

# STRATEGY<sup>20</sup><sub>30</sub>



## WATER SECURITY AND ZERO CARBON

1



### Water is a precious resource

Securing our region's water supply in a constrained environment through innovation, education and carbon reduction.

## HEALTHY PEOPLE AND ENVIRONMENT



### Water is essential to sustain life

Providing clean, affordable water for human and environmental needs including for Aboriginal values.



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**Water  
to live,  
grow  
& enjoy**

### Water underpins economic prosperity

Partnering with industry and government to plan and build water services that supports business, industry and employment.



### Water underpins liveability

Working with community and partner agencies to sustain attractive green spaces and recreational water access for our communities.



4

## GREEN AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES

3

## PROSPEROUS ECONOMIES





## ABORIGINAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Coliban Water proudly acknowledges our region's Aboriginal community and their rich culture and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge Aboriginal people as Australia's first peoples and as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and water on which we rely. We recognise and value the ongoing contribution of Aboriginal people and communities to Victorian life and how this enriches us.

We embrace the spirit of reconciliation, working towards the equality of outcomes and ensuring an equal voice.



# FOREWORD

## Water to Live, Grow and Enjoy.

THE WATER SECURITY OF OUR REGION IS AT OUR CORE.

OUR VISION AT COLIBAN WATER IS *WATER TO LIVE, GROW AND ENJOY*.

COLIBAN WATER – STRATEGY 2030 IS GUIDED BY FOUR STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS THAT ADDRESS OUR FUTURE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN ACHIEVING THIS VISION:

- 1] WATER SECURITY AND ZERO CARBON 2] HEALTHY PEOPLE AND ENVIRONMENT  
3] PROSPEROUS ECONOMIES 4] GREEN AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES

Our region is critically impacted by our changing climate, and we must continually adapt to the anticipated consequences of predicted shifts in our climate. Given this dependence, we will demonstrate climate resilience and climate change leadership by achieving net zero carbon emissions from our operations before the middle of this century. We will ensure water is available for all customers even with population growth.

Water is also fundamental to public health and community wellbeing within the social fabric of our communities and our region. Our focus is on ensuring our waterways and catchments are healthier as a result of our actions, and for tap water to be a drink of choice because of its quality and health benefits. Also important to us is that we respect and protect Aboriginal values in everything we do.

We are accountable at all times for providing essential services, which remain affordable and meet high quality standards, to a fast growing urban population, to valuable community assets and to businesses and rural enterprises contributing to our regional economy. Economic growth is enabled by water and it is important we are a community leader in the economic prosperity of our region. Engaging with and involving our customers and communities and ensuring they have a voice in our decision making is a must.

We also take responsibility for the stewardship of water in the wider landscape that is crucial to environmental health, societal values and urban liveability. It is important our community chosen priority urban areas are cool and green and communities can sustain attractive gardens, even in times where we have no choice but to introduce water restrictions.

In achieving our vision and strategic directions we must also manage the expectations of our many stakeholders in our role as an essential service business accountable to the State of Victoria, and as a socially responsible corporate citizen to our customers, communities, and the environment.

Whilst Strategy 2030 has an external focus – our people are critical to its delivery. We have a highly engaged and committed workforce of exceptional people. Our focus is on continuing to attract, develop and retain a diverse and inclusive workforce of people who empower strong and accountable leadership, exceptional teamwork, and a genuine commitment to the future of our region.



LUCY ROFFEY

CHAIRPERSON



## Coliban Water Service Region Diagram



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# STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

## Water to Live, Grow and Enjoy



### 1 WATER SECURITY AND ZERO CARBON

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### 2 HEALTHY PEOPLE AND ENVIRONMENT

