resilience is about being prepared for the unexpected.

Resilient Wyndham was developed in response to, and at the peak of, the COVID-19 global pandemic. It focuses on maintaining and building upon the resilience momentum generated already, aiming to further drive and build upon positive change.

Wyndham continues to face shocks and stresses that threaten the city’s resilience. As one of the nation’s fastest growing urban regions, the ongoing impact of urbanisation and globalisation, combined with a changing climate, is significant. As part of the delivery of the strategy, these shocks and stresses are assessed annually utilising a range of data sources including the global risks framework.



Wyndham 2040 Community Vision

Resilient Wyndham is in alignment with the Wyndham 2040 Community vision of a safe, connected and inclusive community where we are self-sufficient and pride ourselves on being green and sustainable.

“A safe, connected and inclusive community. We respect, acknowledge, value and celebrate the First Nations people, our heritage, cultural diversity and multicultural strengths.

Our community has the infrastructure and services it needs to support holistic health and wellbeing for all. Local employment and education facilities are plentiful, and there are a variety of recreational, leisure, tourism, art and cultural opportunities for everyone to experience throughout the municipality.

We preserve our natural environment and rural lifestyle; we are able to get around easily and get to where we want to go efficiently. We are self-sufficient and pride ourselves on being green and sustainable.”

Wyndham's Current Acute Shocks

- Economic Downturn
- Extremist acts (including cyber-attacks and acts of terror)
- Storms, flooding, intense rainfall
- Heat events/heatwave
- Bush and Grass Fire
- Disrupted food and goods supply
- Threat of incorrect and/or purposefully misleading information.

Wyndham's Current Chronic Stresses

- Social inequality and mental wellbeing
- Lack of social networks and social capital
- Sea level rise
- Urbanisation and loss of natural environment
- Limited transport options, access and congestion
- Financial stress and cost of living
- Housing affordability
- Food insecurity
- Climate change.

Appendix 1 outlines perceived global risks published by the World Economic Forum in 2024¹.



The consideration of the interconnection between stresses and shocks helps us to realise the impact of unknowns. Stresses can undermine our ability to respond to and recover from shocks, and, if not acknowledged and mitigated, can become the shocks of tomorrow. Focussing on urban resilience can make life in our cities in the good times better, and the bad times easier.

¹ <https://www.weforum.org/publications/global-risks-report-2024/>
Resilient Wyndham: Progress Report 2021 – 2023

Frameworks for Resilience

The City Resilience Framework (CRF, see Figure 1) is a well-established and internationally recognised methodology developed by Arup and The Rockefeller Foundation. It was used to understand where the greatest opportunities exist for Wyndham to build resilience, through identifying relevant targets and actions.

The four dimensions of the CRF are:

1. **Health and Wellbeing:** the essential city services that safeguard human health and diverse and secure livelihoods.
2. **Economic and Society:** the systems that enable urban populations to live peacefully, and act collectively.
3. **Infrastructure and Environment:** the way in which built and natural assets provide critical services and protect residents.
4. **Leadership and Strategy:** effective leadership and management, empowered stakeholders and integrated planning.

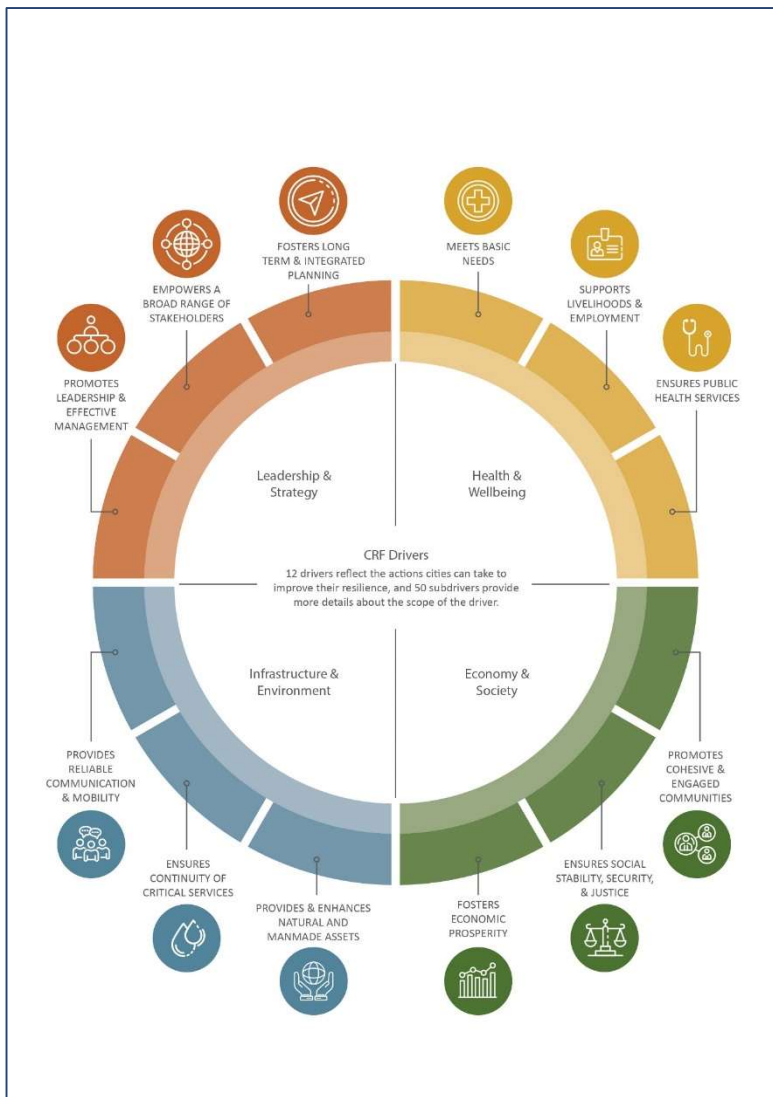


Figure 1 The City Resilience Framework: Dimensions and Drivers, developed by Arup and the Rockefeller Foundation.

These dimensions are informed by a set of drivers (see Figure 2) which reflect some of the measurable actions a city can take to build resilience.



Figure 2 Drivers of City Resilience as articulated in the City Resilience Framework developed by Arup and the Rockefeller Foundation.

Utilising, this framework Resilient Wyndham is structured based on **5 Focus Areas**:

1. **Our People: Healthy, Connected and Inclusive**
2. **Our Environment: Flourishing Natural Spaces**
3. **We are Ready: Disaster Aware**
4. **Our Places: Resilient and Sustainable**
5. **Our Future: Walking our Talk.**

Within each **Focus Area** sits **Targets** that guide development of **yearly actions** which reflect council and community priorities for that period.

This Report

This report will provide a review of progress across the first two years of Resilient Wyndham's implementation – Year 1 (2021-22 financial year) and Year 2 (2022-23 financial year).

Resilient Wyndham committed to a mid-term evaluation using a **Most Significant Change** (MSC) technique. MSC is a form of participatory monitoring and evaluation using stories. It aims to highlight the most impactful and meaningful change resulting from the Strategy, in a tangible manner. Fifteen MSC stories were collected for this evaluation, through interviews conducted by consultants *Clear Horizon*. These stories are included within framed boxes throughout the report.

This qualitative approach to the Strategy's evaluation was agreed to at endorsement due to the known limitations of monitoring urban resilience at Wyndham City:

- Resilience is developed and best measured over longer time frames.
- Council lacks indicators and data on the baseline level of urban resilience in Wyndham.

This report is structured by the Strategy's targets. Under each target, the report discusses key achievements (based on an understanding of yearly achievements) and significant changes (derived from the MSC stories). It also includes other quantitative data sets that show broad progress towards the targets, where they are available.

Certain challenges have further impacted this evaluation:

- Targets developed at the Strategy's outset are a mix of both outcomes and outputs and therefore do not allow a consistent style of reporting throughout.
- Monitoring and data collated is limited, often due to resourcing constraints and a greater focus on delivery in a fast-growing area.
- Staff turnover has impacted organisational knowledge surrounding the Strategy and its associated Annual Plans.
- The timing of this evaluation was necessarily at the end of the first two years of implementation. MSC interviews rely on the interviewee's recollection of events and may merge with recollections of actions being delivered currently in Year 3.



Focus Area 1: Our People: Healthy Connected and Inclusive



A resilient community has a supportive system of social connection. Research shows socially cohesive communities have improved safety, greater well-being and recover quicker in times of disaster. Supporting social connections empowers people to further build these relationships. It also allows a diverse population to feel safe in public space. Public spaces, including community centres, libraries, parks and sporting facilities, are essential meeting places that create well-connected communities.

A healthy and resilient community also supports its members to provide and source their own healthy food, even in the face of pressures such as cost of living increases, supply chain disruptions, or climate change.

Across Years 1 and 2 of the Strategy, COVID-19 and the impact of lockdowns in Victoria were influencing the wellbeing of the community including through financial stress on those unable to work, impacts on social activity, and health system failure.

Key Achievements:

- The Wyndham Seed Library was established and saw a significant increase in participation and use over its first two years:
 - Year 1: 1680 active members; 6290 seed packets collected; 298 seed packets donated.
 - Year 2: 6161 active members; 17982 seed packets collected; 5598 seed packets donated.
- 55 My Smart Garden workshops held in Year 2 on gardening focused on five overarching themes – water, shelter, food, waste and habitat.
- A variety of events were held through the Green Living Series to promote local food growing, community connection and sustainable living, for example:
 - *Green explorers school holiday program* (200 attendees, Year 1)
 - *Talking gardening with Vasili and Craig Castree* (67 attendees, Year 2)
 - *Habitat gardening and seed saving workshop* (25 attendees, Year 2).
- A partnership with 'Sustain – The Australian Food Network' established.
- 3 Café Connect events held (91 attendees, Year 2).
- The Garage Sale Trail program rejuvenated.
- Tunnel established at Tarneit station.

Targets:

By 2030 all residents have knowledge and access to fresh food within their neighbourhood (growing or purchasing).

By 2024 a strong partnership model is developed to ensure a collaborative response to food security by organisations across Wyndham.

Years 1 and 2 actions have had significant positive impacts on empowering Wyndham's community to grow their own food. These projects have worked to strengthen social connections within the community, inspired sustainable living, and built knowledge on the complexity of the food system.

Enhancing Community Food Security and Building Connections

My role focuses on community education and collaboration around sustainability programs. Some of the programs I work on include My Smart Garden program, the Seed Library, and the Green Living Series.

One of the biggest changes I've seen from these programs is empowering the community to garden themselves but also to share their skills with others. Our biggest dream has always been that the community is teaching community. Attitudes and actions around food security are led by the community, with some guidance and support by Council but it's a community-led initiative.

One of the big things I see from our programs is the community connecting to each other. This happens quite often. These moments are the most special. I think the biggest changes from the programs are the people supporting each other, sharing seedlings, sharing ideas, and community teaching community.

My Smart Garden

When Wyndham City Council signed on to My Smart Garden in 2020, there were 5-6 councils involved. All participating councils ran workshops every year like "Intro to Gardening". The program was being run by officers in all those councils, out of our own budgets. We were getting a lot of interest from other councils wanting to sign on but just didn't have the capacity to manage it.

My Smart Garden has gone through a big transition over the years. Those councils worked really hard to grow the program. We all did a major evaluation of the program, updated the website, and changed the logo, branding and style guide. We set a yearly fee. We employed a coordinator to oversee the program across all councils.

Now we've got 11 councils on board which means we're got more funding into the program. There are now 50-60 workshops through the My Smart Garden program across all the participating councils which are available to Wyndham City residents. As My Smart Garden grows, the knowledge expands as well. All participating councils now

go deeper into more advanced gardening techniques. We are ready to bring on more councils.

Seed Library

The Seed Library was launched in May 2021 in collaboration with the libraries. We initially started in Point Cook and Manor Lakes libraries. We provided the seeds which we had purchased and ran the workshops on how to grow and harvest seeds.

We had libraries close, do renovations, new libraries come on board. We expanded to two more locations – Tarneit and Werribee libraries. We saw the community embrace the resources and events and come to the workshops. Community members were jumping in and sharing links and teaching each other. One of my favourite examples from last year was when two of the nicest gentlemen came to a seed sharing workshop. One came over and was chatting about joining a community garden and what he's got in his garden and then another gentleman started chatting about what he's doing and asking for advice. They swapped phone numbers and were going to go to each other's houses to check out their gardens and join the same community garden.

Last year about 17,000 seed packets were collected and 5,600 were brought in. We've changed the process and structure a few times to promote more people bringing their seeds and to try to even out the number of seeds donated and collected.

Currently we've got just over 24,000 seed library members, the majority are Wyndham City Council residents. For the current financial year so far 8,957 seed packets were taken, and 8,498 seed packets donated. Council isn't buying the seeds anymore. The seeds being shared are local, so they are more robust and have better survival. The community is sharing the seeds and sharing the knowledge with other community members about what they've learnt.

Green Living Series

Eight years ago, about 20 workshops for the Green Living Series were occurring within a few months of the year. Feedback during the pandemic told us the community thought the series was awesome and wanted to see more events. The Green Living Series expanded to run across the full year, every year. Every month has a theme, such as energy smart Wyndham being the focus for May and the Sustainable Food Festival in August.

The Green Living Series is a great collaboration between the natural environment team, conservation, the waste team, and my sustainability team. We each lead a few workshops, but we also collaborate on each other's because it all intertwines.

The Green Living Series will celebrate its 10-year anniversary in September 2024. We're going to run an event in September celebrating 10 years of collaboration. I get feedback from a lot of residents at events, and they are always thanking us for all the great workshops we run.

Open Garden Days

We had this dream to open a few local gardens so people could see each other's gardens and get inspiration of what they could do. We started out last year doing six

open gardens in one day, in October as part of “In the Garden” themed month of the Green Living Series.

People love to see what an expert would do. We’ve got a few gardeners like Craig Castree who’s pretty famous in Wyndham, he’s written many books and is on TV and radio. He’s a prime example of what you can do in a small urban space like most people in Wyndham have. He’s got chickens and can feed his family with his very small garden. We’ve had someone who is renting and working at a café have her garden open for Open Garden Day. She collects waste from the café and made a compost from a recycled old bath and a worm farm. It’s an inspiration of what you can do even renting in a small space.

We get so much support from coordinators and managers to run these events. The next year we increased to 12 gardens over two weekends. I have other councils reaching out asking how they can do it. The community absolutely love it.

