



**Healthy Loddon Campaspe  
Stage 2 Strategic Plan Summary  
2022 – 2026**









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Healthy Loddon Campaspe respectfully acknowledges that the Loddon Campaspe region encompasses the traditional lands and waters of the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung, Wurundjeri, and Yorta Yorta people. We pay our respects to them, their culture and their Elders past, present and future.





## Introduction and Background

The Healthy Loddon Campaspe (HLC) initiative aims to improve health outcomes in the Loddon Campaspe region, the heart of Victoria. The initiative encompasses the six Local Government Areas of City of Greater Bendigo, Campaspe, Central Goldfields, Loddon, Macedon Ranges and Mount Alexander Shires.

Following community consultation undertaken in 2016 by the Loddon Campaspe Regional Partnership (LCRP), HLC was established and received \$6.4M in funding from the Victorian Government to deliver Stage 1 of the initiative. Partners in the Loddon Campaspe region collaborated to design the HLC model, and they continue to work together to improve health outcomes in our region by adopting a systems-wide and community-centric approach, prioritising those most at risk of poor health outcomes in our community.

Following an independent evaluation of HLC in 2020, that showed the unique and regionally designed model is effective and positively impacting health in the Loddon Campaspe region, HLC received further Victorian Government funding of \$6.6M to deliver Stage 2 of the initiative.

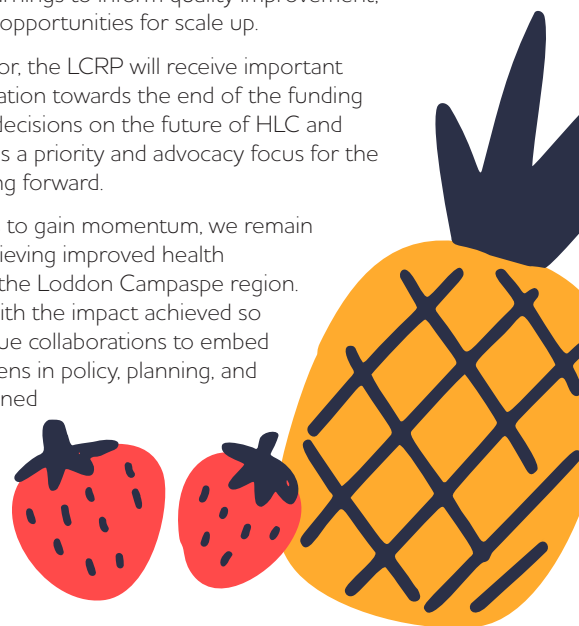
With Stage 2 funding confirmed over 2022 – 2026, the foundation has been set to take a strategic and collaborative approach to generate both systems and community change. This strategic plan will serve as a guide for our ongoing work. It was developed with our partners via:

- A Regional Planning Workshop in September 2022, with over 80 attendees from a range of organisations and community groups
- A Healthy Loddon Campaspe team planning session, held in October 2022
- Regional Steering Group member engagement to refine and ultimately adopt the plan as outlined in this document.

The plan responds to HLC Service Delivery Requirements set by the Department of Health (DH) for the funding period. Robust evaluation and monitoring mechanisms will be put in place, with a focus on demonstrating impacts, outcomes, and learnings to inform quality improvement, sustainability, and opportunities for scale up.

As the HLC initiator, the LCRP will receive important evaluation information towards the end of the funding period to inform decisions on the future of HLC and whether it remains a priority and advocacy focus for the partnership moving forward.

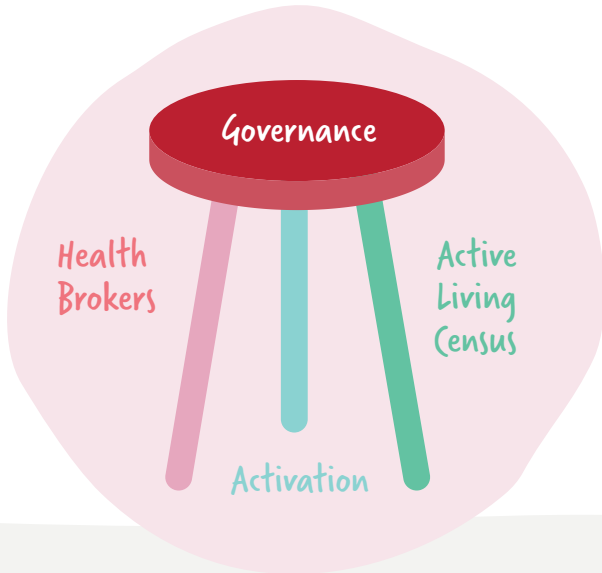
As HLC continues to gain momentum, we remain committed to achieving improved health outcomes across the Loddon Campaspe region. We are pleased with the impact achieved so far and will continue collaborations to embed a health-priority lens in policy, planning, and programming, aligned with catchment plans and state and local policies.