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### 3 PROSPEROUS ECONOMIES

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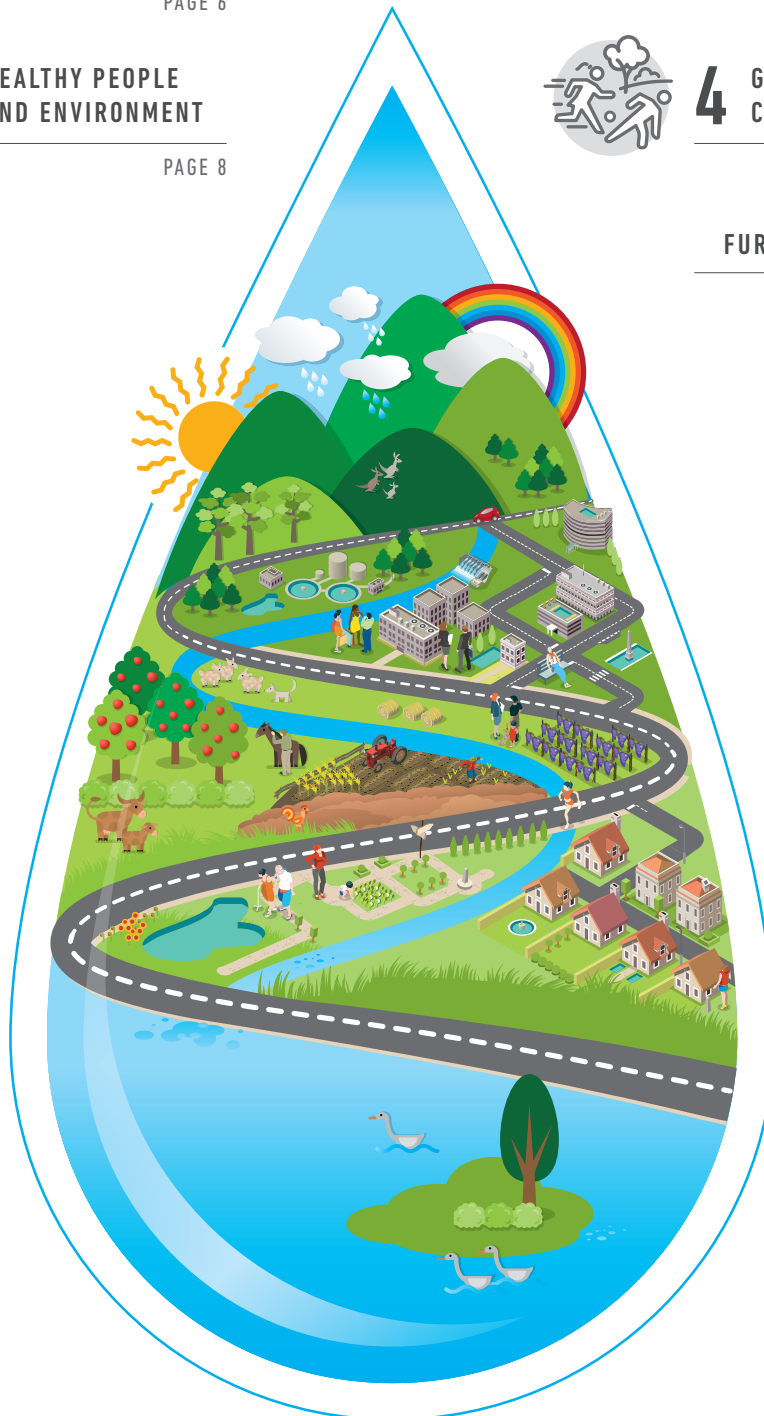


### 4 GREEN AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES

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### FURTHER INFORMATION

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# DRIVERS OF CHANGE

**Our communities and organisations are facing significant changes that will shape demand for water and sewer services.**

## CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change is a broad force changing the way we live. Our future climate is projected to pose a significant risk to communities in the Coliban Water region. Coupled with population growth, the impacts of climate change need to be duly considered – we need to plan for a future with a much larger population and less water than we have today.

The Victorian Government, via the Minister for Water has set clear expectations that water corporations need to respond to climate change through both mitigation (towards zero net emissions) and adaptation (continuing to provide water services in a changing climate).

Given the water sector is responsible for the largest proportion of government carbon emissions, Coliban Water is in a position to provide compelling leadership on climate change. We can support residential and commercial customers to reduce carbon emissions and water usage, and collaborate with other sectors for more effective mitigation and adaptation responses.

## GROWING DEMAND

Water underpins our social health and wellbeing and has a strong impact on the types and success of industries that can operate in the region. Changes in water demand and supply are driven by the lifestyle, proximity to Melbourne, and strong transport links.

Many urban populations are growing quickly, with the City of Greater Bendigo forecast to grow from 116,568 in 2018 to 155,596 by 2036 and similar growth in the towns to the south of our region. However, there is uneven distribution of population across our region, and smaller communities will also require quality water and sewerage services to enable their prosperity.

The challenge for Coliban Water is to ensure all communities are supported by sustainable services.