Other outcomes/changes

- Creating the Green Living Map, an interactive online map including biodiversity sites, community gardens, markets, food swaps and seed sharing.
- School incursions - sustainability-themed engaging programs for schools including commissioning a children’s entertainer Charlie to co-develop a performance “The House That Charlie Built” which is about an unsustainable home that the children help to make sustainable.
 - This performance is booked out for the current financial year’s budget, with 20 bookings for next year already.
 - Very positive feedback from teachers because Charlie maintains students’ attention, engages all students even those not likely to usually get involved, and works well with the diverse demographic of students in the region



Food security remains a significant issue in our growing community (see Table 1). Our community centres have reported an increasing need for food yet decreasing funding (from various sources) over Years 1 and 2 of the Strategy.

COVID-19 had an impact on both food need and the way food relief was provided, including increased relief through community kitchens and emergency relief parcels.

Food relief through community-run centres is primarily driven by volunteers and donations.

Table 1 - Food relief provided through Wyndham's Community Centres across 2021 – 2023.

	Average Families per week		
	June – Dec 2021	Jan – Dec 2022	Jan – June 2023
TARNEIT Food Bank	42	47	55
Point Cook Food Bank / Cross-CULTure Point Cook	54	44	53
Jamieson Way Community Centre	38	56	65
Arndell Park Community Centre	20 (Oct – Dec)	15	20
	Families total per year		
	2021	2022	2023
Wyndham Park Community Centre	11,400 families (Jan – Dec)	8,840 families	2400 families (Jan – June; new support limited to Werribee & Hoppers Crossing due to funding cuts.)
Youth Services (12 – 25 years old)	5730 food bags (Jun – Dec; open to all ages).	1600 food bags (Limited to youth from April onwards).	41 food bags (limited to youth; Jan – June).

Partner with Sustain Australia: Informing Food Systems Thinking in Wyndham

During the pandemic it came to light that there were unprecedented levels of food insecurity being experienced by the Wyndham community. In response, the Council set up a community kitchen to provide community food packages and meals through our local food relief services. With local government not traditionally being involved in food relief, we also started thinking about food systems work and system level thinking more broadly, and the partnerships and relationships that we could develop that would help us in that space.

One of the actors in the space was Sustain Australia, who were doing great work across Australia, but particularly in Victoria and in a local government context. We developed a relationship with Sustain Australia and joined as members and started attending some of their networking and professional development opportunities. It also then came about that there was a funding opportunity that was available and so we collaborated with Sustain Australia to put together a grant application.

We were successful in receiving the grant and so we worked with Sustain on a food systems capacity building project over 12 months. During that time, the project curated a wealth of information, and we had the opportunity to connect with people that are involved with the food system in a variety of ways, including producers, farmers, growers, suppliers, advocates, planners, community organisations, and consumers.

One of the main learnings to come out of the project was that the food system is very complex and there are multiple different players and approaches to this work. It was very evident that we needed to coordinate and collaborate more across Council. Before the project we didn't have a coordinated way of being able to connect and share and learn from each other. It was quite ad hoc and disjointed across the Council.

The most significant change to come out of this work has been the opportunity it has provided to build an internal working group that meets regularly to focus on food security work. The breadth and depth of this work across Council cannot be understated, with many different areas having particular but connected focus.

The project and the reports provided by Sustain have helped us to identify this diversity of work and explore ways of bringing that all together. It's also unpacked the complexity of the food system and we've been able to draw on evidence-based work to help inform and shape our own work here in Wyndham.

What is evident and what this project has reinforced is that food security is a key social justice issue impacting a large portion of the Wyndham community. It is critically important to strengthen local food systems through a collective, collaborative and evidence-based approach to ensure that farming remains viable, community gardens are sustainable and there is greater access to healthy and affordable food across all areas of Wyndham.

Throughout the duration of the project, we had over 400 people engage with the work, from attending webinars, hosting and participating in workshops, being part of the 'Valuing Food' film, giving their time and their valuable insights. The passion for this work in the community is clear.

Other outcomes/changes:

- Council have and continue to work closely with the local food relief agencies to find ways to address food insecurity. Funding support is provided through the Community Grants program to many food security initiatives happening across Wyndham.
- The Community Gardening Policy is in its final stages and will be out for community consultation soon.
- The Agribusiness strategy will be developed as part of the Year 3 Resilient Wyndham Strategy actions.



City dwellers experience vibrancy of place through differences in cultures, cuisines, and shared histories. They can also experience feelings of isolation, anxiety, and discontent. Social cohesion can be a major advantaged to a city undergoing a shock or stress event.²

² The Rockefeller Foundation & ARUP, 2014, *City Resilience Index Research Report Volume 1 Desk Study*, Arup International Development, accessed at file:///C:/Users/eclancy/Downloads/CRI_Research_Report_Vol1.pdf on 31/05/2024, p7. *Resilient Wyndham: Progress Report 2021 – 2023*

Target: Public Spaces in Wyndham are inclusive for all, particularly young people, women, and gender diverse people.

Active and engaged societies that include communities in the decision-making process are more inclusive and resilient³ with greater safety in public spaces.

The *Tracking the Wyndham 2040 Community Vision Survey 2021/2022*⁴ reported that:

- 80% agree that Wyndham is a welcoming and inclusive city.
- 81% feel safe during the day, but 27% feel unsafe during the night. (Reasons for feelings of unsafety include lack of streetlights, police presence and security cameras; gender; high youth presence).
- 81% are comfortable with the diversity in their local area including different languages and styles of dress.
- 57% agree that public areas (e.g., parks, footpaths, facilities) are accessible for people with a disability.

The Wyndham Council Youth Survey (people aged 12 – 25 years old) reported that:

- In 2021, 67.9% of youth felt safe in their neighbourhood.
- In 2022, 76.7% of youth felt safe in their neighbourhood.
- In 2022, 45.56% of youth felt that getting to know their neighbours better would help them feel safer.

Public space that is safe and inclusive for all uses the lived experiences of its residents to understand feelings of unsafety or concern and in turn design and develop socially, culturally and inclusive spaces.



³The Rockefeller Foundation & ARUP, 2014, *City Resilience Index Research Report Volume 1 Desk Study*, Arup International Development, accessed at file:///C:/Users/eclancy/Downloads/CRI_Research_Report_Vol1.pdf on 31/05/2024, p7.

⁴ *Tracking the Wyndham 2040 Community Vision Survey 2021/2022* (Progress report 2021/2022) (“a representative sample of 390 members of the People’s Advisory Panel completed the survey, council received 225 surveys, 190 were fully completed”p4).

Wyndham City Council participated in the Safe Spaces project to understand experiences of safety and inclusion for diverse women in public spaces. Although not a formal action of Resilient Wyndham, findings from this report (see below) highlight important aspects of women’s experience in public space that highlight Wyndham’s standing against this Target.

“I think a place makes me feel inclusive when [I’m] seeing signs in my language or seeing activities that direct to my age or my condition as a migrant.”

“...reports from women in Wyndham and their safety concerns in particular public spaces including parks, shopping centres car parks, train stations, the library and walking trails. Groups of intoxicated men (drugs and alcohol) were reported by several women in public places, which left them feeling unsafe and intimidated.”

“The local libraries have actually done a pretty good job. They have come a long way in recent years, probably there’s always a little bit of work, but they try their best to be really inclusive, their programming is really good. You walk in and you don’t get a sense of anybody being out of place, everyone’s found their little spots and doing their thing. If someone needs help, they’re generally fairly comfortable to ask, but there is still a bit of stuff to do. I’d say kudos to the library service, they’ve really tried to make it a good space for everyone.”

“Many participants talked about specific public places that made them feel safe, included and connected to their community. Libraries and schools, among other places, were mentioned as safe places. While there was significantly more discussion about problems and concerns related to public spaces, some participants did comment on the value of certain public spaces for enabling connection.”

Safe Spaces, 2023, *Safe Spaces: Understanding and enhancing safety and inclusion for diverse women.* (Monash University, Griffith University, University of Sydney). Access online at <https://www.monash.edu/mada/xyx-lab/projects/safe-spaces-understanding-and-enhancing-safety-and-inclusion-for-diverse-women> on 25.06.2024.



The Tarneit Tunnel Installation

Before the project, the space was empty open space. There was a bike path and pedestrian footpath. The project used upcycled existing shipping containers to make an architecturally sustainable tunnel installed over where the pedestrian footpath is. The installation of the tunnel took six weeks.

We worked with the sustainability team to have solar panels installed on the roof of the tunnel to make it more sustainable in terms of the lighting inside the tunnel. Sustainability wise, this is one of the best projects we have delivered.

We had good conversations with Bunnings, which was located right across from where we were installing the shipping containers. We had different stakeholder meetings at the early stage of the project right through project delivery to ensure the positioning was not blocking their signage and marketing.

It was an arts and culture project too; there's "Tarneit" cut outs in the shipping containers. After the tunnel was installed, local artists painted artwork on the backside of the shipping containers. It's for the community, and it's compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act.

There was a small official opening event with a coffee van and community groups. We did a letter drop for the nearby residents. But many people could already see the tunnel was there when exiting the station, so we didn't really need to promote it.

One of the major changes I can think of is that on a very windy or rainy day, it's a really good space for people coming out from Tarneit station and it provides a tunnel experience of going out to their homes with a smile.

I would say it's a really good project in terms of delivering a boost to the Tarneit community. I've heard comments like "This is so good" and "This tunnel looks amazing over here" and it's a standout thing compared to different projects we deliver at Wyndham.

The project was delivered on time and within budget. I still think this project is an achievement and I used to pass through the tunnel every day when I used public transport.



Targets:

Increase social capital and civic participation.

Increase in the number of people who know their neighbours.

The Café Connect series was specifically designed to increase social connection and build civic participation in the interface suburbs of Wyndham where incidental infrastructure that promotes these connections does not yet exist. Additional Year 1 and 2 actions delivered across all areas of the Strategy, including the Garage Sale Trail, My Smart Garden and the Seed Library (Focus Area 1), tree planting days (Focus Area 2), Building Blocks Program (Focus Area 3), and Spark Innovation Hub (Focus Area 5), also significantly promoted social capital and civic participation as a resilience dividend.

The *Tracking the Wyndham 2040 Community Vision Survey 2021/2022*⁵ reported that:

- 64% of respondents agree that they feel part of the community.
- 54% respondents agree that there are enough opportunities to connect socially with people in their local area.
- 75% respondents agree that they can get help from families, friends and/or neighbours when needed.
- 42% of respondents agree that they know where to find out about volunteering and are aware that council provides free training for volunteers and community groups.
- On average 18% of respondents volunteered in some capacity.

Volunteer Expos were held by Wyndham City Council in both 2022 and 2023:

- 375 attendees, 44 organisations represented, and 100 new volunteers recruited (14 May 2022).
- 450 attendees, 55 organisations represented, and 134 new volunteers recruited (18 March 2023).

160 Council volunteers were registered at the end of Year 1, and 138 at the end of Year 2.

⁵ *Tracking the Wyndham 2040 Community Vision Survey 2021/2022*⁵ (Progress report 2021/2022) (“a representative sample of 390 members of the People’s Advisory Panel completed the survey, council received 225 surveys, 190 were fully completed”p4).

Cultivating Neighbourhood Connections with Café Connect

Council approached us to organise together a Café Connect series in Harpley. The specific intention, in its simplest form, was to provide an opportunity for people to connect not just with each other but also with the services that council could offer. Harpley is a new housing development, so there isn't infrastructure like shops, a library or any of those spaces where incidental contact can happen.

As humans we love patterns, and we love repetition. I think it's very difficult in new suburbs to create those opportunities because you're not going to a café because there is no café, you're not going to a library because there isn't one. So these things really need an investment of time and regular input in order for communities to feel connected.

The most significant change for me was that this Café Connect series felt like the beginning of something quite golden. It was beautiful in its idea and its simplicity, and it didn't have massive bells and whistles. It was significantly different to other big splash events like at Halloween, where people would come to the event and then it's over. Instead, with Café Connect we paid for a coffee cart and council had some brochures and information. A councillor would also come down and residents were able to meet there for a couple of hours every Saturday morning. All the people who attended the Café Connect felt seen, heard, engaged and connected.

I think if this kind of engagement continues in the future, then the contribution to the Resilient Wyndham target of an increase in the number of people who know their neighbours will be enormous. Whether the change is going to be long term however is still to be seen, as the series was over a short timeframe rather than a long-term commitment.

Other outcomes/changes

- Provided an informal opportunity for community to connect with councillors.
- Council has knowledge that this kind of event can work well and that residents want it.
- Council now has a connection at Harpley.

The Garage Sale Trail

The garage sale trail is managed by the Garage Sale Trail organisation, and they engage with different councils all over Australia. The program initially ran in Wyndham from 2014 to 2018, and then dropped off for three years between 2019 and 2022, before restarting again in 2022.

The purpose of the garage sale trail is to try and engage the community in two focused weekends of garage sales. Through the promotion it also allows all our residents to be able to understand and read about the program before they can actually put their hand up to host a garage sale. At the same time, the information is also available for the community who are really keen to buy second hand items, which then contributes to working towards our circular economy initiatives to try to reduce, reuse, recycle, rather than just purchasing new items.

Following the 2023 program, the garage sale trail organisation engaged an independent researcher that was able to provide us with some understanding of how the community interacted with the program. In 2023, we had about 5,718 participants in Wyndham that generated around \$51,000 in revenue for the community sellers.

Following the sale, we also engaged with our residents and received some valuable feedback. The feedback was mixed in terms of positive and negative feedback, with some community members loving it and some community members not seeing a benefit of it.

I would say that the garage sale itself did not have much of a major change in terms of social cohesion or social inclusion capital, but rather it supported the work that we already do. The most significant feedback that we received from our residents was that the number of sellers is really too many compared to the number of buyers. It meant that 175 garage sales were competing with each other in a small demographic area, so the more sales you have the less participants you will have attending.

That really alerted us to think outside the box in terms of the sustainability of such programs, and whether the resources could be better directed to some other avenues. From my point of view, a program like this, if it continues every single year with the same capacity, it will phase out by itself. The level of excitement and the kind of participants will not be exactly the same. It has prompted us to think about how to spend our resources moving forward and to think about other ways to do these programs.

