



COMMUNITY SERVICE ORGANISATIONS GROWTH AND ATTRACTION FRAMEWORK

2024-2027



Statement of Acknowledgement

The City of Casey proudly acknowledges the traditional owners, Casey's Aboriginal communities and their rich culture and pays respect to their Elders past, present and future. We acknowledge Aboriginal people as Australia's first peoples and as the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we work and live.

Diversity Statement

The City of Casey is home to a remarkable diversity of cultures, languages, faiths, identities, landscapes and stories. From our First Australians to our recent arrivals and every wave between, the City of Casey welcomes and represents all community members and their respective ambitions to live healthy, rewarding and happy lives. These intersecting and overlapping community stories from Casey's collective identity contribute to its evolving, rich history. We recognise this diversity as our strength and we aim to share, nurture and celebrate it.



TIS: 131450 (Translating and Interpreting Service)

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INTRODUCTION

Community Service Organisations (CSOs) are not-for-profit organisations accountable to a governing body that are established to provide support and assistance to individuals, families, and groups to maximise their potential and enhance community wellbeing.

These Community Service Organisations provide psychosocial, physical, educational, financial, and other support services. They also play a vital part in building healthier and stronger communities. Collectively, these highly capable and resourceful agencies form Casey's community services sector and generate around 15,000 local jobs per year.¹

Casey is a diverse, vibrant, growing community that will reach over 500,000 people by 2050. This makes Casey the most populous Local Government Area (LGA) in Victoria and the sixth most populous across Australia. It is one of 10 municipalities that are placed at the interface of metropolitan Melbourne and rural Victoria, forming a ring around outer metropolitan Melbourne.

This rapid growth brings both opportunity and challenge to build a bold, resilient, connected community. There is significant social need within the City of Casey, with increasing socioeconomic disadvantage, and declining health and wellbeing

outcomes. Casey's community services sector is strong, capable and resilient; however it is unable to meet not only the volume of service demand, but also the diverse needs of emerging populations and the complexity of their needs. Increased demand is resulting in long waiting lists, service rationing, short-term solutions and the most vulnerable missing out.

As with other Interface Councils, this rapid population growth in Casey 'is creating unprecedented challenges for infrastructure and service delivery, especially in the growth areas, where infrastructure and services of all types are limited and lag behind population settlement.'²

The Framework sets out a new and dynamic approach to building sector capacity and leading coordinated advocacy efforts to attract funding and specialist services to Casey where they are most needed.



THE CHALLENGES

In many ways, Casey's experience mirrors what is happening across Australia and Victoria; however, Casey faces some unique challenges. The size, diversity and rate of population growth means that Council must plan well for the needs of its community. The following are some of those challenges:



English Skills

A growing proportion of residents have low English skills (6% Casey-wide), with particularly high rates in established suburbs of Doveton (14%), Hallam (10%), and Hampton Park (10%).³



Humanitarian

Migrants Casey is one of eight settlement cities' across Australia, having settled over 12% of Victoria's humanitarian entrants over the last decade.⁴



Need for Assistance

1 in 20 Casey residents live with a profound or severe disability where assistance with everyday tasks is required.⁵



Mortgage Stress

Mortgage stress is felt in both established and growth areas, with several suburbs exceeding one in five mortgaged households.⁶



Psychological Distress

A quarter of adults experience high levels of psychological distress, one of the highest rates in Victoria⁷



Multicultural Communities

Multicultural residents experience barriers to services at twice the rate of non-Multicultural residents.⁸



Health Concerns

Casey residents have higher rates of diabetes and obesity than the state average. Only 51% meet recommended activity levels.⁹



Growth Areas

Residents in growth areas experience greater barriers to services than those in established areas.¹⁰



Long Commutes

71% of employed residents travel outside Casey for work.¹¹



Family Violence

Casey has the highest number of Family Violence incidents across Victoria.¹²



Ageing Carers

15% over the age of 55 in Casey assist someone living with a disability, health condition or old age.¹³



Low Incomes

Of Victorian LGAs, Casey has the highest number of residents living in poverty and sixth highest rate (17%).¹⁴

FRAMEWORK PURPOSE

Our purpose in developing this Framework is to establish the foundations for shared agreement and collective action so that Community Service Organisations can grow both individually and collectively and Council decision-makers know what to focus on and when to act.