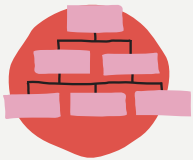


# Model

Our model shows our key components and guides our work and decision making. The four main components to our work are illustrated below as the seat and legs of a stool. At the time of the initiative's inception in 2016, it was agreed that all three 'legs of the stool' are needed to achieve impact. The subsequent regional planning workshop held in September 2022 reconfirmed this commitment.



## Key Components



### Governance

A light-touch, participatory governance structure which provides opportunity for a range of expertise and place-based knowledge to guide and support the initiative. The three levels of governance ensure broad achievement of our objectives, while allowing for locally driven decision making and delivery of activities.



### Health Brokers

A mix of both place-based and regional specialists tasked with supporting systems change through influencing policy development and local practice, building awareness and engagement of HLC and monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of HLC's work; with a focus on making health everyone's business.



### Activation

Local and regional projects focused on creating healthy spaces, places and practices to support an increase in physical activity and healthy eating among target populations. Place-based activation projects are designed based on community-level data and local stakeholder and community engagement.



### Data and Research Driven Approach

Place-based data collection to help inform planning, projects, funding opportunities and to undertake and collaborate on research.

This includes use of the 2019 ALC data and potential delivery of a re-envisioned ALC\*

*\*While the current funding round from the Victorian State Government does not fund the ALC, the collaboration believes the ALC is an integral part of our model and will work together to identify opportunities to fund a re-envisioned ALC for the initiative.*



# Aim, Objectives and Outcomes

## Our Aim:

To improve health outcomes in the Loddon Campaspe region - the heart of Victoria.

## Our Objectives

Support innovative and locally driven decision making, while aligning with regional and state prevention investments (Governance)

Increase understanding, commitment, and action to embed a health priority lens across the region to help make Health Everyone's Business (Health Brokers)

Create healthy spaces, places, and practices to support an increase in physical activity and healthy eating among target populations (Activation)

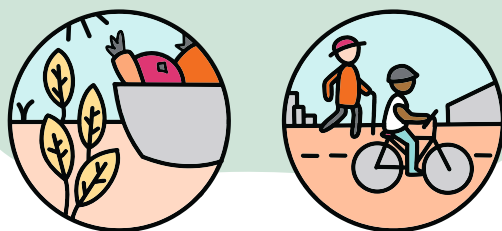
Support place-based data collection to inform planning and regional advocacy for healthy eating and physical activity activation and infrastructure initiatives (Data & Research Driven Approach)

## HLC Priority Areas

- Increasing Healthy Eating
- Increasing Physical Activity

Our Priority Areas align with the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (2023-2027) priorities:

- Increasing Healthy Eating
- Increasing Active Living



## Target Populations

HLC takes a population health approach, while focusing efforts and resourcing on target population groups and locations through specific projects. An equitable approach to resourcing means we prioritise those most at risk of poor health outcomes in our communities, including those who typically engage below the state average in physical activity and healthy eating.

Activation projects are place based, with locations or target groups in each of the six LGA's determined on a needs basis through local engagement and data from the 2019 Active Living Census, the Australian Bureau of Statistics and other available sources.

