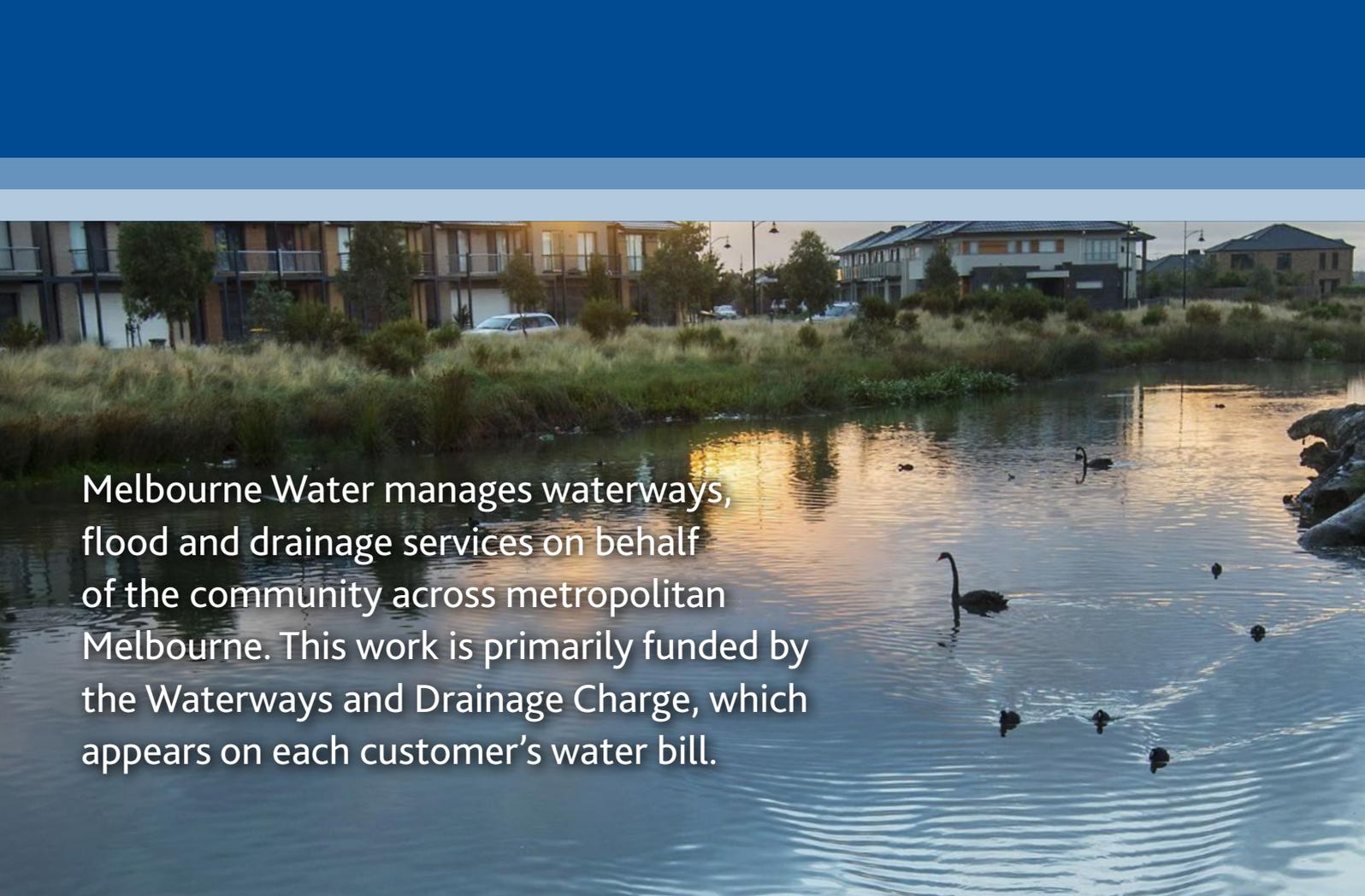




# Better waterways and drainage for our community

An investment plan

June 2016 – June 2021



Melbourne Water manages waterways, flood and drainage services on behalf of the community across metropolitan Melbourne. This work is primarily funded by the Waterways and Drainage Charge, which appears on each customer's water bill.