OUR VISION

In partnership with Community Service Organisations across Casey, our vision is that all community members will have access to the community services they need from agencies best placed to deliver them, now and into the future.

OUR COMMITMENT

The City of Casey is committed to building a stronger community services sector. We need a mix of services in Casey that will improve the health and wellbeing of residents who are currently under-served. External funding for our community services sector has not kept pace with Casey's rapidly growing population and diverse community needs.

Council is committed to growing the capacity of existing Community Service Organisations and attracting new specialist services to Casey to address the resultant priority service gaps. Where there is alignment with Council priorities, strategies, resources and community needs, Council will consider options to advocate, fund, accommodate, collaborate, and partner with relevant Community Service Organisations to achieve this in a fair, equitable and transparent way.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Partnership Focussed	We will work with Community Service Organisations as equal partners to assess and respond to community need.
Innovative and Future Oriented	We will support Community Service Organisations to innovate and adapt to meet changing community needs.
Impactful	We will direct resources to where they produce the best outcomes for people in immediate need; have the greatest impact over time; and address underlying causes of inequality using an intersectional lens.
Needs Based and Informed	We will bring into focus the demand Community Service Organisations are experiencing and the lived experience of residents who use their services.
Reviewed	We will measure outcomes and adjust to new opportunities as they present.

OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2025 identified that a market-driven approach to service provision was resulting in a perpetuation of service gaps in Casey and a business-as-usual approach would not meet residents' needs into the future.

Through an intensive and targeted consultation process with Community Service Organisations and internal officers from several Council departments, Council has identified four goals that it commits to implementing over the next three years.

These will be achieved in partnership with Community Service Organisations, government agencies, private enterprise, and philanthropic organisations.

Community Service Organisations and Council officers were in alignment about what they collectively wanted a Framework to achieve.

Casey Community Service Organisations	Council officers
Sector integration and collaboration.	Sector integration and collaboration.
Increased sector capacity and leadership.	Streamlined internal processes.
United effective advocacy.	Aligned purpose, effort, and resources.
A voice for marginalised residents.	Actionable data.
Better access to facilities.	Strong advocacy.
Strong and equal working partnerships.	Interventions to address market gaps.
Collaborative practice.	Transparent priority-setting.
Evidence-based service planning	Better access to Council facilities.

GOAL 1: LOCAL INTERSECTIONAL DATA WE CAN ACT ON

Co-design a Casey-specific data resource for determining service needs and priorities that will inform decision making by Community Service Organisations and Council together about where we put our resources and focus our advocacy.



Why this goal is important

Co-designing a shared data resource with Community Service Organisations will generate richer local and individual level data, capture a plurality of local perspectives, and provide a more complete story of social need in Casey than what has been possible in the past.

The scale and complexity of community need, together with a constrained fiscal environment, makes it important to have a unified data source to underpin priority setting.

In consultations to develop this document, Community Service Organisations have asked for service mapping. They want a better understanding of what services already exist as well as where the strengths, gaps and duplications are across the sector. They want local data that they can use.

What we intend to do

- 1.1** Collect data about service demand, wait lists, service referrals, eligibility barriers and individual case studies on a yearly basis.
- 1.2** Track health and wellbeing trends through Council's new annual Household Survey to capture the experience of people not using services as well as those who do.
- 1.3** Identify barriers experienced by people with multiple intersecting forms of disadvantage to using support services, particularly those whose voices are not usually heard.
- 1.4** Align data analysis with the four-year cycle of the Council Plan and Health and Wellbeing Strategy to inform Council decision-making.
- 1.5** Establish a steering committee of Council, Community Service Organisations, and community representatives to oversee the collection, analysis and sharing of data.

How we will know we have achieved this goal



GOAL 2: A THRIVING COMMUNITY SERVICES SECTOR

Create the conditions for a highly functioning and collaborative community services sector that can respond to growing community demand.



Why this goal is important

Community Service Organisations have told us that a lack of integrated service planning results in duplication of effort. This includes volunteer-based Community Service Organisations who lack opportunities and resources to drive broader sector collaboration.

Agencies are not adequately resourced to undertake collaborative service planning and explore alternative and complementary delivery methods.