## Principles

**Our work and resource allocation will be guided by the following principles:**

- Keep our shared aim front of mind
- Grow networks and strengthen partnerships
- Be relevant to our local and regional plans
- Strike a balance between evidence-based approaches and innovation
- Evaluation/assessment: adapt based on assessment of implementation and/or impact
- Include local and diverse voices in decision making
- Communicate strategically so information is tailored to reach the right people, at the right time, in the right way
- Maintain a light-touch governance approach
- Focus on equity; those least supported to make healthy choices

**We will focus on things that are:**

- Anchored to the scope of the initiative: three legs of the stool
- Deliverable in the timeframe
- Aimed at system, behaviour and culture change; *Health is Everyone's Business*
- Place-based and community led
- Measurable
- Able to be scaled-up to a regional level



## Our Outcomes: What we hope to achieve

### During Stage 2 of the initiative

Outcome	Indicator
More people living in the Loddon Campaspe region participate in physical activity.	<p>Increased proportion of people living in the Loddon Campaspe region meeting the physical activity guidelines.</p> <p>Increased proportion of people living in the Loddon Campaspe region participating in sport.</p> <p>Increased proportion of journeys that use active transport among people living in the Loddon Campaspe region.</p>
More people living in the Loddon Campaspe region engage in healthy eating.	<p>Increased proportion of people living in the Loddon Campaspe region meeting the fruit consumption guidelines.</p> <p>Increased proportion of people living in the Loddon Campaspe region meeting the vegetable consumption guidelines.</p> <p>Increased proportion of people living in the Loddon Campaspe region confident in cooking their own meals.</p>
There are more healthy food and drink options available where our communities live, work and play.	Increased accessibility of healthy food and drink options in settings where our communities live, work and play.
Everyday physical activity is an easier option for people living in the Loddon Campaspe region.	<p>Improved accessibility and safety of parks, public open spaces and recreation settings.</p> <p>Reduction in barriers to being physically active across the Loddon Campaspe region.</p>
More organisations embed a health priority lens in planning and policy: <i>Health is Everyone's Business</i> .	Increased organisational understanding, commitment, and action to embed health in all policies across the region.
Improved coordination and collaboration within and between LGAs and regional partners.	Partners and networks are broadened, strengthened and actively contributing to the HLC initiative.
More community members the Loddon Campaspe region are actively involved in improving health outcomes.	Increased community-led activity which advocates for, and takes action towards, healthy eating and active living.
Improved access to meaningful data to inform local and regional physical activity and healthy eating activation and infrastructure initiatives.	Locally relevant and meaningful data is collected and made available to inform physical activity and healthy eating activation efforts.
Innovative practices are undertaken to achieve objectives and create opportunities for learning and scale-up	Increased proportion of projects scaled-up across the region and learnings shared widely.

#### Beyond Stage 2 of the initiative:

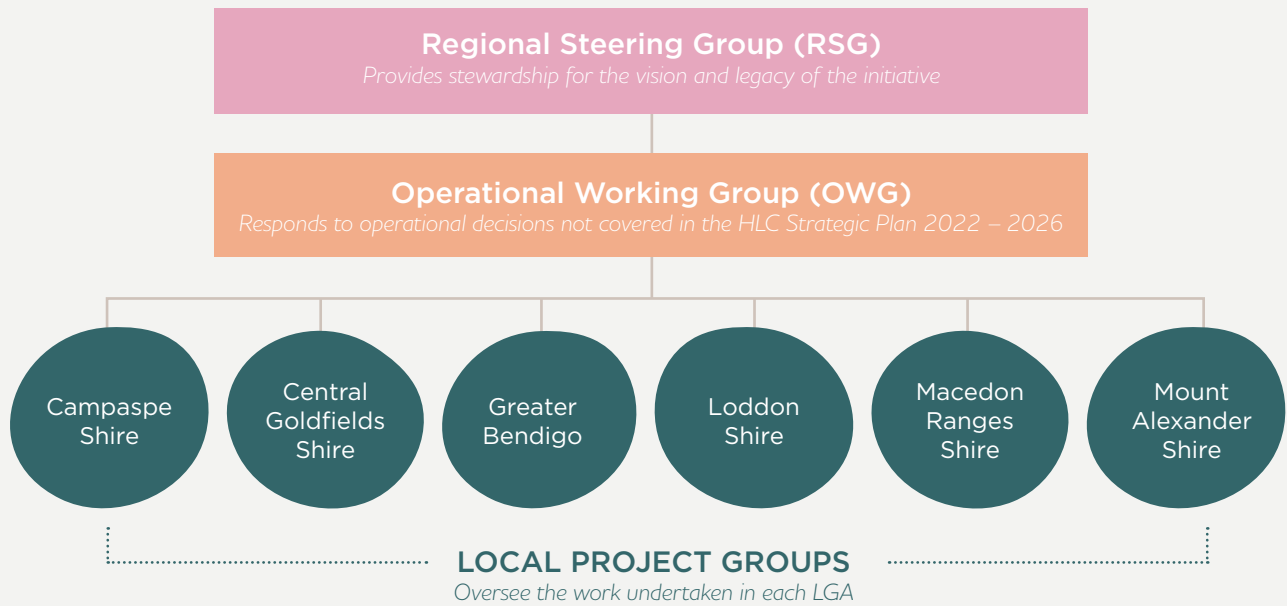
- Organisations embed a "health is everyone's business" priority lens across our region
- Organisations and community members advocate for and champion initiatives which enable physical activity and healthy eating for everyone, drawing on HLC learnings and the model
- Everyday activity is an easy option across our region
- Access to healthy food and drink options for everyone
- Our community knows why and how to be healthy



