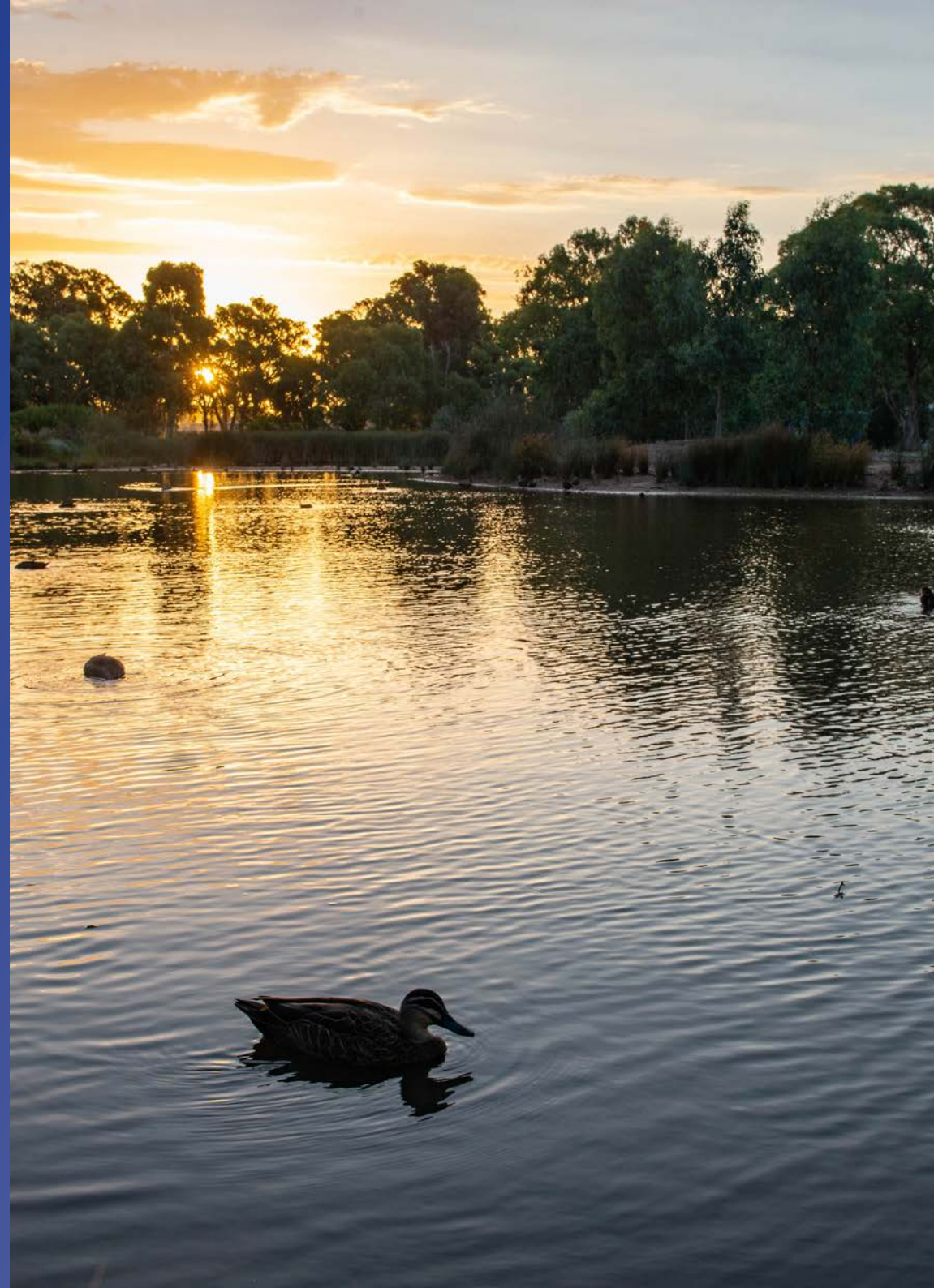


City of Marion
Marion
Water Plan
2026

A great place to live



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Introduction

Water is essential to the City of Marion's environment, lifestyle and future growth. This updated Marion Water Plan builds on our previous work and sets out how we will manage water more sustainably, respond to climate change, and support a healthy, liveable community.

Marion Water was created primarily to harness and reuse excess stormwater to provide water security for the City of Marion. Water surplus to the City of Marion's own needs is sold to third parties at commercially sustainable rates.

The City of Marion is committed to using water wisely, protecting our natural waterways and coastline, and making our city greener and cooler for everyone.

Why this plan matters

The City of Marion aims to support greener, cooler neighbourhoods through efficient and sustainable irrigation practices and support community resilience to climate change by adapting water management processes in preparation for and in response to declining rainfall and increasing periods of drought.

Over recent years, the City of Marion has made strong progress in managing water more efficiently. We have improved our water network operations, expanded infrastructure, increased stormwater reuse, and strengthened governance of our water services.

However, new challenges mean we need to do more. Climate change is bringing hotter days, longer dry periods, and more intense storms. At the same time, our community is growing, increasing demand for green spaces, cooler environments and the efficient use of water.

Marion Water aims to reduce the use of potable (drinking) water in council operations for irrigation purposes by increasing the use of alternative water sources, including stormwater, recycled water, and groundwater.

Challenges we face

Ageing infrastructure

Some of our irrigation systems need upgrading to remain efficient and reliable.