Melbourne Water is the designated caretaker of all waterways in the Port Phillip and Westernport region, as well as managing our major drainage systems and floodplains.

In order to fulfil our responsibility and fund this work, a Waterways and Drainage Charge is collected from homeowners and non-residential customers in metropolitan Melbourne and rural landowners.

Melbourne Water's *Waterways and Drainage Investment Plan 2016/17 – 2020/21* outlines the work that will be completed in managing our waterways and drainage systems over the next five years. This Plan is our commitment to customers, stakeholders and the community.

The policies and legislation we operate under, as well as our ongoing community consultation, guide us in determining what projects and initiatives we undertake. We deliver our services using a range of approaches.

### Developing and supporting partnerships



Direct works

Using regulation

### Developing and supporting partnerships

Melbourne Water fosters partnerships with local government, landowners and community to build infrastructure, enhance skills through education programs, offer community grants and implement litter reduction programs.

### Direct works

Direct works include building infrastructure, re-vegetation, erosion control measures for waterways and flood mitigation.

### Using regulations

Regulations are used to issue licenses and ensure compliance for taking water from waterways and to set conditions on town planning permits for land development.

### This work falls within two service areas:



### Essential services

Services we are required to deliver on, such as managing and diverting water from waterways and planning for drainage on new land developments.