Other outcomes/changes:

- Op shop bus tour: 3-hour tour that visits six or seven op shops around Wyndham, allowing the community to engage with each other, know each other, and then go into those shops and purchase or browse items.
- Neighbourhood day that is supported by the neighbourhood hubs. Community members come along and view different stalls.

Target: Increase capacity and information to local health service providers and the community on infectious disease.

This Target was written in response to, and during, the critical years of the COVID-19 pandemic. At this time there was also a different health service structure through the State Government. Whilst current agencies operating in this space, specifically the Western Public Health Unit (WPHU), do undertake some responsibilities of the previous structure, their roles have continued to evolve and the overall pandemic response decline.

Focus Area 2 - Our Environment: Flourishing Natural Spaces



Natural spaces support the city's resilience. A thriving natural environmental system has intrinsic value and provides essential ecosystem services:

- clean air and water,
- protection from changes in sea level,
- green spaces to absorb extreme rainfall and provide cool and shade in extreme heat, and
- blue and green space to support the physical and mental health of its residents.

Increasing urbanisation and the threat of climate change continue to pose significant threats to Wyndham's natural environment.

Wyndham City Council and the community has an ongoing responsibility to protect the significant yet vulnerable, endangered and depleted ecosystems of the grassland plains, coastal salt marshes, plains grassy woodland, and floodplain riparian woodland, native to the region.

Key Achievements:

- Significant progress towards meeting canopy cover targets in Year 2, particularly in open spaces:
 - 6300 advanced trees planted,
 - 10000 tube stock across 2 community planting events, and
 - 5,000 tube stock planted in partnership with Wadawurrung, as part of the Cooler, Greener West project.
- Development of the Draft Adopt-A-Park Policy for future endorsement.
- Climate change recognised as a strategic risk in Council's Risk Register.
- Significant progress on Arndell Park Stormwater Harvesting Project.

Targets:

Water use efficiency is maximised, and alternative water sources are used to provide green and cool spaces.

Invest in Council projects that supply 70ML/year of treated stormwater by 2040.

Council is investing in the Arndell Park Stormwater Harvesting Scheme. Once constructed and operational this will supply 22ML of treated stormwater annually for irrigation.

Greening the Pipeline: The Arndell Park Stormwater Harvesting Project

The Arndell Park stormwater harvesting project has enabled the infilling of a 500 meter by 10-meter section of what was previously an open concrete channel. The channel was in the middle of a residential area and was unsafe and an eyesore.

The project is both an interagency project because it involves Melbourne Water, the Department of Transport and Greater Western Water, and an intergovernmental project because it involves both local and state government. With all those parties working together to implement the project, there have been challenges to that collaboration, particularly with long timeframes for delivery and management and maintenance agreements.

The most significant change for me is that the project is now 90% complete [as of May 2024] with the channel having been filled in, stormwater harvesting infrastructure installed and a garden bed planted above it with 40,000 shrubs and grasses to provide habitat. It means we now have a space that is safe and green and that is an overall improved public space outcome for the community.

On completion the project will also supply treated stormwater to replace potable water that's currently being used to irrigate the Arndell Park sports field as well as providing treated stormwater to irrigate new green spaces for urban cooling. There are also other garden beds that have been installed which will be irrigated with the harvested stormwater once the project is complete.

So even with the project at 90% complete, it's a vast improvement. We do still have about six different legal agreements for management and maintenance that we need to put into place between all those partners to enable this space to function as public open space. However, with the Resilient Wyndham strategy action being for Council to continue working with other agencies, this project really shows how important it is that we continue the collaboration, while knowing that it just takes a bit more time to do that.

Other changes and outcomes:

- Interest across the industry for the project.

- Invited to present at the inaugural forum on "Knowledge Exchange: Greening Solutions to Tackle Climate Change and Urban Overheating" (April 22nd 2024 at Victoria University, Institute for Sustainable Industries and Liveable Cities).

The use of recycled water to irrigate open space in Wyndham remains relatively constant, with peaks and troughs in usage aligned to overall watering trends (see Figures 3 and 4).

- Over Years 1 and 2 of the Strategy, Galvin Park Reserve and Sports Pavilions was the most significant user of recycled water, at just below 60000ML per year. Harpley Estate park and playground was the next most significant user at only 10000ML per year.

In Wyndham, recycled water used for irrigation in Wyndham has a high salinity content. In the west of Melbourne, recycled water is sourced from areas with a high level of industrial land use, resulting in recycled water that is more saline. Depending on the grass variety planted in an open space area, only a certain level of salinity can be tolerated by that grass before its quality is affected.

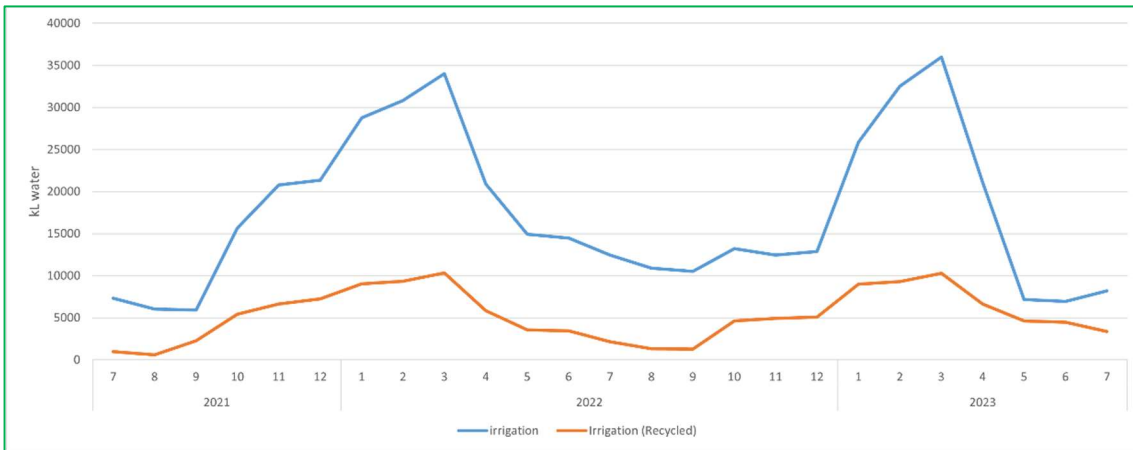


Figure 3 - Use of recycled water for irrigation of Council's open spaces (21/22 FY and 22/23 FY).

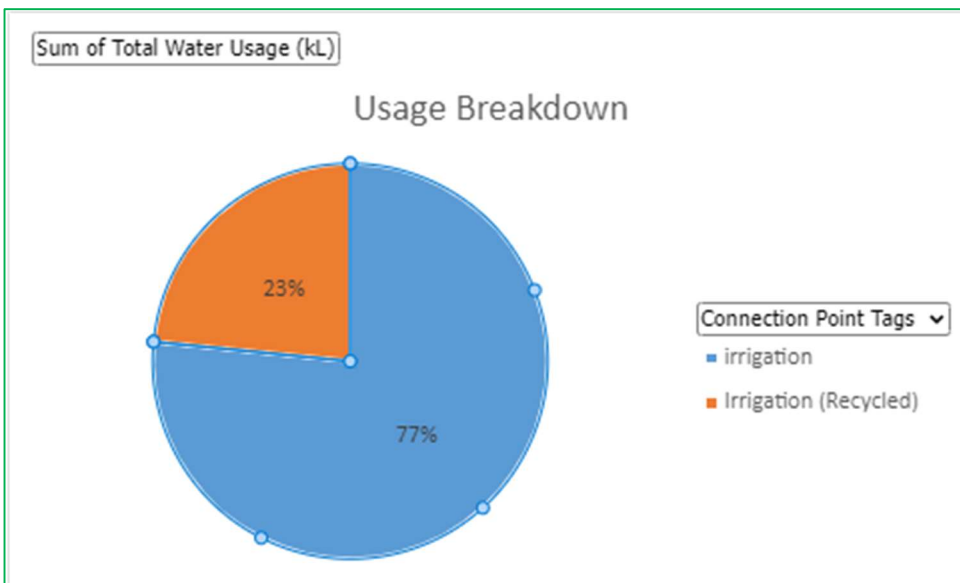


Figure 4 - Recycled water as a percentage of total water used to irrigate Council's open spaces (21/22 FY and 22/23 FY).

Wyndham's Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) Framework is included in all building tenders and aims to encourage water efficient design and onsite water reuse. New buildings projects were seen to successfully maximise water efficiency, however improved reporting and data verification is required for more minor or renewal works and other capital project types.

Across 2021 – 2023, the Sustainability Team oversaw the implementation of the ESD framework, inclusion of water efficiency targets and products, Water Sustainable Urban Design and installation of water tanks at Manor Lakes North IFC (Birnbial), Riverdale Level 2 multi-purpose community centre (Dianella), and Truganina SE Masterplan Implementation (Koomail Tardy).

Water efficiency targets were included across pavilion retrofits in Years 1 and 2, including at Arndell Park Reserve, Cambridge Tennis, Goddard Street Reserve, Galvin Park Football/Cricket, Haines Drive Reserve, Little River Reserve, Manor Lakes Reserve (Howqua Way), Saltwater Tennis and Saltwater Soccer, Tom Roberts Reserve and Wootten Road Reserve.



Targets:

A 10% reduction in Wyndham urban area hotspots by 2030.

At least 25% potential canopy cover within streets across Wyndham by 2030 (moved forward from 2040).

35% potential canopy cover in Council's open spaces (excluding grassland corridors, wetlands, and coastal dunes) by 2030 (moved forward from 2040).

Currently, tree canopy and hot spot mapping for Wyndham does not cover the timeframe necessary to show change over Years 1 and 2.

These stories highlight the significant social and environmental benefits achieved because of community tree planting in Wyndham.

Resilience Needs to be Lived

The Wyndham open spaces where we planted trees were initially grassy areas with footpaths and playground infrastructure. It was a really barren environment. The only birds I'd be able to see would be either large cockatoos or ducks in the river, but I didn't see anything smaller than that because there was just no refuge. There was no ability to survive that environment.

We planned what to plant, got the right mix of stock, of big trees and small trees and shrubs for open space planting. We brought the community to the planting events. It was an opportunity for young and old and everyone in between to come along and participate in the planting of tubestock, or those "baby plants" as the kids like to call it.

The planting areas are now seriously shaded even though they are just two-year-old plants. It's extremely interesting when you walk in between those planting areas and feel a drastic change. People can enjoy the shade, and the cool spaces that it is providing. You sit quietly for a little bit and you're able to see the little birds, seeking refuge within those spaces from the more aggressive bigger birds. You can see the little wren mucking around with his little babies in between those dense plantings. I think it is a nice story of seeing that we're delivering for the environment in a multitude of ways while also improving human liveability within that environment.

We obviously achieved a very tangible change – there were no trees and now there's trees there. In the 2022 and 2023 planting seasons there were 3,600 advanced trees and 10,000 tubestock planted in open spaces. But people start making other connections once they start seeing results and that takes a year or two. Almost every year I see someone, or a family, and I recognise that they participated last year in another location. Someone will say to me, "I did this three years ago with my little kid that was five years old, he could barely hold the plant then, and now he's eight and we go back to visit the first tree we planted, and he's now coming back with me to do this one." People take

pictures at these events with their entire families, or community groups. People come together, some of them not speaking English but so happy to be participating in planting days. They come back a couple of years later and see a drastic change of what it looked like compared to just having footpaths before.

We talk so much these days about resilience that it feels like resilience can be taught, but I feel like resilience needs to be lived. Going through the hardship of having to plant the trees, to understand what it takes for them to grow – I think that's what generates resilience in people because they understand the challenges that it will take to actually get things happening. From an emotional perspective, spending a day with a bunch of people just giggling around planting trees and feeling happy will build resilience in people, if not physically, then emotionally.

I think these initiatives improve the resilience of the community at the same time as improving the resilience of the environment. I think this piece of work allows us to generate a bit of ownership by the community as well. If the community has a stronger sense of ownership of these works, we're probably going to have less vandalism. There will be a sense that they participated, that they will want to protect that. And I think that makes everyone a little bit of a better citizen.

What is interesting is to still be achieving a key objective of this strategy and, at the same time, deliver changes that everyone and the environment benefits from. I think we will gain more if the environment is delivering on a multitude of outcomes rather than just canopy.

Other outcomes/changes

- Delivered 5000-6000 street trees each year through ongoing annual works.
- Secured an additional \$1.4 million funding to deliver an additional 3,600 trees each year in open space for two years as a result of a 2021 Council canopy report.
- The trees planted in 2022 are now approximately 3 meters tall and provide effective shade/canopy.
- On track to deliver canopy cover targets and habitat in wildlife corridors.



Increasing Canopy Cover – A Tree-mendous Task

Street tree and open space plantings are about 70-80% of my role, from planning to conception, to planting and the maintenance period. Wyndham City Council undertakes tubestock planting in open space areas as part the Cooler, Greener West initiative where the state government through DEECA contributed half a million trees, funding attached, to put trees in the ground and green up the western suburbs of Melbourne. We do all the planning, getting the sites prepped and the tubestock ordered. The stock is planted during two community events – National Tree Day and Reconciliation Day. The planting days are so successful, they get bigger and bigger every year. Our target is 10,000 tubestock per year and 3,600 trees planted.

I can definitely say we are smashing out the numbers, we've done more than what was forecasted. For street trees, we now [in 2024] expect roughly just over 7,000 to be planted. We get a database and we get a contractor to physically walk the streets which accounts for about 6,000 of those trees. The rest are customer requests that come through for trees that the operations team removes and replants and we also get developer infills. While there's no dramas whatsoever for the open space target of 35% canopy cover, the target of 25% canopy cover for street trees however is going to be really hard to hit in this strategy. We definitely have some areas that will hit and exceed the 25% target, a great example is Point Cook. These places will bring up the average for other places not hitting the mark. Some areas are going to be heat vulnerable. We're going to have pockets of heat in older areas of Werribee and Hoppers Crossing where they've got bigger nature strips bigger frontages to the house.

There have definitely been plenty of challenges along the way. For open space plantings, Reconciliation Day is getting more political. They're wanting the Traditional Owners to look after it, to procure the tubestock from Traditional Owners and manage those plants. Which is quite hard to do because we are under contract with a panel of contractors with scheduled rates and that's how we award work. We can't give the business to a Traditional Owner owned business when they aren't in the arboriculture procurement panel. We do work with the Bunurong Traditional Owners through Cooler, Greener West where they grow the stock and do the planting and we prep the area and take on the maintenance after they've finished.

