



HUME CITY COUNCIL

COVID-19 RECOVERY AND REACTIVATION PLAN

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Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

Hume City Council recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage within the municipality and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, which includes the Gunung-Willam-Balluk clan, as the Traditional Custodians of this land. Council embraces Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' living cultures as a vital part of Australia's identity and recognises, celebrates and pays respect to the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Elders past, present and future.

Overview

Purpose:	COVID-19 significantly impacted individuals, families, community groups and businesses in the City of Hume. This Plan outlines the priorities and key approaches that Hume City Council will pursue over the next 12 months to support our community to recover from the impacts of COVID-19.			
Domains of Recovery	Social	Economic	Built	Natural
We will continue:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Supporting our community groups and networks to bring our community together, promote social cohesion and community connection ■ Continue welfare checks for disengaged/vulnerable clients in our Health and Community Wellbeing services ■ Continue to provide programs, services, and support to help keep local sporting clubs operating, and the Hume community fit, healthy, and active ■ Continue to support families and individuals facing financial difficulties through reviewing our hardship support policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Deliver 164 Working for Victoria positions ■ Support local people to regain employment / retrain for new roles including providing a broader range of Multiversity programs ■ Targeted investment attraction to bring new advanced manufacturing and white collar jobs to Hume ■ Deliver business support to help existing business growth and sustainability ■ Support the visitor economy by promoting local and regional visitation, and activations that support hospitality and accommodation recovery/growth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Investing \$108 million to deliver 150 shovel-ready capital works projects to build new community infrastructure, including sporting reserves, parks and playgrounds, roads and footpaths and new community facilities ■ Support the activation of street-dining to encourage COVID-Safe visits to local restaurants and cafes ■ Continue to fast track scheduled capital works projects to support social and economic recovery in Hume. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recognising the higher levels of use occurring in our parks, playgrounds and public spaces continue to provide more frequent cleaning and mowing, providing welcoming spaces for our community to enjoy ■ Continue to ensure our parks, playgrounds and public spaces are COVID-Safe, including making physical distancing easier and more frequent cleaning of high-touch surfaces.
We will strengthen / deliver:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Implement Round 2 of COVID-19 Community Support Fund; providing direct grants to provide essential services and support to vulnerable community members ■ Plan and deliver a COVID-19 mass immunisation program, for residents when a vaccine becomes available ■ Empower communities to manage and lead their own recovery by facilitating place-based activities and events ■ Facilitate referrals to specialised mental health support agencies via Council's Maternal and Child Health Service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop a Hume COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan for 2021, in consultation with local business, industry groups, education providers and residents ■ Investigate opportunities to increase local procurement and support local businesses to tender / provide goods and services to Council ■ Facilitate planning permits from businesses to help stimulate the construction sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Continue to promote walking and cycling through connecting more walking and cycling links in urban areas e.g. residential areas to activity centres, schools, community centres, transport hubs and providing associated infrastructure e.g. seating, drinking fountains, signage, lighting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Deliver additional infrastructure in upgrades to open spaces and play spaces including installing more seats, table settings, water fountains, signage and recreation equipment e.g. basketball/netball towers in local parks ■ Supporting physical and mental wellbeing by providing free: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - seedlings, compost to enable residents to grow food at home. - native plants to residents, important for connection to nature in the home. - in-home assistance to set up home gardens.



Mayor's message

The coronavirus has had an enormous impact on the lives of many in the Hume community.

Our City was hit particularly hard - with high numbers of infection in the municipality - which resulted in prolonged lockdowns and a financial, social and psychological toll on individuals, families and businesses.

The crippling effects on our local economy in 2020 have been significant, as many residents were stood down or lost their jobs during the pandemic and some businesses have closed their doors permanently.

Hume City Council has worked closely with the Victorian Government to support our community through the health crisis and has provided direct support with \$11.5 million in emergency relief, grants and stimulus.

Through COVID-19, we've continued supporting our community by changing and adapting our services so people can still connect with us and access what they need to.

To help boost our local economy and get people back to work, we're building a better future by delivering the biggest capital works program in our history.

Over the next 12 months, we're investing \$108 million to deliver 150 shovel-ready projects to build new community infrastructure, including new or upgrades to sporting reserves, parks and playgrounds, roads and footpaths and new community centres.

