

City of Adelaide

Draft Community Wellbeing Strategy

Recommendations Report

Prepared by the Centre for Social Impact

December 2025

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Acknowledgement of Country

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The Centre for Social Impact (CSI) is a national research and education centre dedicated to catalysing social change for a better world. CSI is built on the foundation of four of Australia's leading universities: UNSW Sydney, The University of Western Australia, Flinders University and Swinburne University of Technology. Our **research** develops and brings together knowledge to understand current social challenges and opportunities; our postgraduate and undergraduate **education** develops social impact leaders; and we aim to **catalyse change** by drawing on these foundations and translating knowledge, creating leaders, developing usable resources, and reaching across traditional divides to facilitate collaborations.

Acknowledgements

The authors acknowledge the sharing and wisdom of the representatives of diverse community organisations in preparing this framework. We also acknowledge the City of Adelaide's Community Wellbeing Strategy team and in-house community wellbeing experts who undertook the focus groups as part of the targeted consultations and were table facilitators and note takers at the workshops held with key organisations.

Disclaimer

The opinions in this report reflect the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Centre for Social Impact or the City of Adelaide.

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Executive Summary

This report presents recommended actions aligned to key strategy areas to inform the City of Adelaide's (CoA's) *Community Wellbeing Strategy*. The recommended actions flow from analysis of data collected during targeted consultations with stakeholders and organisations at the end of 2025. The recommended actions align to six key goals areas within the *Strategy*:

- Goal One: People feel welcome and connected
- Goal Two: People are active and healthy
- Goal Three: People can shape their community
- Goal Four: People can adapt and recover
- Goal Five: People keep learning throughout their lives
- Goal Six: People feel safe where they live, work and spend time

The rich data collected via the targeted consultations has helped to inform 10 key strategy areas that align with the goals:

- Cultural equity centred on Kurna Country
- Everyday inclusion and social connection
- Safety and night-time comfort
- Accessible nature and informal recreation
- Supporting vertical communities (including housing affordability)
- Wayfinding and community amenities
- Multilingual discovery and welcoming
- Volunteering and lived experience leadership
- Equity-led preparedness and resilience
- Affordability and hidden cost reduction

Most of the key strategy areas has at least one recommended action associated with it – for council to consider and facilitate. A summary of the key strategy areas and recommended actions across all areas is provided below. This summary combines actions that might fall under one or more area, therefore identifying nine key strategy areas.

Summary of key strategy areas and recommended actions

	Cultural equity centred on Kurna Country
	<p><i>Embed Kurna-centred design commitments.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require Kurna language, histories and practices across signage, programs and precincts. • Commission local artists and cultural educators.
	Everyday inclusion and social connection
	<p><i>Adopt an inclusion-by-design policy across capital works and placemaking.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require no-purchase third places and visible convivial cues in precincts. • Include Gender Impact Assessments and universal design in project approvals and delivery.
	<p><i>Establish a hubs network charter (libraries and community centres)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formalise libraries and community centres as connection anchors with micro-grant pools, extended hours and connector roles. • Integrate non-digital information boards for equitable access.

	<p><i>Design inclusive shared spaces and programs for vertical communities.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create communal areas (gardens, lounges, multipurpose rooms) and organise activities that encourage interaction among residents of diverse backgrounds.
	<p>Safety and night-time comfort</p> <p><i>Implement a night-time safety and wayfinding plan.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct corridor lighting audits and vegetation management. • Publish safe night routes with QR codes on wayfinding. • Coordinate volunteer ambassadors and supervised taxi nodes.
	<p>Accessible nature and informal recreation</p> <p><i>Deliver a riverbank comfort and access program.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure step-free connections, shade, toilets and intuitive signage. • Co-program informal recreation through hubs (community centres and libraries).
	<p>Multilingual discovery and welcoming</p> <p><i>Establish an International Student Wellbeing Hub.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide multilingual onboarding, advice, study space and cultural connectors. • Integrate conversational grant support for student-led initiatives.
	<p>Volunteering and lived experience leadership</p> <p><i>Develop a Lived Experience Workforce Framework.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standardise remuneration, trauma-informed practice and participation in co-design. • Pair with governance support for volunteer-involving organisations.
	<p>Equity-led preparedness and resilience</p> <p><i>Build equity-led preparedness into core operations.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct strengths-based vulnerability mapping. • Formalise rapid coordination with partners. • Enable hubs as resilience nodes and expand multilingual non-digital alerts.
	<p>Affordability and hidden cost reduction</p> <p><i>Create a Citywide Affordability Framework.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce a low-cost participation policy and Third Places Grant stream. • Allow token fees to manage attrition while maintaining accessibility. • Review club and facilitator charges for equity.