For street trees, we're getting a lot of push back from residents that don't want the trees, and they win. The sorts of complaints include trees drop too many leaves, their mower can't get around it, they need to park their car on the nature strip. The residents in the newer developments are more receptive to the trees, the residents in the old areas living there for 30-40 years are stubborn and are really hard to work with. If you do plant a tree, the tree gets vandalised the next day. And residents know to go to their Councillors if they don't get the response they want to hear.

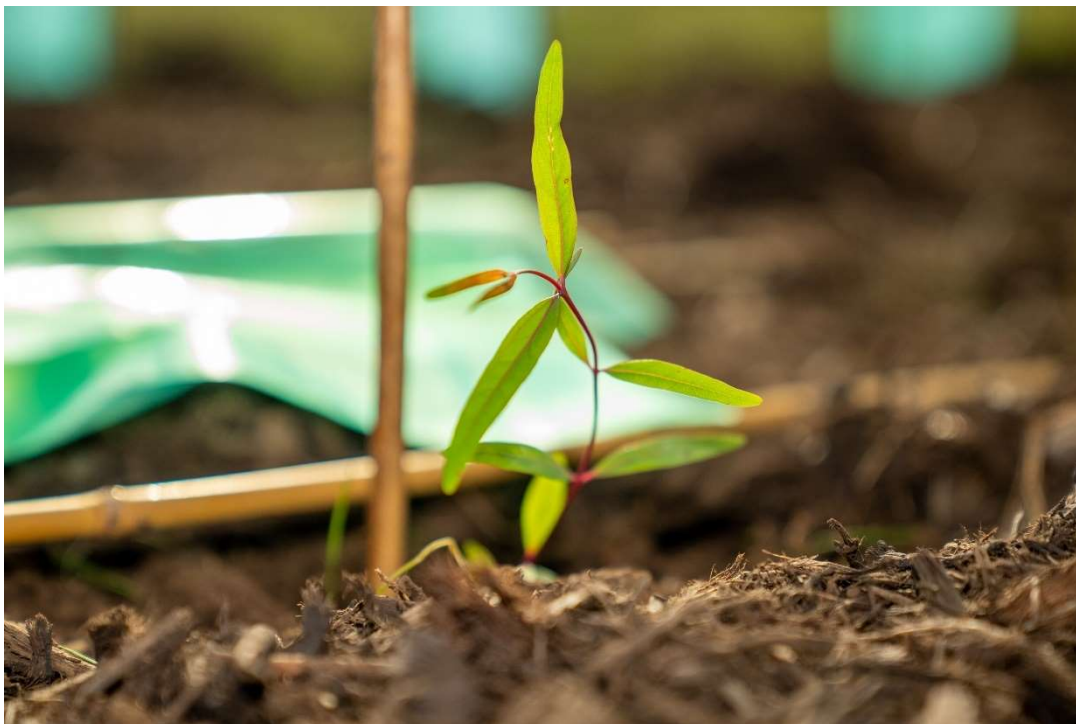
We've really tried to work with residents to make sure they are choosing a tree they want and what fits with our canopy cover objectives. When a resident calls up it's generally a one-on-one conversation. They might say "I'll take a tree, but I definitely don't want a eucalypt" so we filter it down and ask them if they want an evergreen tree or deciduous. Some people love that autumn colour, some people want showy flowers, so we go through a list and narrow it down to a few species and say go Google these and call us back and tell us what you want. There's a lot of work in it and some people don't get back to you.

I've learned that Council as a whole really needs to handle this better. Without that leadership from Councillors, there's only so much we can do. When people contact them, it would be good if Councillors could cut that off at the knees straight away and say this is the reason why we're doing it and not escalate it back to us to answer the question again, because it just goes around in circles. The amount of time that we spend on one rejection, it's impractical to do it, we just don't have the time or the resources. Councillors are the ones that signed off on the canopy coverage report and signing off on these strategies and policies. To achieve the target of 25% canopy cover within streets we really need change from Council to promote it and say to residents at the end of the day this is council land, this is what we are doing, if you remove the tree we will fine you.

The 2030 guideline is good, there's definitely plenty of work in bringing it forward by 10 years but we are on the right track. I suppose the biggest thing is we need more support. The urban forest team is small and we really need the backing and more support.

Other outcomes/changes

- Changing planting mix from just trees to tree/shrub/grass mix.
- Scheduling open space planting first followed by street trees was more positively received by residents because they saw planting in parks before their streets.
- Some residents are still aggressive and threatening to contractors, resulting in contractors not planting there.



Target: 30% of parks have a community group involved in park development, care or management.

This target was designed to improve meaningful connection between community groups and parks, rather than reflect the one-time consultation that may occur in the early land use planning for a park development.

A framework for community and community groups to become involved in park development, care and management in collaboration with Council has been created through the Draft Adopt-A-Park Policy. Consultation on this policy concluded in mid-2024. Once endorsed, this Policy will provide the framework for Council to meet this 30% Target.

Community Conservation Partnerships: Volunteer Groups Caring for Parks

The main activities our crews do is weed control and revegetation works in natural areas and conservation reserves within Wyndham. In terms of projects, we also engage with community groups by running planting sessions and help the groups to perform monthly maintenance activities in some of the reserves. During Covid, everything took a bit of a whack in terms of community group involvement. People weren't allowed to do community activities with the restrictions. We lost a lot of volunteers and connections with those groups. Various community groups would come to us with suggestions, but it was all on us to organise. Sometimes, it was a lot because I'm still managing the internal crew, making sure as much field work is getting done as possible.

We had been trying to re-establish those connections and it's probably become even better now. The most significant change would be that the Werribee River Association hired their own officers and can take a lot of the weight off our shoulders in terms of organising events. The Werribee River Association is probably the largest community group and takes up more time than the smaller community groups. They have expanded their activities and co-run projects, which takes a lot of admin and effort off us. They can connect with their people a lot easier. Previously it was just the Friends of Cobbledicks Ford and in the past 12 months they've got the Friends of Lower Werribee going so they've pretty much doubled their events.

We did the initial liaison with the Werribee River Association's new officers to make sure they understood what we did in the past and what we want to focus on now. We still have that general oversight and we established Memorandums of Understanding where we've got a greater understanding in writing about how to function and run events safely and ensure consistency. In the past when key people left, whether it's from Wyndham City Council or these community groups, things fell apart and we lost momentum. It has been a year or two since then, and it's running a lot smoother, and they are more self-sufficient.

The Werribee River Association organise some of their own events where we'll participate and assist on the day. It might be they want our staff to explain what works have been happening in the reserves or we might organise a tour somewhere like Graham's Reserve at the end of the Werribee River going through salt marsh areas or out at

Cobbledicks Ford to discuss our burning regime out there or to do with tree hollows or a significant species of the area.

I think it's now a lot less onerous on us, there's more trust and the community groups are more self-sufficient. We certainly need to be aware of what's happening, but we don't need to be controlling. We can help guide but they can deliver it themselves without too much involvement on our end so I'm not losing focus on my other core duties. I can focus more on the smaller groups. I'm a lot more efficient in terms of community engagement. On a personal level, I like all of our sites, but they've got some really significant reserves, for instance Cobbledicks Ford, Graham's Reserve and the areas around Presence Park. They are some really lovely areas to work in. It's nice to have the community involved so they feel part of that and can take ownership for it.

We aren't quite fully established with Friends of Little River yet, the only one we really don't have any community activity on is Lollipop Creek. We're probably at 75% in terms of the waterways that we manage having an active community group involved.

Other outcomes/changes

- Re-establishing the lower and mid storey of riparian zone vegetation within Wyndham City Council.
- Expanding the habitat for the growling grass frog, a flagship species that, if protected, benefits a lot of other species.
- Adjusting planting plans based on the results from the first year and observed impacts of climate change.
- Expanded the regular events schedules with volunteer groups throughout the year. Activities involved mulching, basic weed control and planting of fundamental species like Poa and Lomandra.
- A WCC staff member from the Sustainability Team is establishing an internal WCC volunteer group to volunteer in some areas.

Group

Werribee River Association

Friends of Cobbledicks Ford

Friends of Skeleton Creek

Regular event details

One per month at each of the two sites.

Second Friday of the month, three planting sessions in May, June and July.

Bi-monthly events and planting days around National Tree Day, plantings focusing on expanding habitat for the significant target species growling grass frog.



Target: All Wyndham staff understand climate risks.

Across Years 1 and 2 of the Strategy targeted work was undertaken to begin to build climate change adaptive capacity across the organisation, including specifically with the Risk Team integrating climate change into the Risk Register. This prompted ongoing discussion and ownership of the risk of climate change to Council at the Executive level.

In addition, during 2022 groups of staff across the organisation were engaged in the development of a first pass climate vulnerability assessment, and a more detailed climate risk assessment and action plan.

Following this work, specific adaptation actions have been implemented for the top two identified systems at risk to climate change in Wyndham City Council – council owned and operated buildings, and the natural environment. The development, planning and implementation process for these climate change adaptation plans has upskilled staff in these areas of council in climate change risk analysis and adaptation.



Target: Assist the agricultural sector to prepare for and respond to the impacts of climate change.

No data is available to evaluate this target. Delays in implementation of associated actions have resulted in limited work in this space over Years 1 and 2. Specifically, sea level rise and flood mapping data were delayed, hindering progress against this target.

Focus Area 3 - We are Ready: Disaster Aware



Strong and transparent leadership and governance systems allow for communities to build resilience and bounce forward after disaster events.

Research on the impact of disasters on communities that differ in their strength of social networks has indicated that mortality rates differ, even when faced with the same impacts, resulting in higher rates in communities with weaker networks. A cohesive and connected community protects the lives of its residents.

Many actions under the other four Focus Areas are building connection and leadership in Wyndham. Alongside these, active participation in emergency management preparedness activities to build community knowledge and community leaders' capacity has increased our ability to deal with shock events.

These unexpected shocks do not only take the form of natural disasters such as bushfire, storms and floods. They can also include acts of terrorism, cyber-attacks, transport disruption, and pandemic.

Key Achievements:

- First aid training for 8 community leaders in Year 2.
- Psychological first aid training for 8 community leaders conducted in Year 2.
- Educational activities including development of the “Are you Ready” brochure, Coffee with a Cop, and emergency management presence at the Children’s Week picnic.
- A City Resilience themed Building Blocks program delivered across Years 1 and 2 with 15 potential community leaders completing the program.
- Climate Futures Youth Leaders program established in Year 1 with a Summit held in Year 2 (25 attendees).
- *Walkaway* large-scale emergency preparedness exercise held in partnership with the Victorian Government and Wyndham Vale residents.
- Promotion of Local Area Flood Guides for Hoppers Crossing and Wyndham Vale.
- 18 business leaders undertook a cyber-security and business continuity workshop in Year 2.

Targets:

5000 Wyndham community members have actively prepared in 'Get prepared Wyndham'.

Wyndham City residents are aware of and know how to respond to unexpected shocks.

In August 2022, in preparation for the summer fire season, Wyndham Council in conjunction with Victoria Police, Fire Agencies and other Emergency Services conducted an emergency management exercise in the Jubilee Estate.

Residents participating in the exercise were sent a message alerting them to a fire risk in the area and then asked to leave their house briefly and walk 'Two Streets Back'. The exercise provided an opportunity for residents to become familiar with sufficient safety and cover in the neighbourhood. This allowed them to understand what might take place and how best to respond in the event of a grassfire.⁶



⁶ Wyndham city Council, *Are You Ready?* <https://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/about-council/your-council/administration/emergency-management>, accessed on 4/06/20204.

Implementing Learnings from the Walkaway Exercise

The Walkaway exercise was about simulating a grassfire event and getting residents to understand the messaging of walking two streets back from the fire. It involved an evacuation of residents. The exercise was funded through the Inspector General of Emergency Management and led by Victoria Police. Victoria Police were given the funding and we worked with them to do the exercise.

The Walkaway was actually quite a good exercise and we had really good community participation; we definitely got learnings out of it and those learnings were also across all the agencies. It was in a specific location and it's not something that you could replicate at that level. Something that big takes a lot of money and a lot of energy.

The most significant learning from that exercise for me was that some people had no idea about that basic information about emergency management. And the level of awareness of the different languages and different cultures that we had there on the day.

We, including the different agencies, had made these assumptions about how the exercise was going to work and it just didn't run that way. We assumed a certain level of understanding and that was not a great assumption.

The work that we're currently doing is based on what we've learned from the exercise that there's some very basic things that are worth going back to. The very basic messaging about emergencies is a good way to start, particularly about it being a disruption to your day. We need to go back to basics and not to get too caught up in the big messaging that's happening at the state level or agency level.

We now have some videos that we use to explain things to people, and we're also developing some videos in languages, as people can't necessarily read their own language. We've also been sending out basic information about emergencies to all the different schools and kindergartens. Also, with the exercise being really hard to replicate at that level, we're working with CFA to do smaller versions of it.

Using those learnings and not just recording them, but instead actually changing or pivoting is something that's really important.

Other outcomes and changes:

- Publicising and highlighting the importance of preparing and knowing what to do in an emergency through Channel 9 broadcasting the exercise.
- The team is now developing exercises that they can do on their own through the funding. This means they're able to run exercises and invite emergency management agencies, rather than the agencies inviting them to the exercises.
- Developed different ways of contacting the community and more pathways into different community centres and community groups.
- Learnings about the speed or length of time it takes to evacuate people.

Target: 50 Wyndham businesses participate in a workshop on disaster planning.

18 business leaders undertook a cybersecurity and business continuity training workshop in Year 2 of the Strategy.

Target: Increased use of community leadership forums for broader engagement on key Council actions.

Building Confidence, Passion, and Connection through the Building Blocks Program

The Building Blocks program has been running for 10 years. This 15-week program provides intensive formal training in capacity building and leadership to local community members. At the end of the training, the class forms into groups to design and implement a project in four weeks. Each intake into the program focusses on a particular theme or place. The intake that ran from March to September 2022 had the theme of “Resilience” with 21 participants.

This cohort produced three final projects. The first was about home gardening where approximately 40 people attended in addition to the participants to learn skills to grow food at home. There is a ripple effect in that those 40 people tell and show others about growing their own food at home.