As we now enter a new COVID-Normal way of life, our *COVID-19 Recovery and Reactivation Plan* will help drive our community's recovery and respond to local issues, needs and opportunities.

The Plan:

- Outlines how we will help to reconnect our community, with the social recovery of individuals, families and communities
- Seize opportunities to accelerate economic recovery of businesses, employment and local investment, and
- Ensure that the built and natural environments of Hume, including our parks and public spaces are COVID-Safe, and equipped to best support and facilitate community and business recovery.

2020 has been a year like no other and while the effects of COVID-19 are still with us, there is now a great opportunity to reimagine and redefine a better future for Hume.



Cr Joseph Haweil
Mayor of Hume



Introduction

There have been more than 1,660 COVID-19 cases in Hume with a peak of 585 in August 2020.

The municipality experienced ongoing cases of COVID-19 from March to November 2020.

Prior to the arrival of COVID-19, Hume was home to more than 15,000 businesses, who employed over 100,000 people. In 2019/2020 Hume City had a gross domestic product of \$14.5 billion, which equated to 3.2 per cent of Victoria's total GDP.

Current estimates indicate that the impact of COVID-19 on the jobs and the economy will last until late 2021, and may take years to return to 'pre-COVID' levels.

This Plan has a short-term outlook and outlines the actions and activities that Hume City Council will undertake over the next 12 months to support our community to recover.

Council is aware that ongoing recovery efforts will need to continue into 2022/23 and beyond.

Guiding principles for recovery

This Recovery Plan is underpinned by the National Principles for Disaster Recovery.

Understand the context

- Successful recovery is based on an understanding of community context, with each community having its own history, values and dynamics.

Recognise complexity

- Successful recovery is responsive to the complex and dynamic nature of both emergencies and the community.

Use community-led approaches

- Successful recovery is community-centred, responsive and flexible, engaging with community and supporting them to move forward.

Coordinate all activities

- Successful recovery requires a planned, coordinated and adaptive approach, between community and partner agencies, based on continuing assessment of impacts and needs.

Communicate effectively

- Successful recovery is built on effective communication between the affected community and other partners.

Recognise and build capacity

- Successful recovery recognises, supports, and builds on individual, community and organisational capacity and resilience.

Domains of recovery

Emergency Management Victoria outline four key recovery environments: social, built, economic and natural. Considering the impact of COVID-19, the primary focus of recovery in Hume is:

- The social recovery of individuals, families and communities
- The economic recovery of businesses, employment and local investment
- Ensuring that the built and natural environments of Hume, including our parks and public spaces are COVID-Safe, and equipped to best support and facilitate community and business recovery.

Council's role

Following the Victorian Government's declaration of a State of Emergency on 16 March 2020, Council has provided emergency relief, developed grant and stimulus packages and supported our community through a range of programs and initiatives.

As restrictions are eased and we enter a new COVID-Normal, Council is now planning and implementing longer-term initiatives to help drive our community's recovery in a targeted way to respond to local issues, needs and opportunities.

Through the course of recovery and reactivation, Council will actively advocate to and collaborate with the Victorian and Australian governments, and work with business, industry and community groups to support best results for the Hume community.

Our role will be both as a leader, advocate and participant – aiming to deliver a strong, coordinated recovery for the Hume community, and reduce the immediate and long-term impacts of COVID-19 across the City.



Current Context

Strategic links

The City's long-term community plan, Hume Horizons 2040, outlines the vision for the City within five key themes:

- A well-educated and employed community
- A healthy and safe community
- A culturally vibrant and connected community
- A sustainably built and well-maintained city
- A well-governed and engaged community

The COVID-19 pandemic does not alter Council's strategic objectives; however it does provide a different context in which we pursue them. As a result, we need to reassess and recalibrate our priorities, and the way in which we deliver services, to reduce the long-term impacts of COVID-19 on our community, our businesses and our City.

We will aim to ensure that recovery supports Council's broader principles of sustainability and social justice and short-term gains do not come at the cost of our identified long-term objectives.

In April 2020, Council developed a COVID-19 Relief and Recovery Plan, which provided the framework for Council's coordinated approach to community relief and recovery.

The Relief and Recovery Plan outlined the immediate activities undertaken by Council and guided Hume City Council in resourcing and assisting agencies in relief and recovery functions.

This Recovery and Reactivation Plan operates on a longer time horizon (12 months) and will guide the implementation of longer-term initiatives in response to the ongoing impacts of COVID-19.