	Monitoring and learning framework
	<i>Implement a Monitoring and Learning Framework.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Track participation diversity, perceived safety, discovery timeliness, volunteer capacity, resilience indicators, and lived experience involvement.• Publish annual progress and learning briefs.• Integrate with CoA's existing monitoring commitments.

Introduction

The City of Adelaide (CoA) is currently developing a *Community Wellbeing Strategy* as the guiding framework for the alignment of community services and partnerships, responding to changing capital city needs and demographics, and for enabling effective service delivery geared to wellbeing at a *population* level (including for identified priority groups) and at a *place* (neighbourhood) level.

In late 2025, the City of Adelaide (CoA) commissioned the Centre for Social Impact at Flinders University (CSI) to support the development of the City of Adelaide's *Community Wellbeing Strategy*. CSI is supporting the development of the Strategy in several ways:

- undertaking a series of workshops with key organisations and stakeholders to inform the development of the *Community Wellbeing Strategy*;
- providing advice on the structure and content of the draft *Community Wellbeing Strategy*; and,
- providing guidance on the development of the outcomes/reporting framework underpinning the *Community Wellbeing Strategy*.

This report is the key output of the first partnership activity.

Report purpose

This report presents key strategy areas and recommended actions to inform the City of Adelaide's (CoA's) *Community Wellbeing Strategy*. The key strategy areas and recommended actions are the result of analysis of the voices and ideas of key stakeholders engaged in targeted consultations for the development of the *Community Wellbeing Strategy* held between 15 October 2025 and 3 December 2025.

Ten separate engagement sessions were held during the stage one consultation period:

- Four focus groups with some of the identified priority population groups¹ (refugees and asylum seekers, Latin American women studying VET courses, LGBTQIA+ communities, volunteers) – all facilitated by CoA staff.
- Two engagement sessions with existing CoA Advisory Panels (Access and Inclusion, Reconciliation Committee) – CoA facilitated.
- A workshop with council's frontline staff – CoA facilitated.
- Three key stakeholder/organisation workshops, co-facilitated by CSI and CoA.

Workshops and focus groups employed creative engagement methods to foster inclusive participation and rich discussion. Through three key questions (see Appendix A), participants explored what wellbeing meant to them, what a thriving Adelaide looks like, enablers/opportunities for, and barriers to, wellbeing. External and internal (council) experts co-presented at each of the three stakeholder workshops to spark thinking and conversation, and photo voice cards were used as further prompts for thinking.

The CSI team analysed all data from the consultations using recognised thematic analysis methods (Braun & Clarke 2006): (1) familiarisation with data, (2) generating initial thematic codes, (3) searching session notes for themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining and naming

¹ Identified population priority groups include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, culturally and linguistically diverse communities including people from refugee backgrounds and asylum seekers, international students across the tertiary sector, people living with disability, younger people and older people. Priority groups reflect the changing demographic profile of the City of Adelaide, as well as *City of Adelaide: A Place to Thrive, Discussion Paper to inform the Community Wellbeing Strategy for the City of Adelaide* (City of Adelaide 2025a).

themes, and (6) reporting. The thematic analysis arrived at 10 key themes or key strategy areas as described in the remainder of this report:

- Cultural equity centred on Kaurna Country
- Everyday inclusion and social connection
- Safety and night-time comfort
- Accessible nature and informal recreation
- Supporting vertical communities (including housing affordability)
- Wayfinding and community amenities
- Multilingual discovery and welcoming
- Volunteering and lived experience leadership
- Equity-led preparedness and resilience
- Affordability and hidden cost reduction

Underpinning the key strategy areas are a series of recommended actions council can take to support the wellbeing of people who live, work, study and visit the City of Adelaide (see next section of this report). The recommended actions align to the six goals² of the *Community Wellbeing Strategy*. The goals, which reflect local government's role in wellbeing and health, include:

Welcome and connection

Goal One: People feel welcome and connected – by creating opportunities for everyone to participate in community life, build strong connections, and reduce isolation.

Active and healthy

Goal Two: People are active and healthy – by providing accessible spaces, places, programs, and events that encourage movement, play, and recreation for people of all ages, abilities and means.

Shaping community

Goal Three: People can shape their community – by supporting people to contribute their lived experience, get involved and influence decisions that affect them.

Adaptation and recovery

Goal Four: People can adapt and recover – by strengthening people's ability to respond to challenges, support each other during difficult times, and build long-term resilience.

Lifelong learning

Goal Five: People keep learning throughout their lives – by providing accessible learning opportunities, programs, and resources that enable people to develop skills, knowledge, and confidence at any age.

Safety

Goal Six: People feel safe where they live, work and spend time – by creating and maintaining safe, welcoming, and accessible places and spaces, while promoting community awareness and safety initiatives.

² The six goals are an evolution of the six domains originally identified in the Discussion Paper written by the CoA Community Wellbeing Strategy team as background to the consultations (City of Adelaide 2025a). The six goals were shaped by the CoA and CSI Flinders teams following consideration of the findings from the targeted consultations about people's visions for the City of Adelaide and what wellbeing means and looks like to them.

The remainder of this document wraps more detail around the key strategy areas and recommended actions.

Notes:

A second stage to the targeted consultation is planned for 2026.

A companion document to this report provides comprehensive summaries of each session held as part of the stage one targeted consultations: *Community Wellbeing Strategy, Targeted Community Consultation Engagement Report (CoA and CSI Flinders 2025b)*.

Appendix A provides the guiding document for the Workshops held.

Key Strategy Areas and Recommended Actions

This section of the report describes the key strategy areas and recommended actions underpinning each key strategy area for the *Community Wellbeing Strategy*. As noted, these have been derived from thematic analysis of data collected during the targeted consultations. Quick wins and bold moves are included within the recommended actions.

The recommended actions **operationalise wellbeing across programs, partnerships, precincts and planning. They provide practical, scalable solutions for a welcoming, safe and thriving city.**

Cultural equity centred on Kurna Country

What we heard

The City of Adelaide's Reconciliation Committee asked that Kurna culture be centred in Adelaide's wellbeing narrative and environmental stewardship (not decorative). Historical acceptance and everyday visibility – knowledges, language, stories, practitioners – should feature across places, spaces, programs, activities and events.

Why is it important?

Centring Kurna ways of knowing, seeing and being, strengthens belonging and guides sustainable place-making that benefits all people and communities, creates welcoming and safe places, and shapes community.

Strategic alignment: aligns with Goal One (welcome and connection), Goal Three (shape community), and Goal Six (safety) and supports council's priorities for reconciliation and cultural recognition.

Recommended actions

- Partner with Kurna leaders to embed language, histories and practices in signage, programs, and precinct design; commission local artists.
- Partner with Kurna leaders to embed Kurna-centred design and governance in programs, precinct and capital works plans.
- Expand cultural learning opportunities that are accessible and non-tokenistic.

Quick wins

- Partner with Kurna leaders to integrate culture (language, histories and practices) in signage, wayfinding and safety features across the city.
- Support Kurna-led walks and micro-installations.
- Showcase local artists in community-accessible spaces.

Bold moves

- Establish a Kurna-led design and cultural connection hub(s).