The second project was about waste and recycling. This group invited multiple companies involved in waste and recycling to present about what they do. A very high percentage of people living in Wyndham moved to Australia in the last 10 years so there is an issue of people not knowing where to put rubbish. Another confusion is if they move from a neighbouring council, they have different bin colours than Wyndham City Council. About 40 local people attended and saw a demonstration about what things can be recycled, and how to keep recyclables uncontaminated. The ripple effect is where these people now tell others “no, you can’t throw that there, you can actually recycle that” so even though only 40 people came to the presentation the impact is much more because they spread what they learned with their family, friends and community.

The third project was about mental health and wellbeing. Within that group there was a psychologist – a beautiful thing about the program is that we get people of all qualifications who also give their own skills back to the group to empower themselves. This group explored mainstream ideas of mental resilience and cultural ideas about mental health and how people stay healthy. Within that group there were participants from South Africa, Pakistan, Iraq, Iran, Samoa and Afghanistan. Maybe 50 or so people from different cultures attended the event. People were really excited because they don’t see ethnic ideas of mental health represented or promoted so for these communities to come along and share their ideas and practices, they felt validated. They felt there is

something that we can contribute to society, there is something that is valid about us, about our cultures, about our practice and traditions. We want people to be confident that this is their place, that their ways of living are valid, that they can contribute. The cross-cultural learning was a beautiful thing and the harmony, understanding and solidarity that comes with it. We saw this as a significant project.

The most significant change is the participants strengthening their confidence, discovering their passions, and connecting together. When people move countries, they leave all the social capital and all their connections. They move into a new place where they don't know any people and where things work differently. For them to go through the program and find that they're connected to each other and find a community, they find they can do things together. And they find a passion they didn't know of before. All of the sudden, they realise "I'm confident, this is something I want to do more, I can do this". They did not see themselves as leaders until they see how people respond to what they've done and they begin to understand "I am actually a leader, a good leader". Some people in the program go on to find employment in the areas related to their project's topic.

It's part of our job to encourage this confidence and leadership. The other part is that we understand how important it is for people to feel they can contribute. Governments have always done things to community; this doesn't make the community feel confident about themselves. We want community to feel they have a role to play in resilience to contribute and look after themselves.

Other outcomes/changes

- Following an evaluation, the program was extended from 10 weeks to 19 weeks based on feedback from participants.
- More content was added on conflict management, First Nations knowledge and understanding, and more time spent in the project planning phase to hybridise each idea in the group so that the project is representative of what everyone is really passionate about.
- Ongoing continued connection within the project groups, such as catching up for coffee and supporting each other by checking each other's resumes.



Focus Area 4 - Our Places: Resilient and Sustainable



The built environment is subject to many of a city's systems. This area focuses on resilience in Wyndham's land use planning, transport, energy and waste systems.

A resilient and sustainable Wyndham is:

- prepared for the future climate and acts to reduce its own carbon footprint,
- uses innovative and renewable technologies,
- avoids, reuses and recycles waste and works towards a circular economy.
- is planned with a focus on livability, equitable access to green spaces and active transport opportunities, and
- has residents who can access and know how to use technology.

Key Achievements:

- Council carbon emissions were significantly reduced due to participation in the Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO).
- The Neighbourhood Connections Active Transport Program improved path connections within Cambridge Primary School and Bellbridge Primary School neighbourhoods.
- A Parkiteer Cage at Hoppers Crossing Station was installed (26 bike parks on the south side, and additional bike hoops on both the north and south side plaza areas).
- All new capital buildings and retrofits in Year 2 included solar PV.
- Key climate adaptation and ESD requirements were included in Precinct Plans.
- Lighting the West streetlighting efficiency upgrades Stages 3B completed (469 Luminaries), and 3C (1851 Luminaries) planned.
- Launch of the Business Support Program by the Western Alliance for Greenhouse Action (WAGA) provided information on being a sustainable and cost-effective business to over 50 attendees, with significant positive feedback and outcomes, including the installation of a 30kW solar system at BP Werribee.
- The Green Living Series delivered a wide range of sustainable living programs including Dr Cranky (bicycles for school kids), business and sustainability workshops, RENEW All electric homes, and supporting community to transition to renewable energy sources.

- A significant waste education program was delivered focusing on “avoid, reuse, recycle” and appropriate disposal, including:
 - Pop-up Recycling Day Event (Year 1, 245 attendees)
 - Waste map published on Wyndham website to assist community to find recycling, reuse and repair facilities.
 - Waste Watchers Program (Year 2, 27 attendees).

Target: Proportion of mode share for walking and cycling trips to triple by 2040.

The collation of mode share data by Wyndham City Council is currently low due to a strong focus on delivery rather than monitoring and evaluation. Over Years 1 and 2, any data on mode of travel to work is considered heavily influenced by the State Government COVID-19 lockdown directive to “work from home if possible”, and many people’s ongoing preference to work from home even after lockdowns eased.



The 2021 Australian Census⁷ illustrates that over 57% of respondents travelled to work by car in Wyndham (see Figure 5).

⁷ 2021 Census data on the method to travel to work on the day of the Census (employed people aged 15 years and over) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/LGA27260>)

Method of travel to work on the day of the Census, top responses <i>Employed people aged 15 years and over</i>	Wyndham	%	Victoria	%	Australia	%
Car, as driver	69,052	50.8	1,578,210	49.9	6,347,498	52.7
Car, as passenger	5,782	4.3	110,123	3.5	466,904	3.9
Train	3,625	2.7	51,921	1.6	170,326	1.4
Train, bus	1,000	0.7	11,016	0.3	52,509	0.4
Walked only	949	0.7	72,373	2.3	306,045	2.5
Did not go to work	13,577	10.0	353,067	11.2	1,417,449	11.8
Worked at home	34,423	25.3	814,082	25.7	2,531,262	21.0
People who travelled to work by public transport (a)	8,015	5.9	138,867	4.4	554,711	4.6
People who travelled to work by car as driver or passenger (b)	77,534	57.1	1,723,018	54.5	6,961,762	57.8

Note: Respondents had the option to report up to three methods of travel to work on the day of the Census.
(a) Includes people who used public transport (train, bus, ferry, tram/light rail), as at least one of their methods of travel to work on Census day.
(b) Includes people who travelled by car (as a driver, or as a passenger), as at least one of their methods of travel to work on Census day.
More information on [Method of travel to work \(MTWP\)](#)
Table based on place of usual residence

Figure 5 Mode of travel to work in Wyndham City Council on the day of the 2021 Australian Census.

Wyndham’s focus to support active transport has been through building paths connected across neighbourhood networks (see Table 2).

Table 2 - Kilometres of footpath constructed in Wyndham over Years 1 and 2.

Wyndham City Council - Footpaths Constructed (Km)	
Year 1 (21/22)	15.256km footpaths over 51 streets. 676m additional Shared User Path (Davis Creek, Overton Road and O’Doherty’s Road).
Year 2 (22/23)	14.24km footpath over 56 streets.



Target: Wyndham City Council operations are carbon neutral by 2023 (excluding the RDF).

Wyndham City Council was on track to achieve Carbon Neutrality by 2023 at the close of Year 2 of Resilient Wyndham. Council's scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions over Year 1 and 2 were 9525 tonnes and 4017 tonnes of carbon dioxide, respectively (see Figure 6).

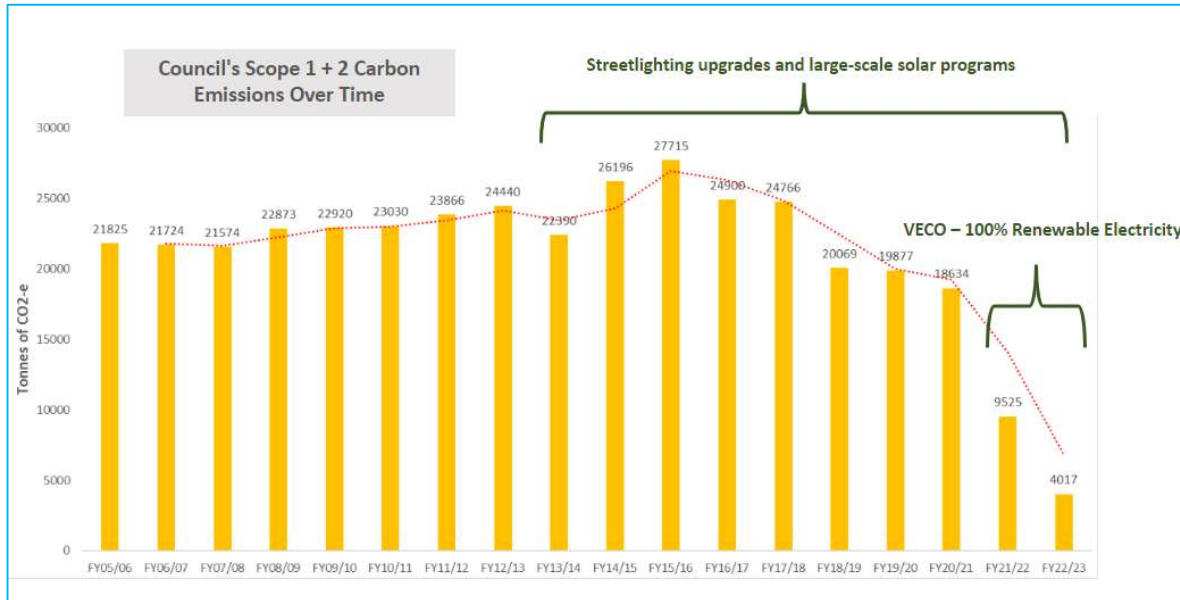


Figure 6 - Wyndham City Council carbon emissions.

At the beginning of the Strategy, Council committed to the Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO). VECO is a collaboration of 51 Victorian councils facilitated by the Victorian Greenhouse Alliances. This project's commitment to the renewables market allowed for two wind farms to come online in western Victoria providing renewable energy to Victoria's energy system. The long-term contract associated with this project means that Wyndham City Council's operations are powered by renewable energy. This contract has resulted in the lowest carbon emissions for the organisation's operations on record.

The resilience dividends associated with this long-term electricity contract include:

- A lower average cost of electricity for the organisation (and therefore ratepayers).
- Minimal exposure to a volatile energy market and pricing impacted by acute shocks such as the war in Ukraine.

Target: All new Council buildings are gas free (where appropriate electrical solutions exist).

This target has been progressed through the implementation of Council's environmentally sustainable design recommendations into the capital works program.

Targets:

By 2030 all Council fleet passenger vehicles will be low or zero emissions.

By 2030 all Council vehicle purchases will meet best practice emissions standards and use a carbon neutral power source (where a fit for purpose option is available).

Throughout the first half of Resilient Wyndham a business case was prepared for the transition of Council's passenger fleet to battery electric vehicles. This was supported by the trialling of two passenger vehicles within Council's fleet. This was supported by the installation of slow charging infrastructure at the Operations Depot.

Table 3 illustrates Council's progress over Years 1 and 2 towards a fleet, plant and equipment that is low or zero emissions.

Table 3 - Number of Wyndham City Council vehicles per fuel type, including variation over Years 1 and 2 of Resilient Wyndham.

Vehicle Type		Variation in Vehicle Numbers	
		Year 1 (2021/22)	Year 2 (2022/23)
Passenger	Electric	0	+2
	Hybrid	+5	+8
	Diesel	-1	+18
	ULP	-2	-17
Plant & EQUIPMENT	Electric		+2 Plant
	Hybrid		
	Diesel	+1 Bus, -1 Plant, +1 Truck	-1 Plant
	ULP	0 Bus, 0 Plant, 0 Truck	+2 Plant



Piloting New Infrastructure: Wyndham's First EV Fast Charger and Solar Carport

The Bembit Bag-rook community centre solar carport and EV charging was a first in a couple of ways. It was the first time that we had ever installed an EV fast charger in Wyndham, and the first time that we piloted a solar carport.

The intention of the project was to trial fast charging as well as the solar carport to see how it would go. Wyndham is in a nice position where we've been a clear leader in terms of rooftop renewable energy across all the Victorian councils. This meant that we kind of thought that we had maxed out all our rooftops for solar, which led us to look at a pilot project using car parking.

With Wyndham also not being a green and leafy type municipality, and there being a lot of open barren car parking space, we're also trying to mitigate the urban heat effect to a certain extent. This is where solar carports can reduce the temperature by shading carparks outside places like community centres.

The most significant change to come out of the project is that we've now provided access to our local community to charge their electric vehicles. From a technical perspective we have installed a 50-kilowatt DC EV charger and a 60-kilowatt solar carport, so effectively both those systems are matched in terms of energy.

It now means that we're saying, 'we're putting the infrastructure here so that every time you charge your vehicle, it's charging from the sun', rather than saying 'here's an EV charger, charge your vehicles from dirty brown coal produced electricity from down in the La Trobe Valley'. We're using renewable energy and trying to reduce emissions two-fold.

Since the charger being commissioned approximately 18 months ago, there have now been nearly 9,000 charging sessions. That's effectively 9,000 times a vehicle hasn't had to go and fill up with petrol or diesel, and all the associated emissions with that as well.

Other changes/outcomes:

- Selected panels with microinverters which enables Wyndham City Council to see how each panel operates independently to the rest. It will also make the servicing and maintenance of the systems easier.
- Integrated requirements for EV chargers into the design of new infrastructure projects, which will make the delivery of any future EV chargers easier, cheaper and quicker.
- Supported the uptake of EVs by the community through providing charging infrastructure.
- Contributed to reducing Wyndham's greenhouse gas emissions.

Targets:

Halve household food waste to landfill by 2030.

20% reduction in the waste we generate at home by 2030.

90% of the waste we generate at home is kept out of landfill by 2040.

Wyndham residents are recycling right by 2030 (maximum 5% contamination).

A 5.85% reduction in waste generated per Wyndham household was achieved between Years 1 and 2. Total waste per household was 0.94 tonnes in Year 1 and 0.882 tonnes in Year 2.

Data for food waste contamination of the household garbage, contamination of green bins, and contamination of recycling bins was unable to be accurately verified over the reporting period.

Waste communication and education campaigns were delivered through this time to raise awareness of recycling right practices for recycling bins.

Council continued to participate in the Victorian government waste and recycling kerbside system reforms by scoping a mobile garbage bin lid standardisation project, and a universal food and garden organics kerbside collection material.