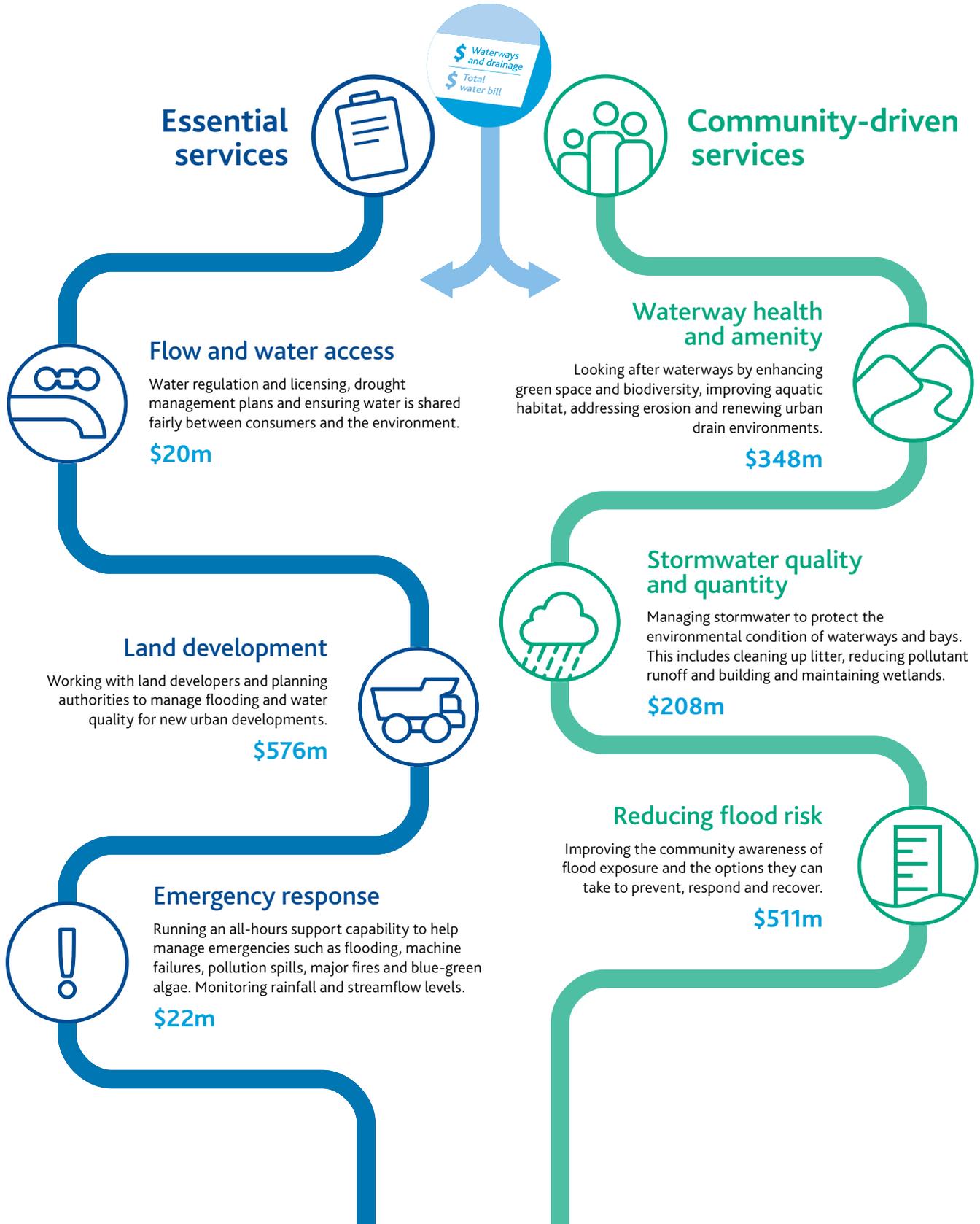


### Community-driven services

Services we are obligated to provide and that are derived from the community such cleaning up litter, maintaining biodiversity and flood mitigation.

# Expenditure on Funding waterways, flood and drainage services

The next five years



# What do our customers value?

Melbourne Water has a strong record of meaningful and transparent engagement with our community and stakeholders.

Consulting with customers to determine what services are important to them has helped us gain a better understanding of what they are willing to pay for.

A customer survey was conducted in 2015 and asked more than 1,000 participants to rank and prioritise a list of waterways and drainage services.

This survey presented participants with similar choices to those faced by Melbourne Water. Survey participants were asked to allocate a limited number of 'points' (equivalent to dollars) across servicing offerings in a similar way to which Melbourne Water allocates limited resources.

The customer preferences revealed by this survey were used to inform this investment plan.

In addition we also considered feedback gathered from:

- a separate customer survey
- advice from a project advisory group made up of key stakeholders
- written submissions and customer input on water strategies
- a study conducted by La Trobe University into customer preferences and willingness to pay for improvements to waterway environments.



The survey showed customers prioritised 'points' towards the following services:

## Improving flood warnings

*Adding* an alert system to warn of floods.

## Enhancing green spaces

*Increasing* the planting and irrigation of trees on Melbourne Water owned land from five to 30 hectares.

## Reducing pollutant run-off

*Increasing* spending to maintain the health of 400 kilometres of waterways and bays.

## Building and maintaining wetlands

*Reducing* this work by 50 per cent to maintain priority wetlands.

## Cleaning up litter

*Providing* litter information programs to councils.

## Maintaining biodiversity

*Increasing* the proportion of waterways where habitat is actively managed from 25 per cent to 35 per cent.

## Improving aquatic habitat

*Adding* 300 kilometres of habitat around waterways.

## Reducing erosion of waterway banks

*Doubling* our activities to manage erosion of waterway banks.

## Renewing urban drain environments

*Increasing* spending to restore five kilometres of concrete drains to more natural states.

## Working with landholders, farmers and community

*Reducing* co-investment activities for waterways from 280 to 196 kilometres per year.

## Collecting stormwater and rainwater

*Greater* co-investment to increase the use of rainwater tanks and rain gardens.

Melbourne Water responded to customer feedback with the following actions:

## Essential services



### Flow and water access

The existing framework provides a clear and well-established basis for the allocation of water consumption, however we will continue to work with customers to enhance the service we provide.



