

## 2. Environments for Health

The Public Health Division of the Department of Human Services, in partnership with the Municipal Association of Victoria, Victorian Local Governance Association, local governments and other stakeholders, has developed “Environments for Health”. This framework for municipal public health planning incorporates an awareness of the social, economic, natural and built environments and their impact on health and wellbeing. This framework encourages municipal public health planning of a high standard and consistency in scope and approach across the State, while still valuing diversity. Importantly, it also aims to improve community health and wellbeing by promoting the integration of Municipal Public Health Plans as an essential component of municipal corporate planning.<sup>1</sup>

### **Social Environment**

#### **Monash General Wellbeing**

Monash residents reported similar wellbeing to all Victorians. Residents gave their wellbeing an average score of 77.2 out of 100, compared to the Victorian average of 77.3.<sup>2</sup> There has been no significant change in subjective wellbeing for Monash between the 2007, 2011 and 2015 surveys.<sup>3\*\*</sup>

Life satisfaction measures how people evaluate their life as a whole. When asked to rate their general satisfaction with life on a scale from zero to 10, residents of Monash reported an average score of 7.7. This is similar to the Victorian life satisfaction average score of 7.8.<sup>4</sup>

Respondents of the Monash City Council 2016 Community Satisfaction Survey were asked to rate their agreement with six statements regarding the local community and sense of community.

Survey respondents rated the following six statements relatively high out of ten:

- Monash community is accepting of people from diverse cultures and backgrounds – 8.34
- Monash community has access to adequate community services – 7.71
- It’s easy to find out what services are available – 7.62
- I/we feel part of the local community – 7.60
- It’s easy to find out about local activities and events – 7.58
- There are adequate opportunities to socialise and meet people – 7.56<sup>5</sup>

#### **Community Safety**

Most (93.3%) Monash residents agreed that they felt safe walking alone during the day, which is similar to the Victorian estimate (92.5%).<sup>6</sup> Just under six out of 10 (58.2%) Monash residents agreed that they felt safe walking alone in their local area after dark, compared to the Victorian estimate (55.1%), indicating that residents in Monash feel slightly safer.<sup>7</sup> There has been no significant change in perceptions of safety for Monash between the 2007, 2011 and 2015 surveys.<sup>8</sup>

Refer to Fact Sheet 5: Community Safety for more information.

#### **Mental Wellbeing (resilience)**

The mental wellbeing indicators were level of resilience, indicators of neighbourhood connection and trust, and attitudes to gender equality in relationships.

Monash residents reported an average resilience score of 6.2 out of 8. This is similar to Victorian residents, who reported an average resilience score of 6.4.<sup>9</sup> The proportion of Monash residents who agreed that people in their neighbourhood are willing to help each other out was 69.0%, which is slightly higher than the Victorian estimate (61.0%).<sup>10</sup> A similar proportion of Monash residents agreed that people in their neighbourhood can be trusted (69.9%), compared to the proportion of Victorians who agreed (71.9%).<sup>11</sup>

## **Economic Environment**

### **Employment**

In the City of Monash, manufacturing is the largest employer, generating 15,278 local jobs in 2014/15.<sup>12</sup>

In 2014/15, the City of Monash contributed 4.1% of Victoria's employment and 4.0% of its value add.<sup>13</sup>

### **Income**

The City of Monash local labour force has a higher proportion of people with high incomes (\$1,500 or more per week) than Victoria.<sup>14</sup>

### **Education levels**

Compared to Greater Melbourne, a larger percentage of persons in the City of Monash hold Bachelor or Higher degrees (37% compared to 29.1%).<sup>15</sup>

### **Car Ownership**

Analysis of car ownership in 2011, indicates 54% of households in the City of Monash had access to two or more motor vehicles, compared to 51% in Greater Melbourne.<sup>16</sup>

### **Food Security**

Food security occurs when people are able to access safe, affordable and nutritious food.<sup>17</sup> Some people in Australia are less likely to be food secure.<sup>18</sup> In the City of Monash, about 6% of people are food insecure, compared to only about 3% in our closest Council areas.<sup>19</sup> There are many activities in Monash that make it easier to obtain healthy food. Farmers' markets are a place for people to buy local and seasonal produce. Community gardens provide space for people to grow fruit and vegetable, as well as to socialise with people from their local area. Gardening classes teach people how to grow fruit and vegetables at home. Community cooking classes give people skills in preparing healthy food.<sup>20</sup>

## **Built Environment**

### **Housing Valuation in Monash**

At June 2016, the City of Monash had a median house valuation of \$1,051,903, which was \$529,046 higher than the median house valuation for Victoria.<sup>21</sup>

### **Transport Access and Use**

Analysis of the method of travel to work of the residents in the City of Monash in 2011 compared to Greater Melbourne, shows that 15.6% used public transport, while 66.1% used a private vehicle, compared with 13.8% and 66.1% respectively in Greater Melbourne.<sup>22</sup>

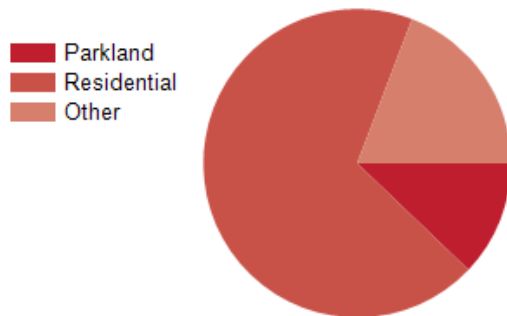
## **Natural Environment**

### **Land Usage**

The City of Monash is a predominantly residential area (76%), with a substantial industrial area (7%), a technology precinct (7%), 6% is zoned for other industry, 1% is zoned for business and recreational and open space comprises of 10%. The City encompasses a total land area of 81 square kilometres.