Targets:

Council decision-making aligns to the science-based targets in the Paris Agreement.

By 2040 Wyndham has transitioned to become a zero-carbon community.

There is no data available to assess progress on these targets. They are both stretch targets and complex to measure over a 2-year timeframe.

During Year 1 and Year 2 of the Council applied for and successfully received Destination Charging Across Victoria grant funding for the installation of charging infrastructure at the Hunter Building in Werribee and Council's Civic Centre. These chargers support electric vehicle charging in the Wyndham community. Wyndham's electric passenger vehicle ownership rate within the community increased significantly across this period (see Figure 7).

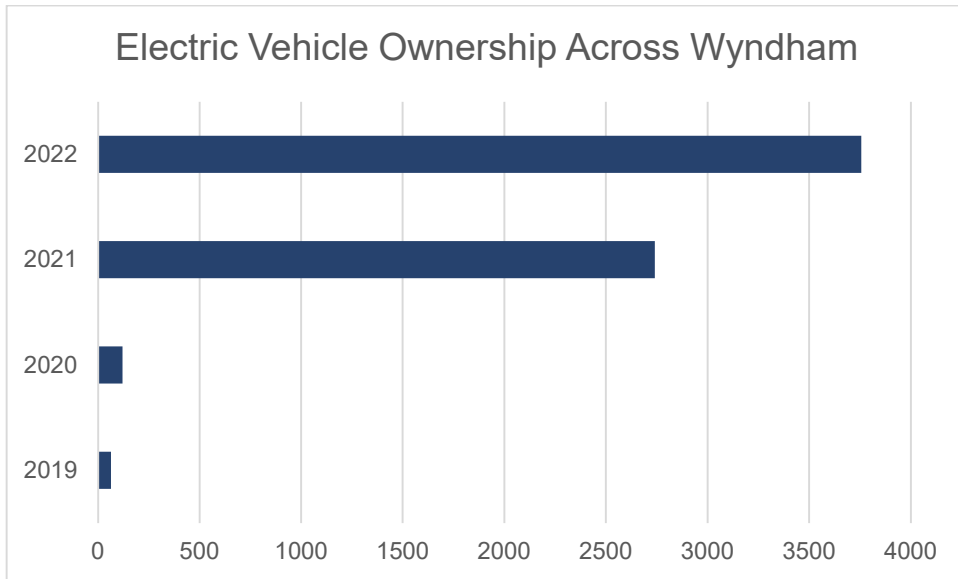


Figure 7 Electric Passenger Vehicles registered in the Wyndham Local Government Area.⁸

By supplying Council owned charging powered by renewable energy we are supporting the community to reduce their emissions.



⁸ Motor Vehicle Census BITRE/ABS.
Resilient Wyndham: Progress Report 2021 – 2023

Target: Wyndham contains a network of town centres and neighbourhoods that deliver services, jobs and opportunities for community locally.



The Wyndham Plan

Wyndham's development has traditionally been very dispersed. The traffic in Wyndham is already untenable. We need more jobs here, so people don't have to leave Wyndham. We want people to be learning and earning locally. We want someone to be able to wake up, to walk to a shop, drop their kids off at school and be able to have their needs met locally.

Change is slow and long term in planning. It's about setting frameworks and encouraging the results you want to see over time. Council can change the zoning and the planning framework to encourage the highest and best use of that area, but we don't control the private sector. When we want to do anything in planning, we must ask the state government for permission because they're authorised through the Planning Scheme. Council didn't have strategic justification needed to do those things because we did not have the Wyndham Plan.

The Most Significant Change would be the adoption of the Wyndham Plan in December 2023. The Wyndham Plan is a major, generational plan about how Wyndham City Council should look spatially. It is the bridge between the Wyndham 2040 Vision and the Planning Scheme. Wyndham is growing so fast and is a city. So, we must act like a city in the way we are growing, in the way we are integrating transport and the way we focus new development in key areas. The Plan sets out the city heart and the city pulses and activity centres along the regional rail line.

We did a whole suite of technical background studies to inform the Plan; demographic, transport, and housing analyses. We collected the data and examined the evidence to build the strategic justification. We extensively consulted internally, and external

stakeholders like the Victorian Planning Association, Homes Victoria, and the water authorities. We drafted the Plan, took it to the community for extensive community consultation. Then we had to bring the Councillors on the journey and do an education piece with them, as they vote on it in the end, and we want them to be a champion of the Plan. We successfully gained the support of the executive leadership, with the CEO being particularly receptive, as they are who engage with the state government and advocate for the Plan.

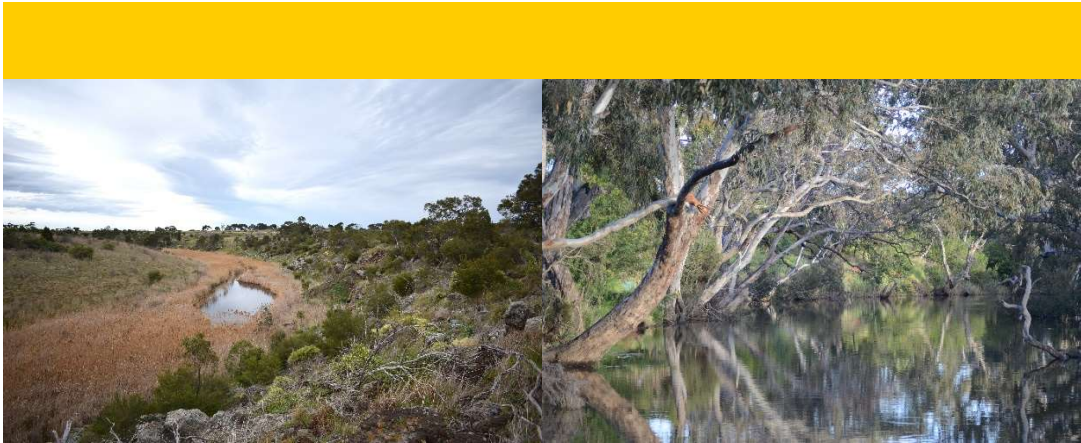
Now everything we'll do will be through the lens of the Wyndham Plan. We can do strategic work because we have an overarching plan to justify why we're doing things. We're moving towards realising that spatial concept which in and of itself encourages densification around major public transport infrastructure, encouraging amenity and encouraging 20-minute neighbourhoods. All our projects are being aligned to the Plan and its objectives. It feels that everyone is rowing in the same direction.

Other outcomes/changes:

- Learnt lessons about effective community consultation:
- The 100-person "People's Panel" was a highly effective way of getting the perspectives of the community.
- Open forums could be more effective if a professional facilitator was engaged or if conducted with smaller groups.
- "20-minute neighbourhood" is now a charged phrase and attracts the attention of some online groups. Omitting this wording from Council strategies and plans could reduce disruptions to any future community consultation process.



Focus Area 5 - Our Future: Walking our Talk



Transparent governance and strategic systems along with strong leadership, supply, and employment systems support a city to be resilient.

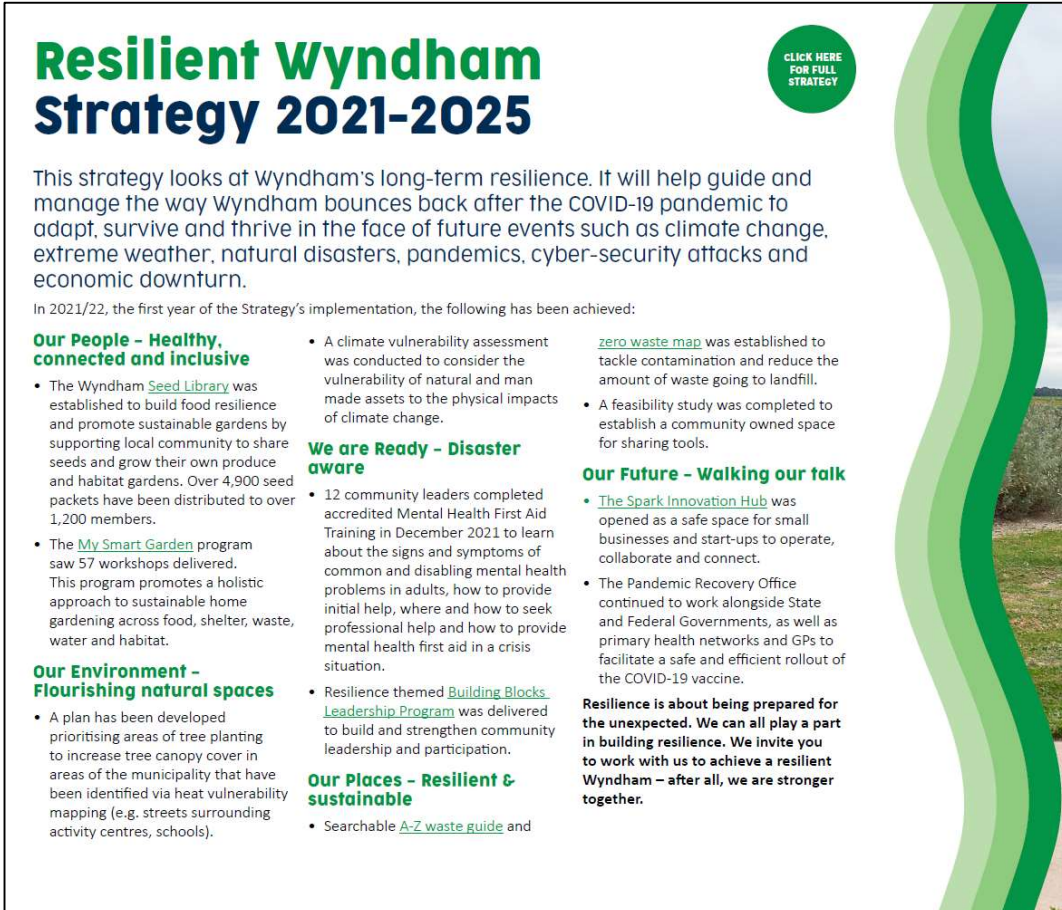
Wyndham City Council has a role to promote the work of Resilient Wyndham and in demonstrating how to integrate resilience thinking throughout its own organisation. Strong leadership and governance by Council supports the Wyndham community to build its own resilience.

Key Achievements:

- Launch of SPARK, Wyndham City Council's Innovation Hub, which provides a collaborative space to support and mentor creative, innovative and solution driven emerging local businesses and entrepreneurs and digital tech start-ups to scale up their concepts and products to commercialisation.
 - The inaugural Leadership Excellence Program was delivered with 15 participating businesses.
 - SPARK Innovation Hub continues to grow with two formal EOI processes conducted and a third underway. 15 digital tech start-ups and emerging businesses are on board.
- Exceeded Council's annual environmentally sustainable procurement target of 6%.
- Delivering of a tailored, Wyndham-specific successful COVID-19 response.

Target: Progress on the implementation of Resilient Wyndham will be provided on an annual basis.

Over Years 1 and 2, Wyndham has met its commitment to annually report progress on implementation of the Strategy and to share learnings and reflections with the organisation and community (see Figures 8 and 9).



Resilient Wyndham Strategy 2021-2025

This strategy looks at Wyndham's long-term resilience. It will help guide and manage the way Wyndham bounces back after the COVID-19 pandemic to adapt, survive and thrive in the face of future events such as climate change, extreme weather, natural disasters, pandemics, cyber-security attacks and economic downturn.

In 2021/22, the first year of the Strategy's implementation, the following has been achieved:

Our People - Healthy, connected and inclusive

- The Wyndham [Seed Library](#) was established to build food resilience and promote sustainable gardens by supporting local community to share seeds and grow their own produce and habitat gardens. Over 4,900 seed packets have been distributed to over 1,200 members.
- The [My Smart Garden](#) program saw 57 workshops delivered. This program promotes a holistic approach to sustainable home gardening across food, shelter, waste, water and habitat.

Our Environment - Flourishing natural spaces

- A plan has been developed prioritising areas of tree planting to increase tree canopy cover in areas of the municipality that have been identified via heat vulnerability mapping (e.g. streets surrounding activity centres, schools).

Our Places - Resilient & sustainable

- Searchable [A-Z waste guide](#) and

We are Ready - Disaster aware

- 12 community leaders completed accredited Mental Health First Aid Training in December 2021 to learn about the signs and symptoms of common and disabling mental health problems in adults, how to provide initial help, where and how to seek professional help and how to provide mental health first aid in a crisis situation.
- Resilience themed [Building Blocks Leadership Program](#) was delivered to build and strengthen community leadership and participation.

Our Future - Walking our talk

- [The Spark Innovation Hub](#) was opened as a safe space for small businesses and start-ups to operate, collaborate and connect.
- The Pandemic Recovery Office continued to work alongside State and Federal Governments, as well as primary health networks and GPs to facilitate a safe and efficient rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine.

Resilience is about being prepared for the unexpected. We can all play a part in building resilience. We invite you to work with us to achieve a resilient Wyndham – after all, we are stronger together.

[zero waste map](#) was established to tackle contamination and reduce the amount of waste going to landfill.

- A feasibility study was completed to establish a community owned space for sharing tools.

[CLICK HERE FOR FULL STRATEGY](#)

Figure 8 - Excerpt from *Council Adopted Strategies and Plans 2021/2022 Progress Report (p23)* illustrating Year 1 reporting.

Resilient Wyndham Strategy 2021 – 2025

[CLICK HERE FOR FULL COPY](#)

This Strategy guides Wyndham's long-term resilience and aims to guide and manage the way Wyndham adapts, survives, and thrives in the face events such as extreme weather, natural disasters, pandemics, cyber-security attacks and economic downturns. Resilience is about being prepared for the unexpected.

The Strategy provides a four-year vision, with an annual action plan outlining targets and actions to strengthen Wyndham's resilience and ability to prepare for future shocks and stresses. The Strategy captures what is already being done as well as identifying where we can do more.

Progress made in 2022/23 is presented below against the objectives of the Strategy.

Our People – Healthy, connected, and inclusive

- Council partnered with Sustain – The Australian Food Network' to co-design a vision for a resilient, sustainable, and equitable food future for Wyndham through a series of workshops and events.
- Council continued to deliver the Green Living Series which saw 44 events offered with over 3,000 residents in attendance, helping to encourage community to better protect the environment and live a little greener.
- Council held three Café Connect events, helping to connect community in new neighbourhoods (Harpley and Mambourin Estates) over a cuppa and chat.