# Coliban Water has considered drivers of change in order to develop a strategy that will enable our communities to prosper now and into the future.

## COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

Communities in our region have made it clear that on top of high quality water services, they expect Coliban Water to support regional liveability, reduce our environmental footprint and be a more socially responsible organisation.

There is increasing acknowledgement that Traditional Owners have cultural, spiritual and economic connections to land and water. Water corporations need to take into account Aboriginal values and objectives for water and improve access to water for Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Victorians in order to provide opportunities for economic development.

Additionally, the community of this relatively dry region, expects Coliban Water to support recreational values of their water assets for activities including fishing, boating and swimming. Coliban Water can work with other organisations to plan and manage access to water assets.

## WATER INNOVATION

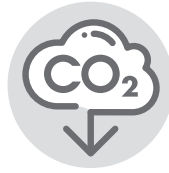
There is increasing interest across our communities and stakeholder agencies in finding innovative ways to supply quality water and sewerage services.

The Water for Victoria plan encourages technological, organisational and operational innovation, to improve supply of a limited resource facing increased future demand and reduced availability.

Innovation may take the form of investing in areas for public good where the private sector is reluctant to be involved, or it could involve a system wide review to find opportunities for improvement in a 'business as usual' operating environment, or it could involve conceptualising future infrastructure differently.







## STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1

# WATER SECURITY AND ZERO CARBON

## Water is a precious resource

STRATEGY 2030 FOCUSES ON SECURING OUR REGION'S WATER SUPPLY IN A CONSTRAINED ENVIRONMENT THROUGH INNOVATION, EDUCATION AND CARBON REDUCTION.

Coliban Water is a water corporation. Water is our greatest asset and an essential resource for the communities that we service. Current projects show that the region will have less water, while facing growing populations and changing consumer demand. Weather extremes associated with climate change threaten water infrastructure. To make our water supply resilient to climate change, we must continue to innovate in the way we plan for, design and deliver water services.

Our customers expect to be able to maintain community liveability during drought. It is crucial that we work with communities to manage water wisely to protect environmental and human health and important assets. We can support residential and commercial customers to reduce carbon emissions and water use, and we can collaborate with other sectors for more effective mitigation and adaptation responses.

Victorian water corporations are responsible for the largest proportion of Victorian Government carbon emissions. In response, the Victorian Government has set clear expectations that water corporations reduce the carbon impact of water, achieving zero net emissions before 2050. Coliban Water is on track to achieve this milestone.

Moving towards zero-net carbon will help Coliban Water increase energy security. Energy prices are growing steadily and this puts pressure on water prices. Using our water resources to produce energy is a way to increase our energy security while reducing costs and carbon emissions.

### OUTCOMES

The outcomes of this strategy direction to achieve our 2030 vision will be:

- Climate resilient water supplies that can maintain liveability during drought
- Communities that collaborate to use water wisely
- Infrastructure that can handle extremes of heat, flood, fire, storms and variable water quality
- Aim to achieve zero carbon by 2030
- Our services are supported by secure and renewable energy supply

### ACTIONS

The strategically important actions to achieve these outcomes are:

1. Develop a 25 year climate adaptation plan for the whole business
2. Educate and work with community to plan for climate resilience
3. Develop a plan for supplementing Bendigo's drinking water supply
4. Improve existing supply networks and investigate new water supplies
5. Drive operational energy reduction efficiency using internal and wider industry expertise
6. Investigate and implement energy generation and peer to peer energy sharing opportunities
7. Partner with community energy groups on water, energy and carbon initiatives

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1 — WATER SECURITY AND ZERO CARBON

Now	In 2030
WE HAVE WATER FOR ALL URBAN CUSTOMERS ON PERMANENT WATER SAVINGS RULES, AND RURAL CUSTOMERS HAVE 100% ALLOCATION	WE HAVE WATER THAT IS SECURE AND RELIABLE FOR OUR GROWING POPULATION*
OUR CARBON EMISSIONS ARE 33KT CO <sub>2</sub> E PER YEAR	WE WILL AIM TO BE CARBON NEUTRAL BY 2030

\*Secure means Coliban Water has secure water entitlements with the right to take water. Reliable means Coliban Water has sufficient water to meet demand without restrictions over the long term 95% of the time.





## STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2

# HEALTHY PEOPLE AND ENVIRONMENT

## Water is essential to sustain life

STRATEGY 2030 FOCUSES ON PROVIDING CLEAN, AFFORDABLE WATER FOR HUMAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL NEEDS INCLUDING FOR ABORIGINAL VALUES.