### Land development

Following a new Customer Charter that was introduced in 2015, we will establish a program to protect standards within waterways and support integrated water management on new urban growth areas.



### Emergency response

We will continue to meet our obligations for emergency management, with an increase in funding for pollution response from \$5 million to \$19 million over five years.

## Community-driven services



### Waterway health and amenity

We will work to improve biodiversity, water habitat and erosion control through planning, compliance, education and consultation with our stakeholders. We have allocated \$33 million to respond to customer requests to improve green space and renew urban drains.



### Stormwater quality and quantity

Customers would like to see an increase in the collection of stormwater and rainwater, an improvement in managing litter and polluted runoff and a reduction in spending on wetlands. We will re-prioritise our work to meet this preference while also working with the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Victoria to meet our obligations.

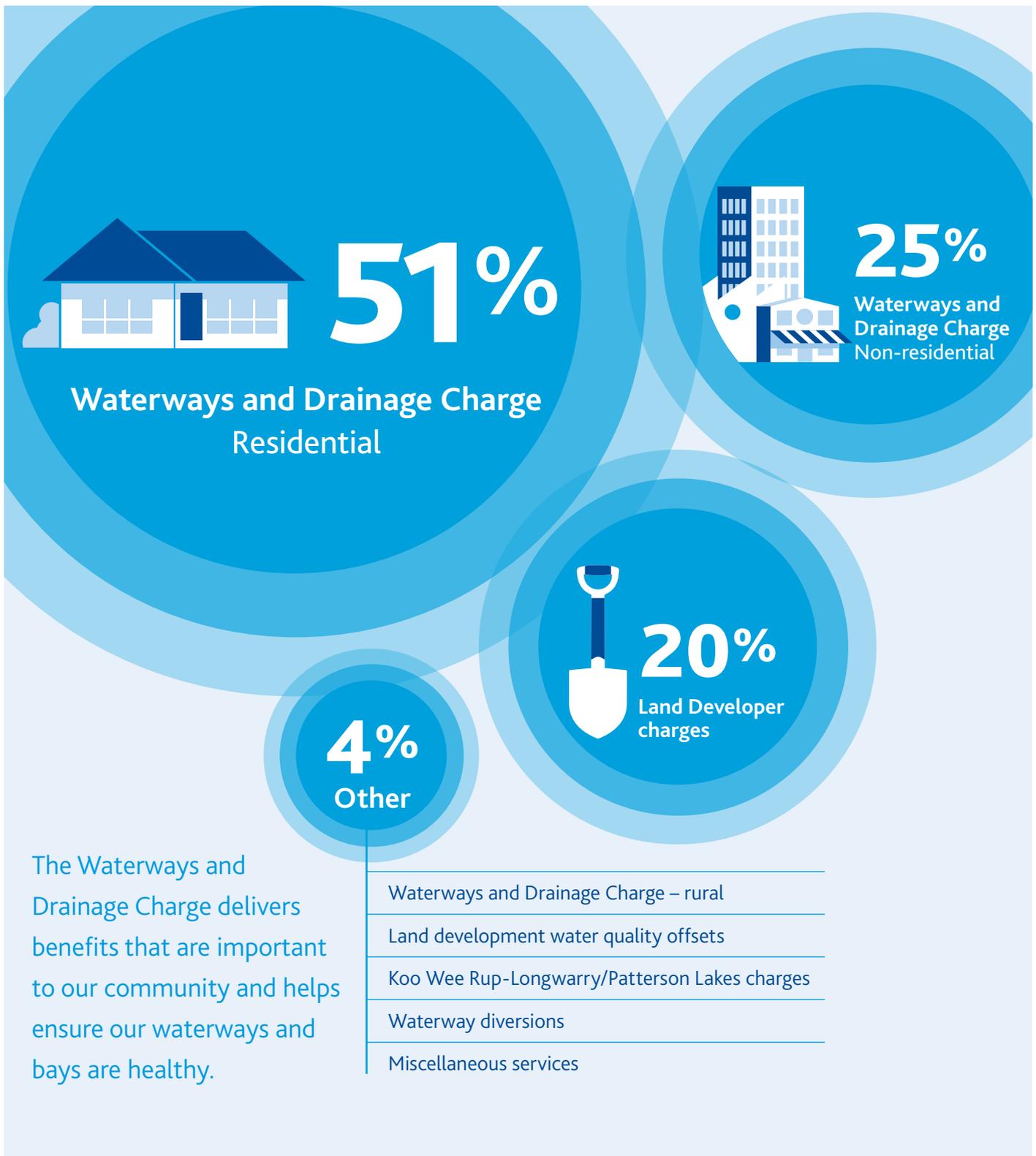


### Reducing flood risk

In line with our current strategies to manage floods, we will improve community awareness of floods and the options for prevention, response and recovery.

## How we fund our waterways, flood and drainage services

The total spend on waterways, flood and drainage services over the next five years is \$1.7 billion. The Waterways and Drainage Charge funds more than three quarters of all the waterways and drainage services, with the remaining funds coming from a range of other income sources.



## Monitoring and reporting

Our performance in delivering the Waterways and Drainage Investment Plan is assessed using 21 targets.

An independent auditor assesses our performance against these targets annually. The results are published on our website.

The Waterways and Drainage Investment Plan will be reviewed before July 2021 or as required under the Melbourne Water Statement of Obligations. When reviewing, we will consider industry trends, evaluations of our programs, policy changes and the needs of our stakeholders.

### Our 21 targets

1. Greater than 80% community satisfaction with waterways is maintained over 2016/17-2020/21.
2. Waterways that have undergone active management will be maintained or improved against an established baseline by 2021.
3. Restore at least 5km of concrete drains to a more natural waterway by 2021.
4. Invest directly in improving 30 ha of green spaces for shade and cooling across Melbourne by 2021.