<sup>23</sup>

#### **Land use**



### **Water Use and Recycling**

Household Water Conservations was measured in the 2011 Community Indicators Survey. <sup>24</sup> Forty-nine point three percent (49.3%) of persons living in Monash were in households that collect waste water, compared to 39.9% in the Eastern Metro Region and the Victorian State average of 41.3%.<sup>25</sup> Fifty-nine (59%) of household waste collected in Monash was recycled in 2009-10, compared to the Victorian State average kerbside recycling rate of 44%.<sup>26</sup>

### **Open Space and Recreational Precincts**

The City of Monash has 125 parks and reserves, which contain important strands of indigenous vegetation and provide important revegetation corridors and habitat for native wildlife.<sup>27</sup> There are numerous bike paths including: Scotchman's Creek Linear Trail, Waverley Rail Trail, Gardiner's Creek Linear Trail and Dandenong Creek Linear Trail.<sup>28</sup>

### **Walking Trails**

Walking is one the most important things you can do for your mental and physical well being.<sup>29</sup> New physical activity guidelines suggest we should aim for at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day. Walking can increase cardiovascular fitness, strengthen bones, reduce excess body fat, and boost muscle power and fitness.<sup>30</sup>

Monash offers local parks, bushland areas and reserves for residents to enjoy the sights, physical and psychological benefits of walking. The City of Monash also has a range of walking trails including: Damper Creek Path, Freeway Reserve – Fitness by the Freeway, Gardiners Creek Trail, Glen Waverley Historical Walk, Mulgrave Reserve and surrounds, Oakleigh Historical Walk, Scotchman's Creek Trail, Valley Reserve Path and other walks in Monash.<sup>31</sup>

### **Global Warming**

Debate continues to rage over climate change. The human population on earth, however is trapping more greenhouse gases in our atmosphere by burning fossil fuels for energy which is causing the earth's temperature to rise. This is known as Global Warming. Reputable climate scientists all over the world agree that this change in our climate will cause more intense and frequent weather events<sup>32</sup>. This is expected to have impacts on Australian climate such as:

- 1 degree C increase in temperatures;
- Up to 20% more months of drought;
- Up to 25% increase in very high or extreme fire danger; and
- Increase in storm surges and weather events.<sup>33</sup>

For Australia, one of the most important concerns is the health of its people.<sup>34</sup> Five main impacts need to be considered:

- Extreme weather events: Directly impacts on lives, homes and communities, and will also place stress on the mental wellbeing of members of the community during prolonged events such as intense heatwaves.<sup>35</sup>
- Disease: Many diseases are likely to spread and increase in incidence as the climate warms.<sup>36</sup>
- Food & Water: Disrupted supplies of water and high temperatures will stress crops and promote algal blooms in reservoirs while rising ocean acidification will affect fisheries.<sup>37</sup>
- Jobs: Livelihoods – including farming fishing and tourism – will be badly affected from soaring temperatures, droughts and storms. Employment patterns will be changed and disruptions to supply chains will threaten business.<sup>38</sup>
- Security: Threatened food supply chains, changing patterns of infectious diseases and forced migration from land uninhabitable will trigger tension, unrest and violent conflict.<sup>39</sup>

### **Global Warming – City of Monash**

Most recently a statutory link between the Climate Change Act and the Public Health and Wellbeing Act has been made that requires council's municipal public health planning to have regard to the Climate Change Act when considering the impact of the environment on the health and wellbeing of the community.<sup>40</sup>

Environmental sustainability is planning and providing for the needs of individuals and communities now and for future generations, creating resilient and prosperous communities and protecting the environment and ecosystem services.<sup>41</sup> Monash Council's Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2016-2026, explores the current and emerging sustainability issues facing the City of Monash and its residents. It sets Council's environmental goals for the future and proposes actions that will help to reach these goals. The ten-year Strategy provides realistic but bold direction and actions required to integrate sustainability practices into Council operations, as well as its community programs and services. Priority Area 3 of this Strategy focuses specifically on Climate Change.

#### *Aims:*

- Reduce Council's corporate energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions
- Build Council's capacity to understand and manage climate change risks and how best to respond
- Increase community understanding and preparedness for the likely impacts of climate change<sup>42</sup>

#### *Objectives:*

- Best practice climate change thinking is integrated into Council's corporate and operational functions
- A strategic approach to reducing Council's corporate greenhouse gas emissions is established
- Increased community preparedness for the likely impacts of climate change.<sup>43</sup>

## 2. Environments for Health – Reference List

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<sup>3</sup> Vic Health 2015, Monash LGA Profile – Vic Health Indicators Survey 2015 Results, Vic Health, Melbourne retrieved 16 December 2016, <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/programs-and-projects/vichealth-indicators-lga-profiles-2015> \*\* Interpret with caution.

<sup>4</sup> Vic Health 2015, Monash LGA Profile – Vic Health Indicators Survey 2015 Results, Vic Health, Melbourne retrieved 16 December 2016, <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/programs-and-projects/vichealth-indicators-lga-profiles-2015>

<sup>5</sup> Monash City Council 2016, Community Satisfaction Survey Report, June 2016, Prepared by Metropolis Research Pty Ltd

<sup>6</sup> Vic Health 2015, Monash LGA Profile – Vic Health Indicators Survey 2015 Results, Vic Health, Melbourne retrieved 16 December 2016, <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/programs-and-projects/vichealth-indicators-lga-profiles-2015>

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