Our Environment – Flourishing natural spaces

- Planting of 26,000 tube stock and street trees completed.
- The Wadawurrung partnership was implemented with 5,000 trees shrubs and grasses being planted on Country.

- Partnership agreements and collaborative plantings have been established with NatureWest, Werribee River Association and Friends of Skeleton Creek helping to green Wyndham.

We are Ready – Disaster aware

- Sixteen community leaders completed accredited Mental Health First Aid & First Aid Training; learning how to provide initial help, where and how to seek professional help and how to provide both mental health and first aid in a crisis.
- Operation Walkaway, whereby Wyndham City was a key support in a Victoria Police led emergency management exercise in the Jubilee Estate, Wyndham Vale. This exercise was an evacuation/request to walk two streets back to test emergency responses to a grassland fire situation.

Our Places – Resilient & sustainable

- Wyndham joined the Garage Sale Trail, with over 150 sales across Wyndham over two weekends in November 2022. The trail helped to divert waste from landfill, grow community connections and generated over \$57,000 in sales locally.
- Electric vehicle infrastructure was delivered at the Hunter Building in Werribee, Civic Centre in Werribee and Council's Depot in Hoppers Crossing.

Our Future – Walking our talk

- 40,000 Rapid Antigen Tests were distributed throughout our operations.
- The inaugural Leadership Excellence Program was delivered with 15 participating businesses.
- SPARK Innovation Hub continues to grow with the second annual intake completed. 15 digital tech start-ups and emerging businesses are on board to date.

Figure 9 - Excerpt from Council Adopted Strategies and Plans 2022/2023 Progress Report (p27) illustrating Year 2 reporting.

Target: Increase number of staff at Wyndham who understand city resilience and feel confident to incorporate into their work.

The City Resilience Framework and Resilient Wyndham were communicated to all new Wyndham City Council staff through the standard induction process across Years 1 and 2, aiming to help them to feel confident to incorporate resilience into their work. Throughout the development of the strategy City Resilience capacity building sessions were delivered to key staff members.

Targets:

Integrate sustainable procurement (social, economic and environmental) into all Council tenders and quotes. The environmental schedule is weighted and scored during the selection process for all Tenders.

25% of Council's spend falls under sustainable spend purchasing data.

Across Years 1 and 2 Council has focused on the environmental component of sustainable spend – for example, using recycled content, low emissions products and energy.

Council has included an Environmental Schedule in its tendering process that is weighted and scored for all council tenders. This allows Wyndham City Council to ensure it works with organisations that have similar sustainability commitments and that projects have minimal negative environmental impact.

Council met and exceeded its annual sustainable procurement reporting target of 6% and is almost one third of the way towards the 2025 target to direct 25% of Council's spend towards sustainable spend purchasing (see Figures 10 and 11).

Throughout Years 1 and 2 of the Strategy lunchtime learn sessions were delivered with support from Kinaway to build Council's capacity to utilise their business directory focussed on First Peoples employment.

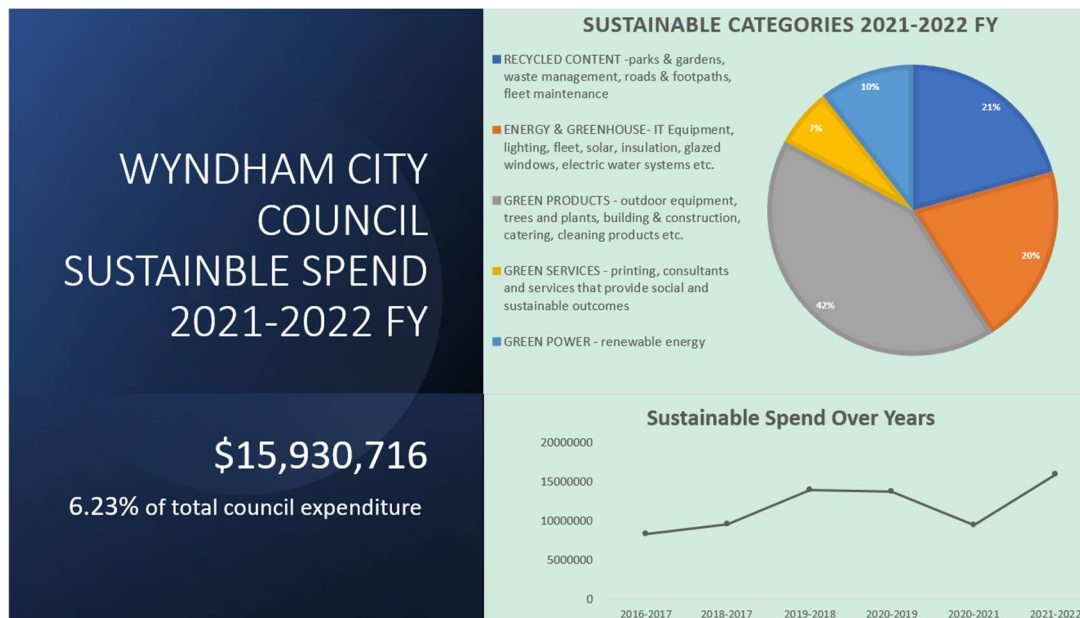


Figure 10 Wyndham City Council's sustainable spend in Year 1 (21/22 FY).

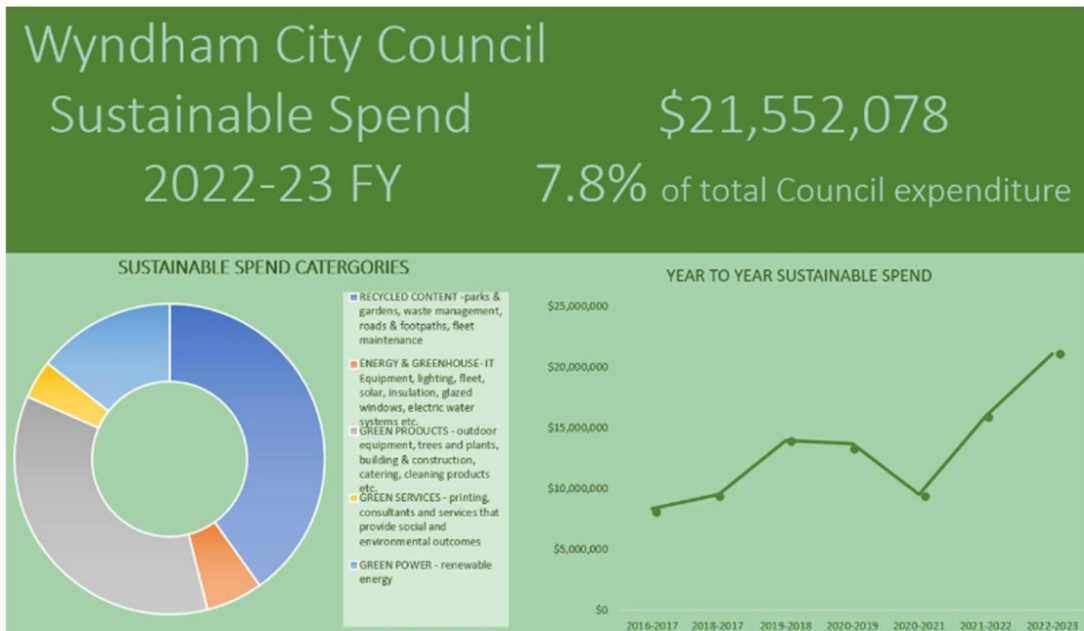


Figure 11 Wyndham City Council's sustainable spend in Year 2 (22/23 FY).

Target: 100 businesses participate in Wyndham Connect and feel more informed about the future challenges and are able to put in place strategies to be better prepared.

City Resilience is bolstered when there are more local jobs and businesses to bring investment into Wyndham.

Wyndham Connect is a local program aimed at supporting small to medium enterprise (SMEs) to be more resilient and viable in response to future shocks and stresses that they may face.

Year 1 and 2 achievements include:

- Launch of SPARK, Wyndham City Council's Innovation Hub, which provides a collaborative space to support and mentor creative, innovative and solution driven emerging local businesses and entrepreneurs and digital tech start-ups to scale up their concepts and products to commercialisation. The inaugural Leadership Excellence Program was delivered with 15 participating businesses.
- 18 businesses attended a cyber security workshop.

Sparkling Local Business Success

The SPARK Innovation Hub is a business support initiative that started in April 2022. My role is not just to run the Hub, it's also to work with the businesses directly in an advisory mentoring approach and to bring in other facilitators to further grow their businesses. Businesses apply through an EOI process for a 12-month residency at the SPARK facility. If their EOI is accepted, the business is invited to join the program. The program has three core areas: mentoring, master classes, and network expansion. We broaden their network locally with partnerships and associations with local business and industry groups. SPARK itself sits under economic development and the three key themes of economic development are to grow businesses in the region, to create more employment opportunities locally, and to build a foundation for attracting external investment into the region by demonstrating the previous two.

The type of business we focussed on at the start were all digitech. The reason is that Wyndham has 60-63% of working-age people exit the municipality every morning to work elsewhere. In the case of the IT sector, we have a very well qualified and experienced population, but more than 90% leave each morning to work in Melbourne CBD, South Melbourne, Docklands, elsewhere other than Wyndham, so we've got a skills shortage. There's a lot of highly experienced people who are doing things in isolation here. Wyndham is the fastest growing region in Australia with a population forecast to 550,000 by 2051. Council saw the current skills shortage as well as the future requirement for a lot more jobs in the region. Council had the courage to support the initiative and fund it wholly, to find the site which could then be utilised to bring these individual remote working businesses together in an environment that would encourage collaboration and networking.

We quickly learned that businesses are ready when they are ready, not when local government decides they want to offer a business development course. So, we changed the application process to have both the formal EOI period and ongoing open applications. We expanded the facility from 24 to 50 workstations and there's a mix on open plan office space, semi-private offices and private suites for meetings. Businesses pay a licence fee to be here, it's about \$300 per month for a dedicated workspace in the open plan area and access to the mentoring, masterclasses, and network expansion. It's not a lot of money, but that \$300 gave them a sense of buy-in so they utilised the space and took advantage of what's offered. A few businesses said to me, it's good value, for that fee we can get the space, the collaboration, the network expansion, the mentoring courses, plus free tea and coffee and Wi-Fi.

We currently have 18 businesses on board. All the businesses are funding themselves, only a few have investor backing or have won some grant funding. A lot will utilise interns to grow their business. Several founders are husband and wife teams rotating who will come in and utilise their workstation. The different spaces here are used for collaboration and meeting spaces, so businesses host their client meetings, supplier meetings and focus groups here. At the end of the 12 months, we'd like them to be in a stronger position that they are able to leave of their own accord, but we also have discussions about extending their residency if they need another three, six or 12 months.

The most significant change is being able to bring these individual remote working businesses together. It encouraged their collaboration and the networking, accountability, and motivation from being able to be with like-minded people. I've seen the impact SPARK has on individual founders and seen how it enables growth and collaboration.

Businesses increased their market network of sales and increased their customer numbers. One data analytics business had three clients when he came to SPARK and now has over 100 clients, including Oracle Australia, Energy Australia and Shopify and have done over 200 projects. He calls SPARK his “lucky place”. Another business is a health and wellbeing loyalty program now with over 1000 subscribers, 20 businesses and 50+ national loyalty partners including Woolworths and JB Hi-Fi since being at SPARK.

We have broadened from digitech businesses to be inclusive of innovative creative solution providers or product service providers for Wyndham’s key industry sectors which are health, medical, education, construction, retail manufacturing, freight logistics, the visitor economy and agribusiness. We have diversified, now we have an engineering company, agribusiness company and a renewable energy company here.

We’ve done research with iSTEM Co. which is a consultancy business focussed on increasing opportunities for women from multicultural backgrounds to get into their chosen STEM field that they might have qualifications in or worked in before coming to Australia. This research found that people from these backgrounds are quite an entrepreneurial group, however there are very few offerings of entrepreneurial support programs or networks. What we will do next is have a pre-accelerator program, so they go from ideation, validation, product development and they then begin the SPARK program already with a minimum viable product and can get up to commercialisation more quickly in the supportive environment at SPARK. Now we’re looking at other things we can do to increase business presence here. We’ve got quite a collaborative ecosystem going here, which obviously is good for the businesses as well.

Other outcomes/changes:

- Identified opportunities to improve visibility and marketing to promote SPARK.

Target: The Wyndham pandemic recovery office continues to assist the local community recovery from COVID-19.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a specific example of a shock to Wyndham's resilience. It was the impetus for this Strategy, even though city resilience extends beyond response to a pandemic.

Connecting with Community: Biocultural Workers and CALD Communities Outreach Program

Wyndham had some of the highest COVID-19 cases which had a lot to do with the way in which our communities work and gather. We have a lot of people that work in those forward-facing jobs like health, manufacturing and cleaning, as well as a lot of newly arrived CALD (culturally and linguistically diverse) communities.

At the beginning of the pandemic, the response was all state government led. The information was very angled at educated, white, Anglo people and that just does not resonate with the majority of Wyndham. It also didn't help with the negativity towards those communities purely because they couldn't understand because it wasn't in their language. Melbourne also had a lot more restrictions than anywhere else in the world for a while, so they were hearing messages about restrictions from their counterparts in different states and different countries.

The most significant change for me has been in how we connected with the community, particularly our CALD communities. We recognised that we needed to change the way we connect with those communities pretty quickly based on the significant amount of positive COVID-19 test results that we were seeing, which led to the development of the biocultural workers and CALD communities outreach program. It was partly funded with the State Government and it provided positions for local community members and leaders to advocate on our behalf.

With the content and support provided by us, their responsibility was to develop their own communication plans that suited their own community needs. Once we started that, there was a huge difference. We saw a lot more people coming in to either report on testing or receive vaccinations. We also saw a significant change in the attitude towards COVID-19 and towards the government, particularly Wyndham and the public health teams.

It was a real turning point in our experience, but also the communities' experience. I feel like the longer lasting effects are much broader than just the pandemic response. There's a continued connection and understanding between government and these CALD communities, and they've actually had a voice and a light shined on them. While it may have started out in a negative way, it has really allowed for greater advocacy within that space for them.

Other outcomes/changes:

- Developed templates and policies around how to manage COVID-19 within the workplace, in collaboration with the Environmental Health team.