Communities in our region expect to have access to clean and safe drinking water and waste water services. The United Nations has explicitly recognised water and sanitation as a human right, and that clean drinking water and sanitation are essential to the realisation of all human rights. At Coliban Water, water affordability for vulnerable customers is paramount, so we will maintain downward pressure on prices to ensure water is accessible to all.

Our communities expect Coliban Water to supply water and wastewater services without compromising the natural environment. Historically, water and waste water services have had negative impacts – such as pollution or changes in catchment water flows – on the natural environment. Pollution of land, water, and drying catchments impacts on biodiversity and human health. People have a reasonable expectation that Coliban Water will work with stakeholders to provide water sensitive services that protect and enhance the natural environment.

Traditional Owners have deep cultural, spiritual and economic connections to land, water, and resources through their connection and relationship with Country. We acknowledge that the region we service across Central and Northern Victoria has a human history that began with Aboriginal traditional custodians. We recognise and support Aboriginal cultural values and economic inclusion in the water sector and will incorporate Aboriginal values and objectives into water planning and management.

2. [www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/human\\_right\\_to\\_water.shtml](http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/human_right_to_water.shtml)

### OUTCOMES

The outcomes of this strategy direction to achieve our 2030 vision will be:

- Maintain high water quality
- Reliable and affordable services that meet community needs
- High community trust and respect
- Aboriginal knowledge and cultural needs are incorporated into our service delivery
- Water services that protect and enhance the natural environment

### ACTIONS

The strategically important actions to achieve these outcomes are:

1. Always supply fit for purpose water and wastewater services in all communities we serve
2. Engage with the community to understand water needs and objectives
3. Affordable pricing for customers and continue support programs for customers experiencing hardship
4. Upgrade water and sewer treatment plants
5. Maximise water use by rural customers
6. Deliver our Reconciliation Action Plan and all obligations under the Reconciliation and Settlement Agreement, and address barriers for Aboriginal enterprises
7. Partner with local councils and catchment management authorities on improving environmental outcomes



## STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2 – HEALTHY PEOPLE AND ENVIRONMENT

Now	In 2030
WE PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY DRINKING WATER AND HAVE STARTED TO PROMOTE THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF DRINKING TAP WATER	OUR TAP WATER IS A DRINK OF CHOICE BECAUSE OF ITS QUALITY AND HEALTH BENEFITS
WE CONSIDER AND MANAGE OUR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ON WATERWAYS AND CATCHMENTS	OUR WATERWAYS AND CATCHMENTS ARE HEALTHIER AS A RESULT OF OUR ACTIONS
WE HAVE STARTED TO INCORPORATE ABORIGINAL VALUES INTO OUR PLANNING AND OPERATIONS	WE RESPECT AND PROTECT ABORIGINAL VALUES IN EVERYTHING WE DO





### STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3

## PROSPEROUS ECONOMIES

### Water underpins economic prosperity

STRATEGY 2030 FOCUSES ON PARTNERING WITH INDUSTRY AND GOVERNMENT TO PLAN AND BUILD WATER SERVICES THAT SUPPORTS BUSINESS, INDUSTRY AND EMPLOYMENT.

We understand the privileged role that Coliban Water has in working with the Victorian Government and the broader community to build the economic and employment strength of our region and its diverse communities. Reliable water supply and treatment is a critical factor in the type and success of industry that operates in our dry climate. Industries in our region – from agriculture to health – rely on affordable, reliable and efficient delivery of water services.

Water demand is projected to increase over time mainly due to population growth and increased temperature. Our 2016 baseline urban demand of 28,658 ML/year is expected to rise to 58,671 ML/year by 2065. By 2040, the shortfall in supply relative to demand may reach 15,300 ML across our nine water supply systems. Without intervention this shortfall will lead to unacceptable water restrictions that could potentially stifle local economies.

Industry needs fit-for-purpose infrastructure to support current and future activity. Some areas will require infrastructure upgrades, while requirements in other areas will plateau or diminish over time. It is crucial that we work with stakeholders to influence and anticipate growth and decline across our region.