Our community

Hume is home to over 241,000 people who live across an area of 504 square kilometres.

Our communities are built around the established suburbs of Broadmeadows, Tullamarine and Gladstone Park in the south, the growing suburbs of Roxburgh Park, Craigieburn, Greenvale, Mickleham, Kalkallo and Merrifield in the north-east, and the township of Sunbury in the north-west.

We are one of Victoria's most diverse communities. With 35.7 per cent of our population are recent arrivals to Australia, 44.8 per cent of our residents speak a language other than English at home. Postcode 3047 (Broadmeadows, Dallas, Jacana) has the fourth highest number of asylum seekers in Victoria (194 people).

Hume City has been particularly vulnerable to the impacts of the pandemic. We are one of the most disadvantaged local government areas in Victoria, with a Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) ranking of 947.

Within Hume:

- 8 per cent of our residents have low English proficiency
- 17 per cent are classified as low-income
- 29.9 per cent of homeowners are at risk of mortgage stress
- 6.3 per cent live with a disability (compared to 4.9 per cent across Melbourne)
- 29 per cent have two or more chronic illnesses
- 22 per cent experience high psychological stress
- There is a high family violence rate (1,637 per 100,000)
- Our residents face higher than average unemployment (9.8 per cent across the City / 21.1 per cent in Broadmeadows in June 2020).

Hume's initial COVID-19 response

We recognise that many households in our community face significant socio-economic challenges. Therefore, caring for the health, wellbeing and economic welfare of our community is our highest priority.

Council responded to the initial stages of this crisis by increasing support services to our most vulnerable residents through a relief and stimulus package.

Many of our services were adapted to provide continued support through tailored online or contact-free approaches during this difficult time. We also developed a range of financial initiatives to support our ratepayers, residents, businesses, sporting clubs and community groups.

Council reduced or provided relief for a number of fees and charges for Council services, and provided more time to pay rates, introducing flexible payment plan options, freezing interest on late payments and deferring rates for those in extreme financial hardship.

The relief and stimulus package included:

Support for residents and ratepayers

- Rates waiver of up to \$50 for residential and rural properties where the property is the rate-payers principal place of residence.
- Council to cease charging interest on outstanding rates balances from 1 June until 31 December 2020.
- Setting discretionary penalties for parking infringements at the minimum for 2020/21.

Support for local community groups

- Providing \$450,000 to deliver the COVID-19 Community Grants Program.
- Funding of \$250,000 for community groups and services to help provide food parcels and essential goods for families in extreme financial hardship.

Support for local sporting groups

- Grants of up to \$20,000 given to local sporting clubs.
- Waiving fees and charges for local sporting clubs.

Support for local businesses

- A \$1m COVID-19 emergency grants program for small and medium sized businesses (2020).
- A new annual \$250,000 growth grants program for small and medium sized businesses (commencing 2021).
- Waiver of food act registrations in the 2020/21 year.
- Waiver of all outdoor dining area permit fees and licence fees for 2020/21.

Support for tenants and hirers of Council facilities:

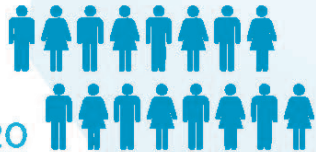
- Rent relief for tenants occupying Council facilities.
- Reduced hire rates for Council facilities.

This COVID-19 Recovery and Reactivation Plan builds on the foundations of these relief and stimulus measures and outlines priority focus areas to ensure that Council continues to provide support to the Hume community, where it is needed the most.

COVID-19 impact in Hume

Since March 2020, JobSeeker and Youth Allowance has almost doubled to

21,834
as of October 2020



Vulnerability to bill stress due to unemployment and more time spent at home



Mental health impacts

84%



One in eight Hume residents not working during lockdowns



34% with reduced work hours



Hume City Council – most trusted source of COVID-19 information for Hume residents

Hume residents aged 18-64
49% decrease in gambling



39% increase in drinking habits



Social media – second most used, but least trusted source of COVID-19 information



One in seven households with **4+** members working or studying from home during Stage 4 COVID-19 restrictions

1 in 7 residents did not have enough computers to work/study at home

Financial disadvantage
87%



Physical health impacts

93%



Community consultation and engagement

During September 2020, we asked our community about the impacts of COVID-19 on them and how Council can best support our communities during recovery.