Climate change

Climate change will bring reduced annual rainfall and more frequent droughts, placing increasing stress on trees, biodiversity and green spaces, while also bringing increased rainfall intensity that will challenge stormwater systems and heighten the risk of local flooding.

Population growth

More people and higher density living means greater demand for green spaces including parks, reserves, sports fields and water. Additional reserves currently not irrigated will be irrigated in the future to improve the amenity value of our open space.

Emission reduction

Potable water supply and wastewater treatment typically produce high greenhouse gas emissions. Using recycled water in place of potable water helps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as it avoids the higher emissions associated with potable water supply and wastewater treatment. This supports Council's broader efforts to minimise corporate emissions from water use.

Water quality

Stormwater runoff can carry pollutants into our waterways and marine environment. Our wetlands and stormwater treatment improves stormwater quality and reduces volumes discharged into the Gulf. The more stormwater we treat and use, the more we reduce the effects of untreated stormwater discharging to the Gulf of St Vincent.



Regulatory environment

As a recognised Water Entity, Marion Water is highly regulated by the Essential Services Commission of South Australia (ESCOSA) who is responsible for the economic regulation of water and sewerage services in South Australia. This includes regulation of industry licensing, consumer protection and retail pricing.

Marion Water is also regulated by the Department for Environment and Water (extraction), the Environment Protection Authority (injection), the Office of the Technical Regulator (infrastructure).



Opportunities ahead

Marion Water will identify and prioritise areas where recycled water can replace potable mains water for non-potable uses, such as irrigation. Through the securing of external funding, Marion Water will be able to expand its operations with priority given to sites with strong community benefit, including reserves, sportsgrounds, schools, community facilities and urban greening areas.

Commercial and institutional demand will also be considered where it improves network efficiency, supports cost recovery and does not compromise supply to priority community uses.

Improvement opportunities:

- Use smart technology to better manage water in real time
- Invest further in stormwater harvesting to capture and reuse more water locally
- Extend urban greening to cool our suburbs and improve liveability
- Partner with government, utilities and neighbouring councils to investigate the feasibility of a regional scheme.

What we've learned from our previous plan:

- Investing in the right projects delivers real water savings and improves operational delivery
- Community awareness leads to better water use
- Working across council teams improves outcomes
- External funding helps expand our network and ensures financial viability

What we will do

01

Use water and energy more efficiently

Explore options for optimising the use of existing recycled water infrastructure including increasing usage during off-peak periods

Continue to upgrade irrigation systems with smart controls and sensors

Carry out regular water audits

Introduce drought-tolerant landscaping in high-use areas

Continue to explore options to reduce emissions generated from Marion Water

02

Use more alternative water

Increase use of recycled water for irrigation; including consideration of using Marion Water for sites not currently irrigated

Explore opportunities for blending of groundwater and recycled water to increase availability of alternative water

Expand stormwater capture and storage

Explore options such as additional storage and improved recovery

03

Protect water quality

Fit-for-purpose water treatment through healthy wetlands

Protecting groundwater quality and aquifer health

Meeting regulatory requirements for aquifer injection and reuse

What we will do

04

Prioritise recycled water use

Prioritise supply of recycled water to sites that maximise local community and environmental outcomes

Maximise reliability of recycled water supply

Identify opportunities to connect additional suitable sites where cost-effective

05

Improve planning and governance

Integrate water planning into council decision-making

Strengthen collaboration across teams and other organisations

Align with state and regional water strategies

Develop and publicly report a climate statement in line with emerging sustainability standards, outlining emissions from water supply and key climate risks to our water system.

06

Ensure financial sustainability

Practice effective asset management

Manage the business in a fiscally responsible manner

Review the cost of Marion Water on an annual basis to ensure full cost recovery

Continue to seek opportunities for external funding to expand the Marion Water network

Explore opportunities for the sale of excess water at commercially sustainable rates to third parties including commercial and institutional entities such as the Department of Education, the Office for Recreation, Sport and Racing and adjacent Councils including the Cities of Mitcham and Holdfast Bay.

Delivering the plan

Short term 1–2 years

- Consolidate and optimise our recently expanded water network
- Investigate options for elevating the use of existing recycled water infrastructure
- Investigate options for treating water for broader use such as within residential developments
- Improve water storage and delivery at key sites such as Oaklands Wetlands via additional water storage
- Increase water security through access to additional groundwater, including investigation into the blending of groundwater with recycled water
- Expand community education programs

Medium term 3–5 years

- Expand our stormwater harvesting system
- Roll out smart water technologies
- Achieve measurable reductions in potable water use

Long term 5+ years

- Support the City of Marion in becoming a water-sensitive city through the sustainable management of water
- Expand our alternative water network (See Plans below)
- Look to supply to commercial and institutional organisations where the supply does not compromise the City of Marion's water security
- Build resilience in the network to climate extremes

How we'll track our progress



Increase the number of sites serviced by Marion Water



Increase the volume of Marion Water used by Council



Use digital systems to monitor performance in real time



Report publicly each year on our progress

How we'll continue to improve



Regularly review and update our approach



Adopt new technologies and best practices



Work with our community and partners to improve outcomes

- City of Marion Council boundary
-  Existing irrigated area (other)
-  Existing irrigated area (recycled)
-  Proposed irrigation areas (recycled)
-  Existing RW pipework
-  Proposed RW pipework

Subject to external funding





8375 6600



council@marion.sa.gov.au



@CityofMarion



@CityofMarion



City of Marion



marion.sa.gov.au