#### OUTCOMES

The outcomes of this strategy direction to achieve our 2030 vision will be:

- A shared vision for regional water services with our stakeholders
- Enough water to sustain and grow economic activity and investment
- Integrated, sustainable and reliable water cycle infrastructure
- Integrated water management is business as usual
- No stranded assets
- Price affordability as assessed by the pricing regulator

#### ACTIONS

The strategically important actions to achieve these outcomes are:

1. Conduct a multi-agency investigation of infrastructure needed to support a much larger population
2. Develop an Integrated Asset Investment Plan in partnership with customers, agencies, and industry
3. Continue to develop integrated water management plans in partnership with local government
4. Investigate new technologies and markets to optimise performance, including digital and energy technology
5. Research to understand customer affordability



### STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3 – PROSPEROUS ECONOMIES

Now	In 2030
WE RESPOND TO THE DEMAND THAT DRIVES ECONOMIC PROSPERITY	WE ARE A COMMUNITY LEADER IN THE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY OF OUR REGION
OUR AVERAGE CUSTOMER WATER BILLS ARE AMONGST THE HIGHEST IN VICTORIA	OUR CUSTOMERS ARE NOT PAYING MORE THAN THE AVERAGE NATIONAL WATER BILL







#### STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4

## GREEN AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES

### Water underpins liveability

STRATEGY 2030 FOCUSES ON WORKING WITH COMMUNITY AND PARTNER AGENCIES TO SUSTAIN ATTRACTIVE GREEN SPACES AND RECREATIONAL WATER ACCESS FOR OUR COMMUNITIES.

Water supports the wellbeing of rural and regional communities. It makes towns more liveable and provides places to relax, unwind and reconnect with nature.

Water is fundamental to creating greener, cooler and more attractive urban spaces. Water restrictions and periods of extreme heat place stress on many gardens and green assets in public spaces. Coliban Water supplies water to maintain the condition of home gardens, sports fields, parks, green spaces, water bodies and public trees. Because customers expect to be able to maintain green assets during dry period, we need to work with communities and land managers to ensure our urban landscapes are green and water sensitive.

The Victorian Government expects water authorities to plan for, and provide, water services that consider recreational values. Coliban Water recognises the importance of water to community liveability and wellbeing. Some Coliban Water storages have the potential to be used for recreational purposes. Considering recreational values in water management will ensure that we can provide water services that improve the recreational value of public spaces. Working in partnership with other organisations will be crucial to ensuring communities have access to water for relaxation, play and adventure.

#### OUTCOMES

The outcomes of this strategy direction to achieve our 2030 vision will be:

- Green and attractive private gardens and public spaces
- Community objectives for recreational water are well understood
- Coliban Water's assets contribute to recreational values
- Water is easily accessible in public spaces

#### ACTIONS

The strategically important actions to achieve these outcomes are:

1. Optimise water use and ensure our urban landscapes are green and water sensitive
2. Improve access to water by connecting to walking and cycling amenities in the region
3. Identify key assets with recreational value and maintain and promote their use
4. Work with other organisations to assess and plan for recreational water use
5. Ensure assets support recreational objectives

## STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4 – GREEN AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES

Now	In 2030
WE WORK WITH COUNCILS TO PRIORITISE ACTIVE AND GREEN SPACES THAT OUR COMMUNITY VALUE	OUR COMMUNITY'S PRIORITY URBAN AREAS ARE GREEN AND COOL EVEN IF WE MUST HAVE WATER RESTRICTIONS
OUR PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE RECREATIONAL SPACES AND FACILITIES ARE NOT WELL-KNOWN ACROSS OUR REGION	OUR PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE RECREATION SPACES AND FACILITIES ARE POPULAR AND VALUED
WE PROVIDE INFORMATION ON WATER WISE GARDENING PARTICULARLY IN DRY TIMES	OUR COMMUNITIES SUSTAIN ATTRACTIVE GARDENS, EVEN IN TIMES OF WATER RESTRICTIONS





# FURTHER INFORMATION



## CONTACT US

### TELEPHONE: 1300 363 200

General and billing enquiries and 24-hour faults and leaks.

Telephone calls are recorded for training and compliance purposes.

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### ACCESSIBILITY

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### INTERPRETER SERVICE

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### NATIONAL RELAY SERVICE

If you are deaf, or have a hearing impairment or speech impairment, contact us through the National Relay Service:

- > TTY users phone **133 677** then ask for **1300 363 200**
- > Speak and Listen users phone **1300 555 727** then ask for **1300 363 200**
- > Internet relay users connect to the NRS then ask for **1300 363 200**.

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