Over 740 residents and ratepayers completed a *COVID-19 Community survey*.

The insights have provided a foundation for our recovery planning, ensuring we understand and can respond to community needs.

We recognise that this is only the first step; we will continue to engage and seek feedback as we implement this Plan, ensuring that our recovery is community-centred, responsive and flexible as community needs evolve and change.

When asked what additional support Council could provide to the community in response to COVID-19 moving forward, almost one in five respondents (24.3 per cent) indicated they were happy with the current level of support provided, or did not require anything further.

For those who indicated additional support was needed, the top five items were:

- Additional financial relief from Council (e.g. rates, fees or charges) (22.2 per cent).
- Further and more enhanced community communication and education on keeping COVID-Safe and what services and support programs are available from Council and other agencies – with Council seen as the most trusted source of community information - more so than both the state and federal government (18.8 per cent).
- More (targeted) social, health and mental health support services, particularly for young people and vulnerable communities (13.4 per cent).
- Improvements to City amenity and waste collection services – particularly as people have been more active in their local communities and using



Image taken prior to COVID-19.

their time during restrictions to do home improvements (5.9 per cent).

- Improvements to open space (including playgrounds, local parks and walking and cycling networks) (5.0 per cent) as people seek to maintain social distancing and socialise in outdoor spaces.

Recovery Plan

A well-educated and employed community

Council aims to support and enhance skill development and educational opportunities to reduce disadvantage, improve employment prospects and quality of life, whilst also creating conditions which support business growth and create local jobs for Hume residents.

Council will continue to deliver upon existing commitments including:

- Deliver the Working for Victoria funded positions, providing 164 residents, whose employment was affected by COVID-19 with 6 months of employment.

- Support for local people to regain employment or retrain for new roles through the Local Jobs for Local People program and the Hume Multiversity initiative.
- Support to ongoing business sustainability and growth.
- Investment attraction including Circular Economy, advanced manufacturing and white collar opportunities.
- Support to the growing small business start-up community.
- Support to re-establishing the Visitor Economy.

However, in response to the local COVID-19 impacts, Council will prioritise the following specific recovery actions:

Strategic Objective: Support and enhance skill development and educational opportunities to reduce disadvantage and improve employment prospects and quality of life.

Action	Recovery domain	Lead department/s	Budget	
			Existing / recurrent	Proposed / COVID-19 related
Develop a Hume COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan for 2021, in consultation with local business, industry groups, education providers and residents.	Economic	Economic Development	\$5,000	
Council economic stimulus package Round 2 including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Business Grants Program ■ Multiversity Resident scholarships for tertiary study ■ Recognition of overseas qualified professionals ■ Business Employment Grants program. 	Economic	Economic Development	\$250,000 \$50,000 \$25,000	\$250,000 \$150,000 \$1,000,000
Further enhance jobseeker support via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Virtual/actual jobs fair ■ Further support development of resident's skills and qualifications through growth in Multiversity Programs. 	Economic / Social	Economic Development	\$30,000	

Action	Recovery domain	Lead department/s	Budget	
			Existing / recurrent	Proposed / COVID-19 related
Attract new business investment in Hume through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Active stakeholder engagement and close management of new business enquiries. ■ Investment Attraction prospectus. ■ Delivery of a cutting edge online “virtual” Investment Attraction room to aid new business investment enquiries. ■ LinkedIn video promotions. 	Economic / Built	Economic Development	\$10,000 \$20,000	\$40,000
Continue to review and investigate opportunities to increase procurement via local businesses.	Economic	Finance and Property Development, Capital Works and Building Maintenance, Economic Development		
Supporting business start-up, fostering entrepreneurship through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ StartNorth, Hume Multiversity ■ Accelerator Programs, entrepreneurship programs. 	Economic	Economic Development	\$50,000	
Promote local and regional visitation, activation to support hospitality and accommodation recovery/growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ @DiscoverHume call to action online ■ Increased use of digital media partners ■ Participate in regional campaigns. 	Economic	Economic Development	\$30,000	\$20,000
Facilitate planning permits from businesses to help stimulate the construction sector.	Economic / Built / Social	Statutory Planning		
Support volunteer organisations to adapt to COVID-Normal practices and re-engage volunteers.	Social	Community Strengthening	\$5,000	
Recovery and Reactivation Budget Commitment			\$475,000	\$1,460,000

A healthy and safe community

Within the 2017-2021 Council Plan, Council commits to fostering a community which is active and healthy and strengthening community safety and respectful behaviour.