- Processes now in place to communicate with community around cleanliness and food hygiene.
- Administered around 130,000 vaccinations across Wyndham sites.
- Created a better connection between community members and their local GPs and public health units that aren't necessarily council led, which is a positive outcome for their health.
- Delivered the RAT distribution program, with around 120,000 tests distributed around the community including libraries, kindergartens etc.
- However, community became very reliant on government to provide RATs.
- Stronger connection with community.
- Built connection between community organisations, groups and leaders.
- Built community resilience around how to take care of themselves.



Findings

Across Years 1 and 2, the majority of actions planned for each of the Strategy's Targets have been successfully delivered or progressed. Several actions continue to rollover and progress over multiple years as they have a planned longer project timeframe. (See Figure 12). Regular reporting has been completed against yearly action plans, including content within the Annual Report.

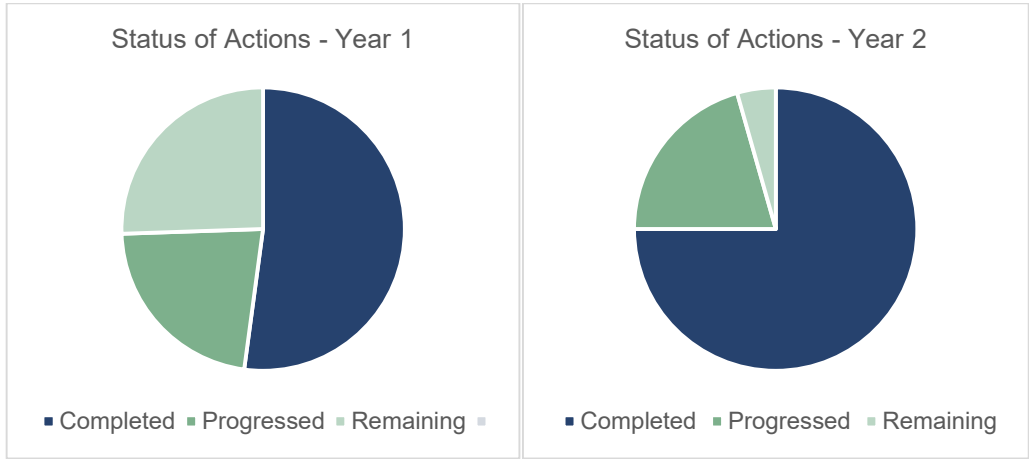


Figure 12 - Implementation status of yearly actions.

It is evident that Resilient Wyndham is a well-designed Strategy developed with a whole-of-organisation focus.

The Strategy was initially driven through the CEO's office alongside and in alignment with the development of the Council Plan 2021 – 2025 and Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021 - 2025. This ensured clear delineation between deliverables under each plan.

This process embedded Resilient Wyndham as a Strategy to be implemented by multiple teams across Wyndham. The Strategy has continued to be resourced although it moved outside of the CEO's office. The Strategy is a major initiative within the Council Plan.

The Strategy shows an understanding of the multiple drivers of city resilience and Wyndham's sphere of influence.

It embeds its actions across all drivers of city resilience and shows a strong analysis of those drivers that sit within the influence of local government in Australia (see Figure 2 and Appendix 2).

The Strategy builds city resilience.

Years 1 and 2 of the Strategy have made significant changes and delivered on-ground actions – as illustrated by the included stories and key achievements, respectively. Many actions also set the groundwork for significant outcomes in Years 3 and 4, as well as ongoing resilience-building. The co-benefits delivered by Years 1 and 2 is made particularly evident through the most significant change stories. For example, social connections built through a program designed to upskill residents in gardening food. This is also known as the 'resilience dividend' – additional resilience benefits delivered outside of the main focus of the program.

The Strategy is framed by high-level Targets yet is implemented through agile yearly actions.

The evidence-based Targets set a clear framework endorsed by the organisation, yet they have allowed for a living and flexible approach to implementation, through yearly action planning. This has ensured Resilient Wyndham remains a living document reflective of current issues.

Therefore, despite being developed in response to the initial shock of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is evident that Resilient Wyndham remained relevant and tailored to the range of acute shocks and chronic stresses faced by Wyndham City Council across Years 1 and 2, and into the future.

Challenges in implementation have included maintaining organisational knowledge and engagement.

The initial development of the Strategy was whole-of-organisation. However broad socialisation of the Strategy did not occur significant throughout Years 1 and 2. This did increase throughout the second half of Year 2 (and has been expanded on in Year 3). Awareness raising activities in Year 2 included a quarterly Pulse reporting, All Staff Survey, WLAB presence, targeted engagement including through staff inductions, promotion on Wyni (intranet). In addition, the Environment Portfolio received quarterly updates and in-person presentations on the annual action plan delivery of Resilient Wyndham. Finally, as part of Year 3 Action Plan development there was significant engagement across the organisation and a cross organisational governance structure established.

Staff turnover has likely impacted knowledge around the Strategy and overall understanding of the concept of city resilience. This has impacted organisational knowledge (for example around why certain Targets were developed and what existing data collation relates to measuring them) and the potential positive influence that continued staff involvement can have over the life of a Strategy.

Long term monitoring of resilience may consider the value of additional information.

This mid-term evaluation was always intended to be through the qualitative Most Significant Change approach, and the Strategy was endorsed as such. The additional quantitative aspects of this progress report add valuable context. Particular Targets within the Strategy are being tracked over the long term through surveys completed as part the Council Vision design and tracking.

Next Steps

Resilient Wyndham continues to be delivered through out financial year 23/24 (Year 3) and 24/25 (Year 4). This includes achieving carbon neutral status and Climate Active accreditation for Council's organisational emissions and utilising the community engagement panel to further develop CALD materials and messaging around disaster preparedness.

Finally, the mid-term evaluation highlights Targets that need additional focus prior to the finalisation of the Strategy. These include:

- **Public Spaces in Wyndham are inclusive for all, particularly young people, women and gender diverse people.**
 - Restructuring in the related teams of Council has impacted resilience building actions focused on gender and inclusion. There is an opportunity to embed the learnings from relevant research (e.g. Safe Spaces 2023).
- **Assist the agricultural sector to prepare for and respond to the impacts of climate change.**
 - Actions associated with building adaptive capacity to climate change in the agricultural sector have been delayed.
- **A 10% reduction in Wyndham urban hotspots by 2030.**
 - Urban heat mapping has been delayed.
- **All Wyndham Staff understand climate risks.**
 - There is scope for increased capacity building on climate risks to the organisation and community.
- **Council decision-making aligns to the science-based targets in the Paris Agreement.**
 - This target is supported by resources provided by global networks including the Global Covenant of Mayors. There is scope to assess Council's decision-making to date in comparison to up-to-date global emissions targets.
- **By 2040 Wyndham has transitioned to a become a zero-carbon community.**
 - This is a complex long-term target and Council's ability to influence the community has limits. National legislation flowing on from Paris Agreement is leading to greater disclosure of emissions from organisations in the community which will assist in this Target.
- **Increase the number of staff at Wyndham who understand city resilience and feel confident to apply it in their work.**
 - There is scope for continued and increased capacity building work to embed the concepts of city resilience across Wyndham City Council.



Appendix 1

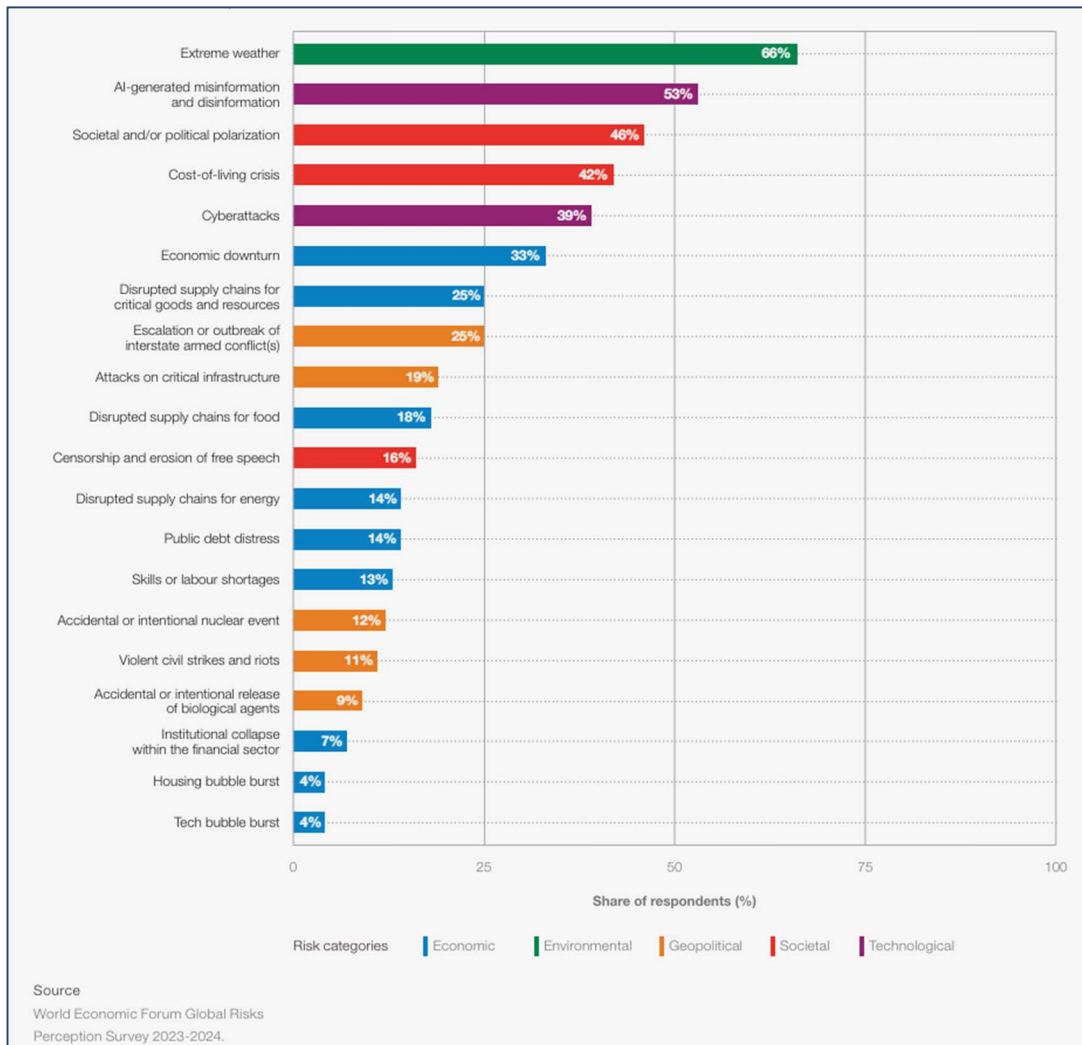


Figure: Perceived Global Risks 2024 World Economic Forum Global Risks Perception Survey 2023 – 2024.

Appendix 2

	CITY RESILIENCE FRAMEWORK DRIVERS											
	Meets Basic Needs	Supports Livelihoods & Employment	Ensures Public Health Services	Promotes Cohesive & Engaged Communities	Ensures Social Stability, Security & Justice	Fosters Economic Prosperity	Provides and Enhances Natural & Manmade Assets	Ensures Continuity of Critical Services	Provides Reliable Communication & Mobility	Promotes Leadership & Effective Management	Empowers a Broad Range of Stakeholders	Fosters Long Term and Integrated Planning
Focus Area 1: Our People: Healthy Connected and Inclusive												
By 2030 all residents have knowledge and access to fresh food within their neighbourhood.												
By 2024 a strong partnership model is developed to ensure a collaborative response to food security by organisations across Wyndham.												
Public Spaces in Wyndham are inclusive for all, particularly young people, women, and gender diverse people.												
Increased social capital and civic participation. Increase in the number of people who know their neighbours.												
Increase capacity and information to local health service providers and the community on infectious diseases												
Focus Area 2: Our Environment: Flourishing, natural spaces												
Water use efficiency is maximised, and alternative water sources are used to provide green and cool spaces. Invest in Council projects that supply 70 ML/yr of treated stormwater by 2040.												
Assist the agricultural sector to prepare for and respond to the impacts of climate change.												
A 10% reduction in Wyndham urban area hotspots by 2030. At least 25% potential canopy cover within												

streets across Wyndham by 2030 (moved forward from 2040.) 35% potential canopy cover in Council's open spaces (excluding grassland corridors, wetlands and coastal dunes) by 2030 (moved forward from 2040).												
All Wyndham City staff understand climate risks.												
30% of parks have a community group involved in park development, care or management.												
Focus Area 3: We are Ready: Disaster Aware												
Wyndham residents are aware of and know how to respond to unexpected shocks. 5000 Wyndham Community members have actively participated in 'Get prepared' Wyndham												
Increased use of community leadership forums for broader engagement on key Council actions												
50 Wyndham businesses participate in a workshop on disaster planning												
Focus Area 4: Our Places: Resilient and Sustainable												
Proportion of mode share for walking and cycling trips to triple by 2040 (Active Transport Strategy)												

Wyndham City Council operations are carbon neutral by 2023 (excluding the RDF) All new Council buildings are gas free (where appropriate electrical solutions exist) Council decision making aligns to the science-based targets in the Paris Agreement By 2040 Wyndham has transitioned to become a zero-carbon community												
By 2030 all Council fleet passenger vehicles will be low or zero emission. By 2030 all Council vehicle purchases will meet best practice emissions standards and use a carbon neutral power source (where a fit for purpose option is available).												
Halve household food waste to landfill by 2030. 20% reduction in the waste we generate at home by 2030. 90% of the waste we generate at home is kept out of landfill by 2040. Wyndham residents are recycling right by 2030 (maximum 5% contamination).												
Wyndham contains a network of town centres and neighbourhoods that deliver services, jobs and opportunities for communities locally.												
Focus Area 5: Our Future: Walking our Talk												
100 businesses participate in Wyndham connect and feel more informed about future challenges and are												

able to put in place strategies to be better prepared												
Increase number of staff at Wyndham who understand city resilience and feel confident to incorporate into their work.												
Progress on the implementation of Resilient Wyndham will be provided on an annual basis.												
Integrate sustainable procurement (social, economic and environmental) into all Council tenders and quotes. The environmental schedule is weighted and scored during the selection process for all tenders. 25% of Council's spend falls under sustainable spend purchasing criteria												