Limited and uncertain grant funding as well as stressful work environments make it difficult for Community Service Organisations to attract and retain experienced staff who can support residents with challenging and complex needs.

The Casey Futures Partnership will provide the most effective mechanism through which Council partners with the sector to implement Framework initiatives.

What we intend to do

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|------------|--|------------|--|
| 2.1 | Launch and resource the Casey Futures Partnership to strengthen Council and sector collaboration, address sector issues and become a united advocacy voice. | 2.5 | Improve utilisation of facilities by removing current barriers and identifying design principles that can be incorporated into existing and new builds. |
| 2.2 | Develop a 3-year strategic action plan in partnership with Community Service Organisations which Council will report on annually. | 2.6 | Support the development of new, emerging, and non-traditional service models including flexibility of service hours and locations to meet the diverse and intersectional needs of the community. |
| 2.3 | Provide a new targeted funding stream to complement existing grant programs that enables Council and Community Service Organisations to innovate and test new service models together. | 2.7 | Provide a digital resource that facilitates information exchange and efficient communication with the community services sector. |
| 2.4 | Identify under-utilised Council facilities and vacant land that could be made available for priority services. | 2.8 | Build the capacity of Community Service Organisations to meet the need of under-served residents and attract and retain a skilled workforce. |

How we will know we have achieved this goal

Effective collaboration

More resources

Facilities better used

Access to local skilled workforce

GOAL 3: INCREASED RESOURCES TO CASEY

Attract funding and critical services to Casey so that under-serviced groups have access to the services they need.



Why this goal is important

Some population groups are missing out on the services they need because programs are not tailored to their needs. This includes Casey's multicultural residents, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (Casey has the highest population in South East Metro Melbourne), people living with a disability, victim/survivors of domestic and family violence and those who identify as LGBTIQ+ (representing around 15,000 residents).

Casey has difficulty attracting new specialist services due to a lack of purpose-built facilities, financial outlay required and Casey's distance from the Melbourne CBD.

Government expectations around funding sustainability put Community Service Organisations under pressure to attract philanthropic and corporate funding and service reforms result in Community Service Organisations having to adapt service models with less funding certainty.

What we intend to do

- 3.1** Provide practical incentives for priority Community Service Organisations to establish successfully in Casey, including access to funding, facilities and collaborative partnerships.
- 3.2** Put mechanisms in place to fast-track timely and mutually advantageous co-investment opportunities with Community Service Organisations who have significant funding to contribute.
- 3.3** Advance an annual advocacy agenda with Community Service Organisations based on major service gaps and high priority issues identified through local data.
- 3.4** Partner with Community Service Organisations, philanthropic organisations, private enterprise and other levels of government to attract investment to the community services sector.
- 3.5** Support the establishment of satellite services in Casey's growth areas

How we will know we have achieved this goal

Funding with impact

Successful advocacy

Investment attraction

Stronger partnerships

GOAL 4: CONTINUOUS EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

Understand which actions are achieving desired outcomes and measure the tangible difference they are making.



Why this goal is important

This is the first time that Casey has made such a concerted attempt to support the whole community services sector to meet increasing and changing community needs and proactively attract priority services to the municipality. We need evidence of social impact to know whether our initiatives are working in the way we intended and adapt them as necessary.

Community Service Organisations seldom have the resources to evaluate their programs to the extent that they would like in order to justify ongoing funding and expansion.

What we intend to do

- 4.1 Apply social impact measures to assess the value of key initiatives to Council and the community.
- 4.2 Analyse crucial population data to assess the impacts of these initiatives on community health and wellbeing.
- 4.3 Support Community Service Organisations to demonstrate and document the value of their services and programs to government, the private sector and philanthropists.
- 4.4 Seek regular and timely feedback on Framework outcomes through the Casey Futures Partnership.
- 4.5 Review and report on actions annually using 'Our Learning Cycle'.

How we will know we have achieved this goal



FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION

A flexible three-year action plan will be developed in consultation with the community services sector to deliver on these four goals. These actions will also align in the Action Plan with community outcomes Council is looking to achieve through related Council policies, strategies and plans.

The implementation of actions within this Framework will be reviewed and reported on annually.