# Governance Structure

## Overview

HLC incorporates a light-touch, participatory governance structure which provides opportunity for a range of expertise and place-based knowledge to guide and support our work. The three levels of governance ensure broad achievement of our objectives, while allowing for locally driven decision making and delivery of activities.



# Health Brokers

## Overview

A mix of place-based and regional specialists working to influence and impact local and regional systems, particularly involving:

- Partnerships: establishing, developing, and strengthening partnerships, networks, and collaborations across the region
- Policy work: influencing policy, plans, strategies, and practice with a health-priority lens
- Capacity-building: providing opportunities for learning and helping organisations adopt more of a health-priority lens in their work
- Communication: building awareness of HLC through communications, marketing, and engagement
- Evaluation: monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of HLC's work

## Team structure

The City of Greater Bendigo is the HLC lead agency and responsible for employment of the team on behalf of the region. There is six place-based Health Brokers stationed at our partner local governments and four regional backbone roles that work across the initiative to support regional outcomes and efficiencies.





# Activation

## Overview

Activation projects focus on creating healthy spaces, places and practices that support an increase in physical activity and healthy eating, particularly among target populations.

Place-based activation projects are designed based on community-level data and local stakeholder and community engagement. Projects are outcomes-focused and aim to advance equity, create opportunities for scale-up and keep sustainability front of mind.

### Activation may include:

- Systems change
- Policy development or change
- Small scale enabling infrastructure
- Knowledge and skills development
- Community mobilisation and action
- Capacity building
- Strengthening best practice
- Broadening partnerships and networks
- Improving access to resources
- Prioritisation of target groups, geographic areas and settings based on equity
- Continuing actions that have demonstrated positive impacts in previous HLC funding rounds

### Activation does not include projects:

- Already committed to, and resourced by, government bodies and other funding bodies (excluding enhancement to such projects)
- That are considered major infrastructure, including sporting infrastructure
- That have not considered DDA compliance or universal design principles
- Focused only on people who are already physically active or who have a healthy diet
- Focused on secondary or relief efforts
- Previously trialled and deemed unsuccessful in other HLC funding rounds

### Examples of HLC Activation Projects:

- HLC Healthy Sports Clubs project provides a place-based approach to enhancing club capacity to offer healthy food and drinks to their members and guests. This activation project involves policy development, small scale enabling infrastructure, knowledge and skills development, community mobilisation and action, capacity building and improving access to resources
- The StoryWalks initiative activates walking paths through the installation of storyboards featuring pages of a children's story book. Children and families participate in physical activity while they follow along with the story. This activation involves small scale enabling infrastructure, knowledge and skills development, community mobilisation and action, broadening partnerships and networks
- Revitalising or establishing kitchen garden programs across early learning, school and community settings supports residents to grow, prepare and eat more fruit and vegetables. These activations involve policy development, small scale enabling infrastructure, knowledge and skills development, capacity building, broadening partnerships and networks and access to resources.





# Data and Research Driven Approach

Place-based data collection will help inform planning, projects, funding opportunities and to undertake and collaborate on research.