Everyday inclusion and social connection

What we heard

People want everyday spaces that invite incidental or spontaneous social contact without the expectation to spend money on social events. Opportunities for incidental social connection include important spaces like libraries, community centres, hubs and public open spaces (parks, the riverbank, and walking trails).

People consistently asked for council to facilitate community connection and welcoming through casual engagement opportunities (coffee sessions, spaces where they can play board games, repair stations, art corners and community gardens). People identified the need for “social dolphins” or ambassadors who extend invitations to others to join in with social events, especially people who might be feeling or known to be marginalised such as people from CALD and refugee backgrounds, international students, LGBTQIA+ people, and volunteers. Participants in the engagement sessions also felt more needs to be done to support the growing number of people living in vertical communities in the city, where access to safe and welcoming public space becomes important to counter potential for social isolation. Some participants also felt significant opportunities exist for council to do more to facilitate people who study and work in the city staying longer after their formal commitments that involve city spaces finish.

Why is it important?

Positive social contact in well-designed and welcoming spaces reduces isolation, strengthens trust and builds community connection and belonging.

Strategic alignment: aligns with Goal One (welcome and connect) and Goal Six (safety), and delivers on Council’s mandate around inclusive spaces and priority of supporting social participation.

Recommended actions

- Establish a network of hubs across libraries and community centres with micro-grants made available to community groups to seed low-cost engagement activities and informal learning opportunities (for people from CALD backgrounds, for example).
- Create a “Connection Calendar” that brings together what’s happening across hubs.
- Recruit and train neighbour connectors in vertical communities.
- Fund community connector roles.
- Extend library and community centre opening hours to support after-work and night-time connection.
- Pair libraries and community centres with physical (non-digital) noticeboards.
- Require no-purchase third places (public or semi-public places where people can gather informally) in precinct agreements and design briefs for major projects. Examples of such spaces could include: public seating areas, drop-in centres and community spaces within developments/precincts, and social corners in cafes.

Quick wins

- Install drop-in convivial tables in community centres, hubs and libraries.
- Pilot “offline club” sessions in community centres, hubs and libraries.
- Host fortnightly “meet your neighbours” mornings.

Bold moves

- Welcoming City accreditation.
- Activation of community hubs.

Safety and night-time comfort

What we heard

Residents, visitors and students strongly desire a friendlier city after dark. People noted the need for upgrades to lighting to support pedestrian movement and safety; clearer sightlines across public spaces; and supervised taxi pick-up points to help them feel safer in the city generally, as well as in particular precincts within the city. LGBTQIA+ people stressed the importance of safe and accessible dance and non-alcohol spaces. Older residents and students emphasised the need for safe routes through the Park Lands, noting that visible foot traffic supports feelings of safety.

Why is it important?

Night-time comfort dictates whether people stay in the city to participate in the range of events and activities city life offers. Making people feel safe (Goal Six) and encouraging evening vibrancy means that people feel welcomed within and connected to city across time and space (Goal One).

Strategic alignment: this key strategy area aligns with Goal Six (safety) and Goal One (welcome and connection), and supports council's priorities for safe public spaces and gender impact assessments.

Recommended actions

- Conduct a lighting and sightlines audit of vegetation.
- Add seating at lit nodes.
- Deploy volunteer city ambassadors during festivals, busy events, and evening times.
- Publish a safe night routes map with QR-linked "what's on" signage linking information about local events and activities and nearby services (e.g., gigs, exhibitions, late night cafes and venues, community programs).
- Coordinate visible evening activations in squares, Park Lands, riverbank.
- Publish safe night routes map on a city information portal.
- Embed Gender Impact Assessments and safety-by-design in capital works to mainstream safety considerations.

Quick wins

- Upgrade lighting at identified pain points.
- Identify places for supervised taxi areas.
- Provide easy to locate/identify ambassadors during major events and busy periods.

Bold moves

- Night-time economy and safe routes initiative.