OUR LEARNING CYCLE

Our learning cycle reflects the intention of Council and Community Service Organisations to learn from experience through a series of sequential steps. It provides a structured approach to coordinating the CSO Growth and Attraction Framework, allowing Council and its partners to identify successes, challenges, and areas for improvement, and uses data and feedback to make more effective and informed decisions.

Our Learning Cycle will be the tool through which we measure and track progress and impact, and how we respond to new opportunities as they emerge.



GLOSSARY

The following are key definitions underpinning the Community Service Organisation Growth and Attraction Framework.

Key term	Definition
Council	Means Casey City Council, being a body corporate constituted as a municipal Council under the Local Government Act 2020.
Councillors	Means the individuals holding the office of a member of Casey City Council.
Council officer	Means the Chief Executive Officer and staff of Council appointed by the Chief Executive Officer.
Community Facility	Buildings that act as a focal point for community interaction; a place where people can build relationships and a community identity; where residents can meet and carry out activities; a place that strengthens the life of a community; and where residents can access community services.
Community Service Organisation (CSO)	Not for profit organisations accountable to a governing body that are established to provide support and assistance to individuals, families, and groups to maximise their potential and enhance community wellbeing. These Community Service Organisations provide psychosocial, physical, educational, financial, and other support services. They strengthen community ties and build healthier and stronger communities. The terms 'Community Service Organisations' and 'agencies' are used interchangeably throughout the Framework.
Community services sector	All Community Services Organisations located in Casey and/or those who provide support services for Casey residents.
Interface Councils	Municipalities at the interface of metropolitan Melbourne and rural Victoria, that share aspects of both urban and rural communities. Interface areas account for most of the population growth in Victoria. The City of Casey is one of 10 interface councils that form a ring around outer metropolitan Melbourne, along with Cardinia Shire Council, Hume City Council, Melton City Council, Mornington Peninsula Shire Council, Mitchell Shire Council, Nillumbik Shire Council, City of Whittlesea, Wyndham City Council and Yarra Ranges Shire Council.
LGBTIQA+	An abbreviation which is used to describe lesbian, bisexual, trans and intersex people collectively.
Multicultural Residents	Residents from different countries and ethnic and cultural backgrounds. It includes non-English speaking populations as well as people born outside Australia but whose first language is English and encompasses a wide range of experiences and needs.
Mortgage Stress	The financial burden experienced by homeowners who spend a disproportionate amount of income paying off a home loan. Generally, it's thought that mortgage stress kicks in when more than 30% of a household's pre-tax income goes to its mortgage.
Psychological Distress	A state of emotional suffering characterised by symptoms of depression (e.g., loss of interest; unhappiness; desperateness) and anxiety (e.g., restlessness; feeling tense).

GLOSSARY *(Continued)*

Key term	Definition
Growth Areas	Areas on the fringe of metropolitan Melbourne that are designated for large-scale change, over many years from rural to urban use. Melbourne has seven growth areas – Cardinia, Casey, Hume, Melton, Mitchell, Whittlesea and Wyndham.
Casey Futures Partnership (CFP)	A structured network of local agencies that represent a wide range of Community Service sectors who work collaboratively and in the spirit of shared leadership to improve the provision of human services for Casey residents.
Partnership	An arrangement between two or more organisations and / or businesses, with common goals, to yield a greater flow of opportunities, improve efficiency and pool resources for the mutual benefit of the parties involved and the community.
Innovation	The mindset and approach to solving a challenge in a new, collaborative way that pushes the boundaries and adds tangible value to the Council and community.
Resources	In the context of this Framework, resources refer to grant funding, facilities, information and data exchange.
Intersectionality	The concept of intersectional disadvantage or discrimination explains how people may experience overlapping forms of discrimination or disadvantage based on attributes such as Aboriginality; age; disability; ethnicity; gender identity; race; religion; and sexual orientation.
Partnership Health Check	A tool that is used by all parties to assess how well a partnership is functioning and whether it is meeting its goals.
Health and Wellbeing Strategy	The City of Casey develops, implements, and evaluates a Health and Wellbeing Strategy every 4 years to meet the requirements of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008.
Council Plan	A Council Plan is a legislatively required document (Local Government Act 2020, section 89) which sets a strategic direction for City of Casey for 4 years. The City of Casey's Council Plan outlines how we will achieve our long-term vision to become a more connected, bold, and resilient community.

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