Recognising the impacts of COVID-19 on community health and safety, Council will continue to deliver upon existing commitments including:

- Supporting the Hume Interfaith Network to unite and bring together faith and community leaders, to promote social cohesion in the community.
- Delivering the COVID-19 support for Multicultural Communities project, funded through the Department of Premier and Cabinet, supporting targeted COVID communications and engagement in Hume.

- Continued welfare checks for disengaged /vulnerable clients in our Health and Community Wellbeing services.
- Continue to develop the Hume Youth Strategy, which will respond to emerging needs for young people in Hume.

However, in response to the additional COVID-19 impacts, Council will prioritise the following recovery actions:

Strategic Objective: Foster a community that is active and healthy.

Action	Recovery domain	Lead department/s	Budget	
			Existing / recurrent	Proposed / COVID-19 related
Deliver in person and online mental health, mindfulness and resilience workshops (delivered in community languages) to women and multicultural communities.	Social	Community Strengthening		\$20,000
Implement Round 2 of COVID-19 Community Support Fund; providing direct grants to agencies / organisations in Hume, supporting their ability to provide essential services (food relief), mental health programs and digital access to vulnerable community members.	Social	Community Strengthening		\$160,000
Deliver free community-based physical activity and social connection opportunities for cohorts disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, particularly women and young people.	Social	Health and Community Wellbeing / Leisure Centres and Sport		\$40,000
Deliver in-person and/or online multicultural community cooking classes which promote culturally appropriate healthy eating on a budget.	Social	Health and Community Wellbeing		\$20,000

Action	Recovery domain	Lead department/s	Budget	
			Existing / recurrent	Proposed / COVID-19 related
Plan and deliver a COVID-19 mass immunisation program for Hume City residents when a vaccine becomes available.	Social	Health and Community Wellbeing		
Provide free: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ seedlings, compost to enable residents to grow food at home, important for both physical and mental health. ■ native plants to residents, important for connection to nature in the home providing mental health support. ■ in-home assistance to set up home gardens. 	Social / Natural	Sustainable Environment		\$90,000 \$25,000
Energy Savvy program targeting financially vulnerable households to conduct energy efficiency home upgrades to improve thermal comfort, physical health and reduce bill stress.	Built	Sustainable Environment		\$280,000
Grants of up to \$20,000 to support clubs to meet their administrative and offset service utility service costs (and encouraging passing on savings to families).	Social	Leisure Centres and Sport		\$250,000
Grants of up to \$5,000 to support sporting clubs to remain viable and operating post-COVID.	Social	Leisure Centres and Sport		\$100,000
Establish a Health and Community Wellbeing mobile visiting service to deliver Maternal and Child Health, Aged Care, and Immunisation outreach services for residents in areas with limited services access.	Social	Health and Community Wellbeing	\$160,000	
In partnership with organisations such as the Waterwell Foundation, enhance health literacy of Hume residents by delivering resources and information sessions in community languages.	Social	Health and Community Wellbeing		
Recovery and Reactivation Budget Commitment			\$160,000	\$985,000

A culturally vibrant and connected community

Council commits to fostering socially connected and supported communities and strengthening community connections through local community events and the arts.

COVID-19 has impacted the way in which our community connect and participate in community life. Whilst face-to-face programs have been put on hold over the last eight months, Council has continued to deliver activities which enabled cultural vibrancy and connection including:

- The delivery of the first Community Change Makers program, supporting community led action and local change in neighbourhoods across Hume.
- Supported community agencies to adapt their volunteer programs for new program.

- Collaborated with the Multicultural Advisory Group and Community Hubs to understand new and emerging community issues and shape COVID relied and recovery responses.
- Continue to investigate alternative options for social gathering spaces for seniors groups and Council-led planned activity groups.
- Transitioned community capacity building programs such as Community Grants Information session, Community Group Governance training, Reconciliation Week and Arts Gallery programs to virtual and online formats to ensure we maintained and strengthened community connection.