Accessible nature and informal recreation

What we heard

Recreation and sport are key drawcards for the city for many people – whether as participants in formal or less formal sport or recreation pursuits or as spectators in sporting events. Some stakeholders felt that too much emphasis is placed on formal sport as the focus of recreation within the city, to the detriment of a range of other types of recreation and the spaces and facilities to support them. Desire was expressed for less formal and non-competitive activities to be supported by council, such as walking groups (through investment in good quality, accessible walking trails), social table tennis (through the provision of indoor and outdoor table tennis tables and equipment), and 3x3 basketball (through the provision of outdoor smaller courts) as examples. Stakeholders were clear about wanting better access to the River Torrens, noting that they did not know whether people could use the river for recreational pursuits such as kayaking. Shade, places to sit, hydration stations and toilets were repeatedly requested to support everyday comfort and broader participation in recreation and sport.

Why is it important?

Like formal sport and recreation, informal recreation welcomes diverse users, increases physical activity and supports mental health. Increasing visibility of recreation spaces for families, CALD communities and people who do not participate in formal/club sport, helps keep people active and healthy (Goal Two).

Strategic alignment: Aligns with Goal Two (active and healthy) and supports priorities for green space activation and informal recreation.

Recommended actions

- Install free public recreation spaces (including access to free/low-cost equipment hire), hydration points and shade.
- Publicise River Torrens boat ramps and permissible activities.
- Design flexible spaces that serve multiple community purposes, such as parks that accommodate play, exercise and community events, while integrating natural elements that support biodiversity. Incorporating plants, trees, and habitats that support local wildlife and ecological health, i.e. native plant gardens, green walls, rain gardens.
- Cluster amenities as activity hubs with toilets, hydration points, seating, and shade.
- Deliver a riverbank comfort and access plan (continuous ramps, toilets, signage).
- Program “walk and talk” clubs with organisations who provide these types of community engagements activities such as Walk SA, the Heart Foundation, or ParkRun, and make accessible through libraries and community centres.
- Renew community buildings to fit-for-purpose standards across the Park Lands, with attention to accessibility, safety and sustainability.

Quick wins

- Provide accessible table tennis and 3x3 basketball courts around the city for informal recreation options. Pop-up (movable) table tennis tables could be provided in the first instance (managed by the CoA’s activation team or relevant sporting club or education provider) to test how well they are used and received, with a view to resourcing permanent installations.
- Provide shaded seating, lighting and hydration points along high-use paths.

Bold moves

- Riverbank activation.
- Park Lands spaces and facilities renewal.

Supporting vertical communities (including housing affordability)

What we heard

Residents and international students in high-rise living reported isolation, suggesting that common spaces are needed to enable better social interaction and neighbourly connection. A range of thoughts were provided about the form of such spaces, which included common rooms within high rise apartment buildings, rooftop gardens and neighbourhood spaces external to the high-rise buildings. People offering thoughts on vertical community life and enabling a sense of community noted the need for spaces and programs to support connection, such as low-key, visible/attractive, no-cost activities to invite participation.

Conversations about vertical community life linked strongly with conversations about the affordability of housing in the city, and the need for affordable housing to support a diverse resident population, including international students.

Why is it important?

The City of Adelaide's ambitions for population growth demand expansion in vertical living. Successful vertical living is about creating vertical communities, communities which are inclusive and safe, and anchored in their neighbourhood and place. Good social infrastructure creates and supports communities, and councils are a significant provider or enabler of such infrastructure (community spaces, wayfinding etc).

Strategic alignment: Aligns with Goal One (welcoming and connection) and Goal Three (shape community) and supports council's strategies to support housing affordability in the city and to provide the infrastructure needed for vertical living.

Recommended actions

- Mapping of towers to create an evidence base for planning community life in high-rise environments and assess community infrastructure gaps (such as green spaces, community rooms), ensuring these spaces are socially connected and inclusive.
- Negotiate minimum social space standards and rooftop greening in development approvals.
- Support inclusive zoning across the City of Adelaide.
- Pilot/support piloting of an inclusive rooftop garden with social programming.
- Develop vertical community design guidelines that incorporate accessible routes, shared community spaces, and expectations for social programming, drawing on best-practice models.