## Active Living Census

The ALC, conducted in 2019, is a region-wide survey that gathers information about Loddon Campaspe residents' health and wellbeing including:

- Participation in organised sport and informal physical activity
- Consumption of fruit, vegetables, water, alcohol, and sugary drinks
- Smoking and gambling
- Overweight and obesity
- Barriers to healthy eating and active lifestyles

While stage 2 HLC funding does not cover an ALC, our partners believe it is an integral part of our model, and have expressed commitment in seeking alternate funding to pursue a re-envisioned ALC.

There are several reasons for the implementation of another ALC, including:

- There is now a large, useable data set for our region, broken down by town. Another ALC would enable measurement of trends and changes to behaviour over a period of years
- The data influences strategic and policy directions across our LGAs, including Council Plans, Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plans and HLC strategic and project level work.
- The 2019 ALC data has supported successful grant applications totalling \$7million for place-based health, parks, and leisure projects.
- An independent evaluation and recommendations process was undertaken in 2021 and the following actions will be taken on board for future surveys:
- Leverage existing partnerships with community organisations to assist with survey uptake in vulnerable populations to increase response rates and representativeness
- Re-envision the ALC to lower costs involved, including a primarily online census
- Build in additional planning time ensure the most efficient and robust implementation, data analysis and reporting of the findings
- Translate the survey into other common languages (pending funding availability) to increase response rates amongst our culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- Review sampling and weighting procedures to reduce sampling error

## Research

Further opportunities for distinct research projects throughout the initiative will be explored, whereby the findings can be used to inform future project planning, as well as disseminated through a range of channels (e.g., academic publications, media releases, presentations and reports).

An example of this is a research project to assess the pricing and affordability of locally grown versus imported produce across the region. Data will be collected during each season to ensure an accurate representation of price points across the year. This data will be used to inform tailored marketing of local produce to improve consumption of fruits and vegetables. The findings will also be prepared for academic publication and conference presentation, and a policy brief which will be disseminated to relevant public health policy stakeholders.

The 2019 ALC data has and will continue to be used for academic research projects.



## Data

Data will be collected on a continual basis throughout the initiative as part of the evaluation for each unique Activation project. A more standardised set of key health behaviour questions will be asked pre and post projects across our region where suitable.

The data from all completed surveys and forms will enable us to explore the impact of the project across the entire Loddon Campaspe region, as well as between LGA's to identify for whom the project was most beneficial and impactful.



# Evaluation and Monitoring

## Overview

Robust evaluation and monitoring mechanisms will be established and implemented, with a focus on demonstrating impacts, outcomes, and learnings to inform quality improvement, sustainability, and opportunities for scale up. The engagement of a specialist contractor to develop a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning plan and prepare annual reports, will ensure independent oversight of monitoring and evaluation across the life of the initiative.

## Key activities

The Independent Evaluator will:

- Lead the development of a comprehensive Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan

- Provide independent oversight on the evaluation until June 2026
- Build the skills and capacity of HLC team to measure successful impacts and outcomes of our work and to support sustainability planning (and any future funding)
- Deliver yearly reports, including evidence-based recommendations to enhance HLC's impact

HLC and the independent evaluator will engage with stakeholders and DH in the development of plan.

As a State Government funded initiative, HLC evaluation and monitoring will be conducted in accordance with the evaluation requirements for lapsing programs to identify short, medium and long-term impacts.







## Partnerships and Engagement

Facilitating strong engagement and support from a broad range of stakeholders has been a key part of the HLC initiative from its inception.

HLC brings together representatives from state and local government, peak health bodies and local health and community services, summarised below.

### State Government Departments:

- Department of Health
- Regional Development Victoria/LCRP
- Sport and Recreation Victoria
- Department of Transport
- Department of Education

### Local health and community services:

- Community Health
- Regional and District Health Services
- Neighbourhood and Community Houses
- Disability services
- Education providers

- Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit
- Grampians Public Health Unit
- Aboriginal Controlled Community Health Organisations
- Bendigo Foodshare

### Peak bodies:

- VicHealth/VicHealth Local Government Partnership
- Sports Focus
- Nutrition Australia/Healthy Eating Advisory Service
- Cancer Council Victoria/Achievement Program/Vic Kids Eat Well
- Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation/Healthy Kids Advisors
- Heart Foundation
- Diabetes Victoria
- Sustainability Victoria

### Local Government representatives:

- Mayor, Councillors, CEOs, relevant departmental Directors, Managers and staff from each LGA





# Communications and Marketing

## Overview

Communications and marketing activity will focus on raising awareness of the initiative, promoting healthy eating, physical activity and the *Health is Everyone's Business* message. Communications and marketing activity will align to the strategic priorities of HLC, expanding reach, engagement and exposure of the initiative.