However, recognising the importance of social recovery of individuals, families and communities, as a backbone for overall recovery, Council will prioritise the following recovery actions:

Strategic Objective: Enhance community pride and sense of place.				
Action	Recovery domain	Lead department/s	Budget	
			Existing / recurrent	Proposed / COVID-19 related
Launch the "I Love Hume" campaign; reconnecting with the heart of community and driving feelings of pride and belonging.	Social	Strategic Communications		
Share engaging personal stories of individuals living in Hume City through social media to increase visibility of community members, their unique experiences, cultures, traditions and strengths.	Social	Health and Community Wellbeing / Strategic Communications		\$10,000
Provide care packages for rough-sleepers that include bottled water, sunscreen, face masks, sanitiser, food/travel vouchers, resources and information about available local support services.	Social	Health and Community Wellbeing		\$10,000
Employ a liaison officer for 12 months to provide support to the growing number of people sleeping rough and at-risk of homelessness in Hume.	Social	Health and Community Wellbeing		\$80,000
Recovery and Reactivation Budget Commitment				\$100,000

Strategic Objective: Foster socially connected and supported communities.

Action	Recovery domain	Lead department/s	Budget	
			Existing / recurrent	Proposed / COVID-19 related
Empower communities to manage and lead their own recovery by facilitating place-based activities and events.	Social	Community Strengthening		\$20,000
Recognising the risks of family violence and violence against women during COVID-19, in partnership with Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres develop and deliver targeted programs that support at-risk community members.	Social	Community Strengthening	\$5,000	\$10,000
Facilitate capacity building workshops to up-skill community organisations to develop COVID-Safe plans, supporting their ability to safely re-establish.	Social	Community Strengthening		\$10,000
Continue to expand opportunities for older residents to remain connected online and with the assistance of technology in the home.	Social	Health and Community Wellbeing		\$20,000
Raise awareness of gambling harms, available supports within the community and alternative recreation options.	Social	Health and Community Wellbeing		\$10,000
Connect vulnerable families with material aid, working in partnership with St Kilda Mums and Big Group Hugs.	Social	Health and Community Wellbeing		\$10,000
Facilitate referrals to specialised mental health support agencies via Council's Maternal and Child Health Service.	Social	Health and Community Wellbeing		
Recovery and Reactivation Budget Commitment			\$5,000	\$80,000

A sustainably built and well-maintained city

Council already undertakes significant actions to:

- Facilitate appropriate urban development while protecting and enhancing the City's environment, natural heritage and rural spaces.
- Create community pride through a well-designed and maintained City.
- Create a connected community through efficient and effective walking, cycling, public transport and car networks.

COVID-19 has changed the way we use our spaces and reinforced our connection with our local environments, highlighting the importance of accessible and safe open spaces, parks and gardens

Recognising the impacts of COVID-19 on Hume's places and spaces Council will continue to deliver upon existing commitments including:

- Investing \$108 million to deliver 150 shovel-ready capital works projects to build new community infrastructure, including new or upgrades to sporting reserves, parks and playgrounds, roads and footpaths and new community facilities.
- Council has fast-tracked approvals and increased support to local food premises to establish outdoor dining to help activate hospitality in Hume and local activity centres.

However, in response to the additional COVID-19 impacts, Council will prioritise the following recovery actions:

Strategic Objective: Create community pride through a well-designed and maintained City.

Action	Recovery domain	Lead department/s	Budget	
			Existing / recurrent	Proposed / COVID-19 related
Deliver additional infrastructure in upgrades to open spaces and play spaces including installing more seats, table settings, water fountains, signage and recreation equipment e.g. basketball/ netball towers in local parks.	Natural	Urban & Open Space Planning		\$250,000
Continue to promote walking and cycling through connecting more walking and cycling links in urban areas e.g. residential areas to activity centres, schools, community centres, transport hubs and providing associated infrastructure e.g. seating, drinking fountains, signage, lighting.	Built	Urban & Open Space Planning	\$1,000,000	
Recovery and Reactivation Budget Commitment			\$1,000,000	\$250,000



A well-governed and engaged community

Council has an ongoing commitment to:

- Realise the vision and aspirations of Hume's community
- Create a community actively involved in civic life
- Provide responsible and transparent governance, services and infrastructure which responds to and supports community needs.

Successful recovery recognises, supports, and builds on individual, community and organisational capacity and resilience which is central to this theme. To support this, Council will continue to deliver upon existing commitments including:

- Facilitating regular connections with community engagement networks, including the Multicultural Advisory Committee, Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group and Community Safety Advisory Committee
- Ensuring our staff are enabled, supported, equipped and trained to continue to provide COVID-Safe services to the Hume community
- Rolling out new mobile technology devices to Hume staff to support their ability to work remotely
- Adapting services and practices to ensure they are COVID-Safe and support evolving community needs.