Quick wins

- Co-create building-specific "welcome packs" connecting residents to nearby spaces and services that support community connection.
- Recruit resident connectors in key high-rise developments.
- Seed small budgets for monthly neighbour activities/meet-ups.

Bold moves

- Set a City of Adelaide benchmark for inclusive zoning.

Wayfinding and community amenities

What we heard

A significant proportion of conversations at all engagement sessions centred on wayfinding challenges and opportunities within the City of Adelaide, along with commentary about the accessibility and inclusive design of city amenities – council and non-council owned. The riverbank and Festival Plaza were identified as significantly underutilised areas, hidden from sight and confusing in terms of function, with clear opportunities for their better activation.

People involved in engagements noted wayfinding challenges specific to bike/e-bike access, and the need for step-free paths around the city. Additionally, toilets, seating and shade are inconsistently available (and often poorly accessible) making it hard for some people to engage with spaces within the city. A case in point raised were the shared paths around the River Torrens, which are inaccessible to many. Lack of shade/green canopy within the city generally created heat traps, limiting people's engagement with particular spaces and activities.

People asked for intuitive signage at key places within the city, including clear wayfinding markers to community centres and other places of community connection, with QR codes to scan to access information on nearby services/amenities and “what's on” guides.

Why is it important?

Dignified movement and comfort underpin participation, particularly for people with disability, older residents and families. Accessible amenities, clear wayfinding and easy access information support active and healthy lifestyles within the city.

Strategic alignment: aligns with Goal Six (safety) and Goal Two (active and healthy), supporting council priorities around an accessible city and universally designed infrastructure and amenities.

Recommended actions

- Refresh wayfinding with “you are here” maps and other visual markers of pathways to key amenities.
- Add QR code links to wayfinding and social connection information at key gateways across the city.
- Publish maps of toilets, seating, hydration points and shade locations.
- Integrate wayfinding with calendars of events and activation and with safety routes.
- Complete step-free shared paths to/along the riverbank.
- Add shade where tall buildings create heat traps.
- Require amenity standards in building renewals and precinct plans.

Quick wins

- Refresh signage, including pathway signage.
- Publish guide to key amenities and their accessibility.
- Remove barrier stairs on core shared path/bike routes.

Bold moves

- Application of inclusive design standards to all council amenities.

Multilingual discovery and welcoming (international students and CALD communities)

What we heard

For the international students and people from CALD and refugee backgrounds involved in the targeted engagements, welcoming to the city was of utmost importance. International students described arriving in the city without support or access to materials explaining Adelaide in their language, leading to confusion about where to seek help or find community connection. Communities asked for in-person help, multilingual resources, translated FAQs and culturally matched ambassadors who can guide discovery in familiar languages and platforms.

Why is it important?

Being welcomed within place is a critical foundation of community belonging. Supporting discovery in culturally responsive ways embeds belonging, removing language barriers, promoting feels of safety and inclusion and, ultimately, for students promotes a successful learning experience.

Strategic alignment: aligns with Goal One (welcome and connect), Goal Five (lifelong learning), and Goal Six (safety) and supports priorities for multilingual access and digital inclusion.

Recommended actions

- Co-host events with student and community groups and key organisations (education providers).
- Design more accessible grant processes and programs to enable CALD and student-led initiatives, i.e. embed simplified or conversational grant applications (i.e., no complex forms and process as these are a barrier to particular groups seeking seed and other funding for initiatives to support their community wellbeing needs and aspirations).
- Engage ambassadors via partnerships with VET and language schools and community organisations.
- Formalise cultural liaison roles and peer connectors.

Quick wins

- Translated welcome and discovery related guides and FAQs, covering such things as banking, communications technologies, housing, support services.
- Host welcome and discovery sessions at libraries/community centres.
- Support platform-specific outreach in key languages (WeChat, WhatsApp).

Bold moves

- Support the establishment of an International Student Wellbeing Hub modelled on Study Melbourne, with advice, space to study, networking and events.
- Support digital literacy programs for people from CALD backgrounds.