## Key activities

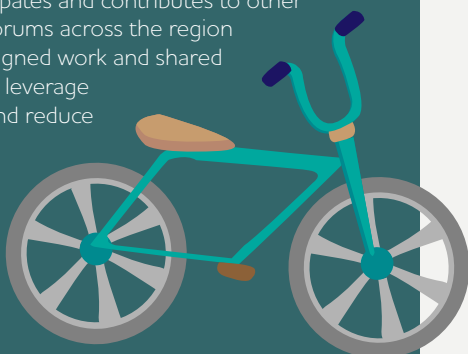
- Development and implementation of an initiative-wide Communications and Marketing Plan
- Launch and leverage of HLC website. The website will act as a central hub of information for the initiative, improving reach, efficiency and credibility, as well as providing a sustainable resource of health and wellbeing information for the community
- Connect, engage and build capacity amongst HLC target populations via a variety of communications channels including social media, online, public relations, email, reports and branded HLC marketing material
- Work collaboratively with Health Brokers and LGAs to provide communications and marketing support as well as identify opportunities for promotion and engagement for HLC across our communities
- Position HLC as a thought leader in the fields of health in all policies and place-based activations through approaches such as sharing project insights and learnings with stakeholders and the community; and creating opportunities to share information and resources with industry-specific publications and stakeholders
- Measure impact and success of communications and marketing activity via qualitative and quantitative methods including surveys, social media and web analytics, and community feedback.
- Create and communicate consistent HLC brand presence through logo, brand guidelines and brand voice

## Key activities

HLC will continue to work with stakeholders on the planning, implementation, and evaluation of initiative activities, including via:

- Quarterly RSG and OWG meetings
- Twice yearly contract management meetings
- Regular HLC LPG meetings in each LGA
- Regular Healthy Systems Network meetings
- Annual regional workshops
- Project-level working groups and partnerships
- Monitoring and Evaluation activities

HLC also participates and contributes to other networks and forums across the region that focus on aligned work and shared priority areas to leverage opportunities and reduce duplication.



More People,  
More Active,  
More often.





# Sustainability and Scale-Up

## Overview

True to HLC's focus on making *Health Everyone's Business*, our work seeks to embed this approach during and well beyond Stage 2 of the initiative.

We will work towards improved systemic capability for organisations and all levels of community to embrace and embed a health-priority lens in policies, planning and practice across the Loddon Campaspe region. This includes integrating a *Health is Everyone's Business* approach to existing processes and continuing our work to embed a culture of collaboration and coordination across our region.

Sustainability is often thought of within a financial lens, however it should be noted that sustainability is more complex than this. A relevant sustainability framework will be sourced and used to guide the development and implementation of the initiative to work towards achieving sustainable change.

## Sustainability

In addition to this strategic plan, which defines our direction and outlines our aim and objectives, we will:

- **Focus on local, regional and state-wide alignment**, including aligning our work with catchment plans, local activity and state and local policies. This includes Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans, the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and Healthy Kids Healthy Futures. Health Brokers are tasked with identifying local needs and priorities and how they may align with existing goals, projects and procedures within and external to local government.
- **Undertake capacity building** for individuals, organisations and at a systems level. This includes capacity building for Health Brokers, Local Government departments and stakeholder organisations. Mechanisms for capacity building include the Healthy Systems Network and annual HLC regional workshops. Capacity building will also occur within activation projects, such as train-the-trainer opportunities.
- **Focus on partnership and collaboration**, strengthening regional ownership and adoption of the HLC model during and beyond Stage 2 of the initiative.
- **Undertake continuous monitoring and evaluation** to allow for program adaptation and corrections throughout the life of the initiative, and to ensure effectiveness and impact.

