

Community infrastructure and services



Strategic indicator

Increase equitable access, safety and quality of a diverse range of community infrastructure and services.

Domain overview

Community infrastructure and services are vital to support the health and wellbeing of residents. They may provide a safety net when things go wrong for an individual, family or community experiencing hardship.

They may also support community connection, access basic amenities (toilets, drinking water) and daily living destinations without needing a car. Community needs should be regularly assessed to ensure services are available for those who need them.

Links to Cardinia Shire Council Plan 2021-25

- 1.1 Plan for, and support the delivery of, accessible health and social services that address critical gaps in provision.
- 1.4 Facilitate a partnership approach to create safer communities.
- 1.5 Work closely with the community to deliver programs that build community resilience, relating to a pandemic or other disasters.
- 2.1 Advocate, plan for and deliver accessible community infrastructure and services that address community need.
- 3.1 Partner with community, business and industry to take action on, and adapt to, climate change.

About community infrastructure and services

Data about employment in Cardinia Shire identifies:

- 31 general practice (GP) clinics of which 53% provide bulk billing.
- The average distance to a GP clinic with bulk-billing is 1.6 kilometres.
- Healthcare and social services account for 4.9% of businesses (compared to 7% in Victoria), and employ approximately 11% of people in Cardinia Shire. Most of these are located in Officer, Pakenham, Koo Wee Rup and Emerald, with few in Bunyip, Lang Lang and Gembrook.
- Majority of residents can access a doctor (65%), dental (58%), allied health (54%), and/or food support (52%) within the Shire, however many go outside of the Shire mental health (64%), housing (72%) and alcohol and drug rehabilitation (70%) services.
- 25% of residents in 2023, did not visit a GP when needed (compared to 20% Victoria-wide).
- 7 Neighbourhood Houses and 8 Men's Sheds operate in Cardinia Shire.
- Many residents participate in community markets (67%), children's playgrounds (41%), and libraries (37%).

Community infrastructure and services liveability measures

- Social Infrastructure Index by SA1

Social justice and equity statement

Some groups in the community face unequal barriers to reaching their highest achievable health, social and economic outcomes. The Liveability Plan recognises the need to direct efforts for improving health, wellbeing and liveability in a way that addresses inequities through social justice.

Equity refers to providing resources based upon the circumstances and characteristics of the people involved, to ensure the same opportunities for all. Social justice removes barriers so that people can enjoy the same opportunities without reliance on external support. Social Justice and Equity action areas include:

- Equitable and accessible places, services, programs and activities
- A well-planned, accessible and liveable community.
- A safe and equitable workplace.
- An inclusive and empowered community.
- Leadership, collaboration and advocacy.

The role of community infrastructure and services in addressing climate change

Across immediate and ongoing disaster management cycles, local health and social services, community groups and facilities work together to provide support in climate preparation, mitigation, adaptation, response and recovery.

Community buildings provide safe and cool shelter during extreme weather. Community organisations play an important role in implementing climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies, to reduce overall emissions and working towards a stronger climate-resilient community.

Climate-health impacts on employment

During extreme weather conditions and climate disasters, health, social and community services, including housing, have increased demand.

The onset and worsening of psychological distress significantly increases at times of climate disaster as well the exacerbation of chronic illness requiring health intervention and hospitalisation.

Social issues including family violence and financial hardship are experienced and lead to an increase in demand for services.

When thinking about the future of food, the following is relevant

- Monitoring the growth and access of affordable, accessible health and social services and facilities to inform decisions and best use.
- Attracting health, cultural and social services to address critical gaps for the community through partnerships, innovating solutions, grants and advocacy for equity-based funding.
- Facilitating community participation in decisions around infrastructure, service and place-making.
- Providing services and public infrastructure that are inclusive, accessible and resilient to climate change.
- Activating facilities across the region through place-based planning partnerships and mixed and joint-use arrangements, to enhance service access, navigation, and connectivity.
- Balancing community expectations for investment in facilities in a rate-capped environment.