Volunteering and lived experience leadership

What we heard

Volunteers face out-of-pocket costs and seasonality yet report high wellbeing from participation. Communities asked for flexible roles, recognition and lived experience connectors who make public spaces approachable. Frontline staff emphasised co-design and rapid partnership coordination.

Why is it important?

A supported volunteer network multiplies capacity and strengthens community resilience, aligning with Goal Three: people can shape their community and Goal Four: people can adapt and recover.

Strategic Alignment: Aligns with Goal Three (shape community) and Goal Four (adapt and recover); supports priorities for volunteer sustainability and co-design.

Recommended actions

- Publish and maintain a volunteer listings portal accessible through the City of Adelaide website, libraries, and community centres, and integrated with existing volunteer networks.
- Refresh the City of Adelaide's Volunteer Strategy, identifying key ways the City of Adelaide supports and values volunteers (including via training opportunities, intergenerational volunteer roles).
- Subsidise costs for volunteers supporting the efforts of the City of Adelaide to build wellbeing and community resilience.
- Provide governance support and micro-grants to volunteer-involving organisations.
- Track volunteer retention and wellbeing.

Quick wins

- Support a network of city ambassadors who can provide guidance to people about city amenities, welcoming and discovery and opportunities for social participation.
- Create a single, easy-to-access centralised listings platform that consolidates all volunteer opportunities across the city, reducing confusion and making it simpler for people to find ways to get involved in the life of the city/community.
- Provide modest financial support (e.g., transport costs, uniforms, or refreshments) to remove barriers for volunteers, ensuring participation is inclusive and accessible for people from diverse backgrounds.

Bold moves

- Develop a Lived Experience Workforce Framework to support, embed and remunerate participation in the design, delivery and evaluation/review of council programs, strategies, policies and commissioning processes.

Equity-led preparedness and resilience

What we heard

Frontline staff highlighted anticipated challenges and pressures that communities and frontline services expect to face in the next decade, such as extreme heat, misinformation, and social isolation, alongside gaps in vulnerability mapping, scalable services, non-digital inclusion, and cross-system coordination. In response, communities called for adaptive resilience hubs located in libraries, sport facilities, and council-owned car parks (UParks) to serve as cool refuges and safe spaces during times of need. These hubs are critical for equity-led preparedness, ensuring vulnerable groups have accessible, safe environments during climate and social disruptions.

Why is it important?

Preparedness reduces harm to isolated and at-risk cohorts (equity considerations), ensuring people can adapt and recover when challenging situations present (for example extreme weather events). Community resilience is a necessary condition of the 21st century city and community, which has learnt the far-reaching impacts of such things as climate change, global pandemic and economic shocks.

Strategic alignment: aligns with Goal Four (adapt and recover) and supports priorities for resilience hubs and food security initiatives.

Recommended actions

- Run strengths-based vulnerability mapping and extreme event scenario planning for council staff, community and people with lived experience.
- Formalise rapid community resilience coordination structures and processes with partners (for extreme weather events, other community shocks).
- Enable UParks and resilience hubs (future) as refuges for extreme weather events, providing water and shade for vulnerable communities.
- Embed resilience and equity metrics across programs and capital works.

Quick wins

- Provide signage and other wayfinding to extreme weather refuge points.
- Develop multilingual non-digital alert channels/options to ensure all community members have access to key information about extreme events, and support to build their resilience.

Bold moves

- Pilot resilience hubs in two precincts.

Affordability and hidden cost reduction

What we heard

Cost of living considerations were top of mind for many people and groups engaged in the target consultations. People reported that social participation and wellbeing activities have real and hidden costs and these are a barrier for many. The cost of food, transport and parking were raised as concerns even at free events, pointing to the real impact of the cost-of-living crisis. Desire was expressed for support for genuinely no-cost activities to ensure equity in access to wellbeing opportunities.

Why is it important?

Lowering cost barriers increases participation, while improving fairness for low-income residents and newcomers.

Strategic alignment: aligns with Goal One (welcome and connect) and Goal Two (active and healthy) and supports priorities for low-cost participation and equitable access.