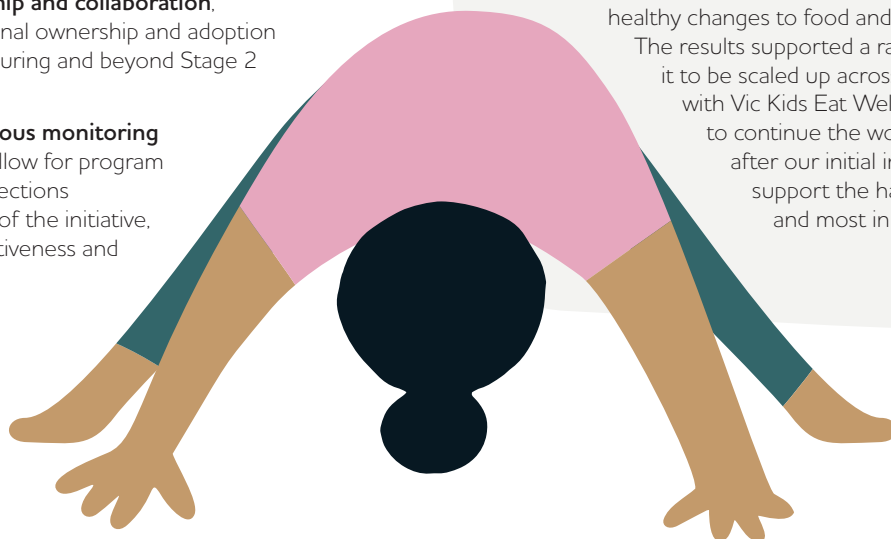
- **Advocate for and pursue diversified funding sources** to understand and address emerging needs. Funding from a new source to complete another ALC would provide up to date local level data to support a strong case for future funding and to inform local and regional planning beyond Stage 2 of the initiative.
- **Leverage state-wide programs** as a pathway for sustainability of our local projects (e.g., Vic Kids Eat Well with HLC Healthy Sports Clubs project).
- **Communicate strategically** to share outcomes, results and activities with stakeholders, decision makers and the community. A legacy of HLC resources will be available in an ongoing manner through the delivery of a public facing HLC website.
- **Advocate for and promote the HLC model** to gain leadership support across stakeholder organisations, local and state government, to support sustainability outcomes through things such as model adoption and policy change.

## Scale-Up

Our monitoring and evaluation processes will ensure data collection and analysis is undertaken robustly and regularly, and with sustainability at the forefront. This will allow for key processes and lessons learned to be captured so we have an enhanced ability to identify replicable approaches within our communities to reach larger populations across the region.

Perhaps our biggest opportunity for scale-up is with our regional and state partners. Using a robust evaluation approach, we will have the ability to take the learnings from this model and share it with others who might benefit from this approach across Victoria. For example, the evaluation process found that our Healthy Sports Clubs pilot project in 2022 was well received and successful in creating healthy changes to food and drink offerings.

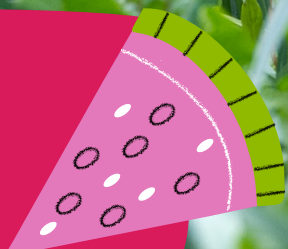
The results supported a rationale for it to be scaled up across the region with Vic Kids Eat Well as a partner to continue the work long term after our initial investment to support the hard to reach and most in need clubs.







Eat well.  
Be well.





# Deliverables and Timelines

Deliverables and Timelines	2022 from July 1	2023	2024	2025	2026 until June 30
HLC Strategic Plan 2022 - 2026	Development		Implementation		
Independent Evaluator appointment	December				
HLC Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan	Development		Implementation		
Annual Regional Workshop delivery	October	November	October / November	October / November	
Activation project funding rounds		June	June	June	
Healthy Systems Network meetings	8 - 10 meetings held each year				
HLC Website		Development	Implementation		
Flourish Food System Framework	Development and early implementation		Implementation		
Active Living Census 2025 (TBC)	Planning and development			Delivery	
Regional Steering Group meetings	August / November	February / May / August / November	February / May / August / November	February / May / August / November	February / May
Operational Working Group meetings		April / June / August / November	February / May / August / November	February / May / August / November	February / May
Local Project Control Group meetings	Monthly / bi-monthly meetings held each year				
HLC Annual Implementation Plan	March 2023	October	August	August	
HLC Annual Report / Final Report		September	August	August	July
HLC Annual Budget Forecast	February 2023	October	August	August	
HLC Annual Budget Acquittal		September	August	August	August
DTF Lapsing Program Evaluation				TBC	













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