Recognising the dynamic and complex nature of COVID-19, and the importance of governance and organisational foundations that support successful recovery, Council will prioritise the following recovery actions:



Strategic Objective: Create a community actively involved in City life.

Action	Recovery domain	Lead department/s	Budget	
			Existing / recurrent	Proposed / COVID-19 related
As recovery progresses, undertake further community and business engagement to identify changing and emerging needs	Social / Economic	Community Strengthening, Economic Development, Organisation Performance and Engagement		
Advocate to the State and Federal Government to address local issues and community feedback relating to COVID-19 needs for Hume's community and businesses	Social / Economic / Built / Natural	Strategic Communications, Health and Community Wellbeing, Leisure Services, Family Youth and Children's Services, Community Strengthening, Sustainable Environment, Economic Development		
Recovery and Reactivation Budget Commitment				

Strategic Objective: Provide responsible and transparent governance, services and infrastructure which responds to and supports community needs.

Action	Recovery domain	Lead department/s	Budget	
			Existing / recurrent	Proposed / COVID-19 related
Extend waiver of interest on outstanding rates balances until 31 March 2021	Social	Finance and Property Development		\$250,000
Extend discounts to private event hirers (i.e. birthday parties) and not for profit clients running new programs in Council's community centres or facilities until 30 June 2021	Social	Customer Service, Events and Venues and Community Strengthening		\$250,000
Review our financial hardship policies to ensure they address the difficulties of increased financial stress brought about by COVID-19	Social	Finance and Property Development, Governance, Health and Community Wellbeing, Family Youth and Children's Services		
Review current COVID-19 fee reductions and waivers to determine if they should be extended to support ongoing community and economic recovery, especially for vulnerable cohorts	Social	Finance and Property Development, Customer Service, Events and Venues, Leisure Services, Community Strengthening, Governance		
Recovery and Reactivation Budget Commitment				\$500,000



Monitoring and evaluation

It will be important to track the social and economic recovery of the Hume community throughout the implementation of this plan.

We will evaluate the effectiveness and influence of the actions, regularly checking in with our communities as we go.

Periodic research and analysis will help us understand the progress of recovery. We will use these insights to inform and shape the next steps work towards recovery, identifying gaps and focusing effort toward areas of greatest need.

Potential population-level outcome indicators:

- Improvement with satisfaction with 'future security' on 2020 results (Source: Hume Community Indicators Survey).
- Improvement with Personal Wellbeing Index score on 2020 results (Source: Hume Community Indicators Survey).
- Decrease in the percentage of 15 to 64 year olds on JobSeeker and Youth Allowance benefits (currently 15 per cent of Hume's working age population).



Appendix 1

Social impact of COVID-19 on our people, families and communities

From a health, wellbeing and economic perspective, COVID-19 has touched the lives of every person across Hume. However, there are a number of sections of the community that have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes:

- Young people
- Women
- People working in casual or insecure employment
- Older people
- Culturally and linguistically diverse community members
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members
- Community member who are homeless, in insecure housing or rough sleeping
- International students and asylum seekers
- People with a disability.

Recognising the disproportionate affect the pandemic has had on certain population groups, the Recovery and Reactivation Plan seeks to provide greater levels of support for those who have been the most significantly disadvantaged.

From a community perspective, immediate impacts of COVID-19 have included:

- Personal lifestyle adjustments that were required to manage the immediate health risks of COVID-19 and comply with State Government directives.
- Social and economic challenges from loss of income (including financial strain and housing stress and housing security (impacting both homeowners and renters).