Recommended actions

- Provide flexibility for clubs and facilitators to offer wellbeing-related events at no cost or for a nominal fee (e.g., gold coin donation) and encourage no-cost elements in scheduled activities at events, so people who cannot afford standard event costs can still participate while maintaining a sense of value and commitment.
- Establish a dedicated grant program to support venues that host free, no-purchase social programming, ensuring inclusive spaces for connection and wellbeing remain viable and accessible.

Quick wins

- Subsidised food at council-supported events.
- Targeted transport vouchers.
- Accessible parking pilots (East/West loop bus).

Bold moves

- Adopt a low-cost participation policy for wellbeing related events and activities (transparent pricing, pay-it-forward options, low-cost food, transport vouchers).
- Integrate affordability criteria (including delivery of no-cost elements) into grants and event commissioning.

Where to next?

While this research captured diverse voices across Adelaide's communities, further engagement is required to deepen representation – particularly Aboriginal voices and perspectives. Stage two consultations on the Community Wellbeing Strategy must focus on meaningful engagement with Kurna Elders and leaders of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations to ensure cultural equity is fully embedded in the Strategy. More comprehensive engagement with CALD community leaders and organisations is also needed to ensure the views and needs of communities are captured and reflected in the Strategy.

The recommended actions presented provide a robust, evidence-informed pathway to operationalise wellbeing in everyday city life. They foreground equity, inclusion and preparedness, align with CoA's six goals and priorities, and convert community insights into pragmatic actions. The recommended actions outlined provide a balance of quick wins with actions to support longer-term change. They are structured to represent many voices and facets of everyday life in the city – part of an ongoing journey to realising CoA's vision of Adelaide as a *welcoming, safe and thriving city* for its diverse population of residents, visitors, students and workers.

References

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>.

City of Adelaide (2025a). *City of Adelaide: a place to thrive, Discussion paper to inform a community wellbeing strategy for the City of Adelaide* [Discussion paper].

City of Adelaide and Centre for Social Impact Flinders (2025b). *Community Wellbeing Strategy: Targeted Consultation Engagement Report* [Report].

APPENDIX A – WORKSHOP QUESTIONS

City of Adelaide – Community Wellbeing Strategy Co-Design Workshop

Workshop data collection template

Vision for Community Wellbeing in Adelaide *(In a few words or phrases)*

What does a thriving City of Adelaide look like for residents, visitors, students and workers?

What are the barriers to connection and wellbeing in the City of Adelaide?

(Please record as much detail as possible. Use dot points if you prefer.)

What are the opportunities for the City of Adelaide to strengthen connection and wellbeing across our city?

(Please record as much detail as possible. Use dot points if you prefer.)

Group process instructions *(These instructions help ensure consistent, usable data)*

Before you begin

- Choose a Scribe – someone who will write all ideas clearly on this sheet.
- Choose a Spokesperson – someone who will share key points with the whole room.

During discussion

- Consider each question from your viewpoint and the viewpoints of the priority groups listed below where you can.
- Capture ideas in clear dot points.
- Include specific examples where possible.
- Focus on practical actions, experiences and conditions that support or limit connection and wellbeing.
- Record consensus as well as differences of opinion.
- If a point relates strongly to a particular priority group, please note this beside it (e.g., “CALD communities”, “Young people”).

What to record

- Key barriers people experience.
- Opportunities and ideas for improvement.
- Innovative or practical solutions.
- Descriptions or “signs” of a thriving city.
- Anything important the group wants us to hear or know.

When you finish

- Review your sheet together to ensure it reflects the group’s ideas accurately.
- Make sure the scribe has written clearly and legibly.
- We will come back together to share some of the thoughts.

Priority groups to consider

When answering the three questions, please reflect on how your ideas relate to or impact:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	Children and families	Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) people	International students
LGBTIQ+ people	Older people (50+)	People experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage	People who are refugees or asylum seekers
People with disability	Women	Young people (12–25)	Other groups identified through discussion