5. Interventions completed over 2016/17-2020/21 maintain or reduce runoff and pollutants from urban and rural catchments against an established baseline.
6. 100% of facilitated stormwater management over 2016/17-2020/21 achieves multiple benefits (e.g. greening, flood protection, alternative water, capacity building etc).
7. 100% stormwater diversion licences are managed over 2016/17-2020/21 in accordance with the rules
8. 100 capacity building initiatives will be delivered under the Clearwater program over 2016/17-2020/21.
9. 100% increase in number of catchments that are flood mapped by Melbourne Water or in partnership with others to improve understanding of current and future risks by 2021 (versus 2015/16 baseline).
10. 20% increase in the number of people, directly affected by flooding, who are aware of their risk by 2021 (versus 2015/16 baseline).
11. Lead collaborative development of 50% of new flood management options and delivery plans for the region by 2021.
12. 15% reduction in flood effects, achieved by projects in delivery by Melbourne Water by 2021.
13. 100% Diversions will be managed to meet the service requirements for licence and trade as specified in Melbourne Water's customer charter for diversion services.
14. 100% annual environmental watering requirements delivered by Melbourne Water are met to the satisfaction of our customer the Victorian Environmental Water Holder.
15. 100% Diversions will be managed in accordance with management plans and rules throughout the 2016/17-2020/21 period.
16. 300 km of waterways where environmental water is improved or enhanced through management tools such as stream flow management plans by 2021.
17. 100% of incidents that require a response will be managed promptly and in accordance with Environment Protection Act 1979 throughout the 2016/17-2020/21 period.
18. 100% of notifiable events on stipulated waterways will be provided to the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) throughout the 2016/17-2020/21 period.
19. 100% of flood related property (information) statement updates are completed within one month of Melbourne Water receiving notification of a change in the relevant circumstances throughout the 2016/17-2020/21 period.
20. 100% of statutory and 95% of agreed industry response times will be achieved for development referrals.
21. 100% of Development Services Schemes and Strategies will be implemented and reviewed according to the development planning program.

**For more information, contact Melbourne Water**

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