- Mental health impacts relating to COVID-19 including increased anxiety, social isolation, stress, and increased rates of depression and anxiety. These impacts are disproportionately felt by younger people, with 16 to 24-year old's having the highest prevalence of mental disorders of all age groups across Australia.
- Family violence (heightened risk of violence within the home due to confinement and economic stress throughout the crisis).
- A disproportionate impact on young people in Hume. Early data shows that 12.8 per cent of youth in Hume are disengaged (4.9 per cent higher than Greater Melbourne).
- Exposure of the 'digital divide' within the Hume community. Disparities in access to digital technologies increased people's vulnerability and affected their ability to equitably participate in school, work and social connections during COVID-19 lockdowns.
- Education has been significantly disrupted by COVID-19; rapid transitions to remote learning impacted participation and engagement levels. This raises concerns regarding the lasting impacts of the pandemic on educational outcomes and opportunity, particularly for disadvantaged students.
- Higher incidence of racism. The incidence of racism that our multicultural community has experienced during the pandemic and lockdowns requires proactive and long-term measures to foster the HumeTogether spirit.
- Older people in our community have been isolated due to social distancing, particularly as they are more vulnerable if they contract the virus. One in four older people in Australia live alone and are already at risk of social isolation.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are also disproportionately at risk due to their already poor health outcomes and economic disadvantage.

Despite significant challenges that have been experienced and felt by many in our community, COVID-19 has also created some new opportunities and benefits in our community. Some which have been shared by community members and organisations include:

- Reaffirmed personal priorities about 'what's really important' and improved social connection with immediate family, friends and neighbours.
- The celebration of community kindness, togetherness, resilience and new ways of connecting and sharing through neighbourhood initiatives (i.e. Spoonville), social media (i.e. Hume Together campaign) and virtual connections (i.e. Zoom parties, Community Change Makers program).
- More time to think and live at a slower pace, reduced work demands for some, and more time spent with family.
- Greater connection with 'home', the local neighbourhood and local businesses.

Economic impact of COVID-19 on our businesses and economy

From a local economic perspective, COVID-19 resulted in significant industry and economic impacts in the City of Hume. Identified vulnerable economic cohorts include:

- Airline (Melbourne Airport) and tourism/visitor economy industry related employees
- Casual workers across all industries and gig workers
- Hospitality and visitor economy businesses
- Retail businesses and other sectors deemed 'non-essential' during the lockdown
- Sport and recreation providers
- Artists and Creative industries.

From a broad economic perspective, impacts of COVID-19 are:

- Lower population growth and potential decrease in greenfield residential land sales and construction sector fallout
- Low business confidence and concerns about future financial security is leading to a reduction in discretionary spending (and an increase in savings)
- Projected long term economic 'steps' shaped recovery
- Effects on younger people, many of whom work on a casual or part-time basis, and therefore may already face financial instability.
 - Youth are also more likely to have been unemployed before the crisis, with an unemployment rate higher than total unemployment.
 - Periods of unemployment of young can lead to further disadvantages with costs to the individuals often lasting many years
- Effects on other disadvantaged cohorts including over 45, migrants, long term unemployed etc.

Recognising the impacts the COVID-19 led recession is having on key businesses, industry groups and employee types, the economic recovery plan seeks to focus on the businesses and workers who have been most significantly disadvantaged.

In contrast, COVID-19 also offers new opportunities to shape and strengthen Hume's economy.

Hume's capacity to take advantage of the opportunities presented by COVID-19 are supported by the strong economic fundamentals which already exist in the City.

Hume has a critical mass in population, a large skilled workforce, strong economic assets (i.e. Melbourne Airport, employment land readily available, world class transport and logistics infrastructure, excellent B2B opportunities), and a commitment to ongoing infrastructure investment.

Opportunities for Hume's economy that can be facilitated through COVID-19 recovery and reactivation include:

- Activity Centres strategies to deal with potential for office/white collar decentralisation and the localised opportunities generated through having more residents working from or closer to home. This will strengthen demand for neighbourhood retail, food and dining, and services to respond to local catchments.
- Infrastructure projects advocated for through the North West City Deal, Northern Horizons and Hume Whittlesea Land Study.
- Aggressive investment attraction.
- Grants to support business growth and sustainability.
- Opportunities for growth in remote working will support demand for local coworking spaces such as StartNorth.
- Rising support for Australian made products and a desire to shorten (secure) industry supply chains provide an opportunity to further grow local manufacturing.
- Circular Economy growth is being supported by State and Federal Government Funding for related advanced processing and manufacturing.
- Transport/logistics – best infrastructure in Australia and growth in online shopping.
- Skills development -changing demand, over-supply and shortages; training and development and a big role for the Local Jobs for Local People Program and Hume Multiversity.
- Visitor Economy rebound focused on domestic tourism, which is the cornerstone of Hume's approach, including hotel developments.



Image taken prior to COVID-19.

HumeLink

Hume City Council's
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General enquiries: Telephone 9205 2200

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