

DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2025-29

ENGAGEMENT REPORT

JUNE 2025

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Executive Summary

BACKGROUND

The Draft Council Plan 2025-29 Engagement Report provides an overview of the findings from the online community engagement activity conducted May-June 2025 to gain community feedback on the Draft Council Plan 2025-29.

The engagement aimed to understanding the community's thoughts on the draft strategic direction, objectives outcomes, and major initiatives.

ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

Community members could participate in the engagement process via an online survey.

Participation opportunities were promoted through social media, media releases, and local newspapers.

KEY FINDINGS

The community's feedback showed:

- The majority of respondents supported the draft Council Plan 2025-29 as it was presented.
- There was a low level of unsupportive sentiment towards the strategic direction and each of the strategic objectives.

NEXT STEPS

The findings from this engagement inform the refinement of the final Council Plan 2025-29.

Council will vote whether to endorse the Council Plan at the July 2025 Council Meeting.

Introduction

ABOUT THIS REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the findings from the online community engagement conducted May-June 2025 as part of draft Council Plan 2025-29 engagement process.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

In Victoria, a Council Plan is a four-year strategic document required by the *Local Government Act 2020*. It outlines a council's vision, objectives, and strategies based on community engagement and long-term plans like the Community Vision, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and Asset Management Plan. The plan must be adopted by the October following a council election.

ENGAGEMENT PURPOSE

The purpose of this engagement was to gather community feedback on:

- the Strategic Direction:
 - *We are committed to advancing community outcomes for a thriving Greater Geelong*
- the Strategic Objectives and related outcomes:
 - *Plan, deliver, manage and optimise core and critical infrastructure across the region*
 - Responsible and sustainable growth and development.
 - Community facilities and public spaces are accessible and fit for purpose.
 - Multi-modal transport networks are well-connected and accessible.
 - *Identify, promote, advocate for, and deliver equitable health and wellbeing outcomes for our diverse communities*
 - A community that is fair, compassionate and inclusive.
 - Services and facilities that enhance health and wellbeing are accessible to all.
 - A community with the resources and capacity to control their health and wellbeing.
 - *Lead efforts to strengthen our diverse economic precincts and workforce to enhance prosperity across our community*
 - New businesses, events and investment are attracted to the region.
 - Local businesses, industry clusters and precincts are supported to thrive.
 - Greater Geelong attracts, retains and develops workforce capacity and capability.
 - Sufficient land supply to enable sustainable growth, business expansion and attraction.
 - *Champion our unique heritage and culture*
 - Increased engagement in arts, culture and heritage experiences across Greater Geelong.
 - Increased investment in our creative, cultural and sporting activity hubs.
 - Greater Geelong's diverse culture is shared and celebrated.
 - *Protect and enhance our unique natural environment and surrounds*
 - Natural habitat and areas of important biodiversity are identified, protected, connected and restored.
 - Significant reductions in emissions.
 - Increased community resilience to climate change impacts.
 - *Commit to the highest levels of leadership, integrity, financial stewardship, and meaningful community engagement*
 - Public funds and assets are used equitably and efficiently.
 - Decision making is evidence-based, transparent and strategically aligned.
 - Community engagement, strong partnerships and effective advocacy delivers value and impact.

Results will then be used to inform the development of the final Council Plan 2025-29.

How we engaged

The community were invited to provide feedback online between 27 May and 25 June 2025. Opportunities to participate were promoted using the following methods:

- Social media posts
- Email to subscribers to the City's online engagement platform, Have Your Say (HYS)
- Media releases and articles in local newspapers

HAVE YOUR SAY ONLINE PLATFORM

The primary method of engagement, the City's HYS engagement platform, was designed to submit feedback via a survey.

Survey

The survey asked questions to understand the community's sentiment on:

- the draft Strategic Direction
- the draft Strategic Objectives
- the draft Indicators
- the draft Major Initiatives

Who we engaged

DEMOGRAPHICS

A total of 44 responses to the survey were received. Of these respondents:

- 36 of respondents were local residents
- 5 were employed in the area



Figure 1 – Breakdown of survey respondents' connection to Greater Geelong (respondents could select more than one connection)

The largest proportion of survey responses were from those aged between 35-49 years (20) and 50-59 years (10):

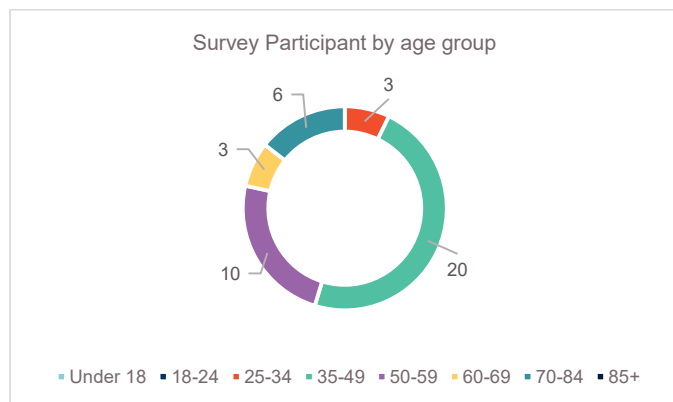


Figure 2 - Breakdown of survey participation by age

There was a larger proportion of women than men:

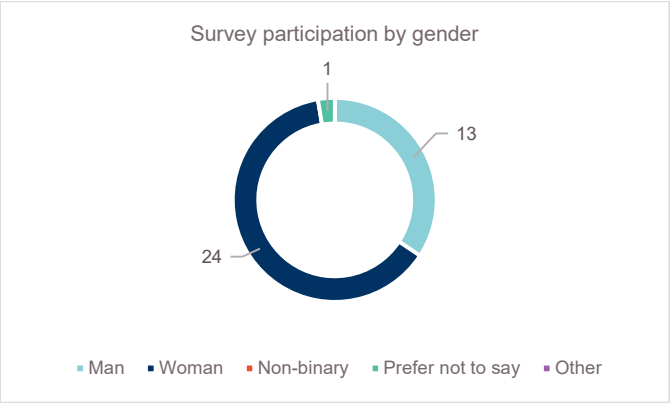


Figure 3 - Breakdown of survey participation by gender

The following provides a detailed breakdown of survey participation by identified groups, the highest being Parent/Guardian (12)

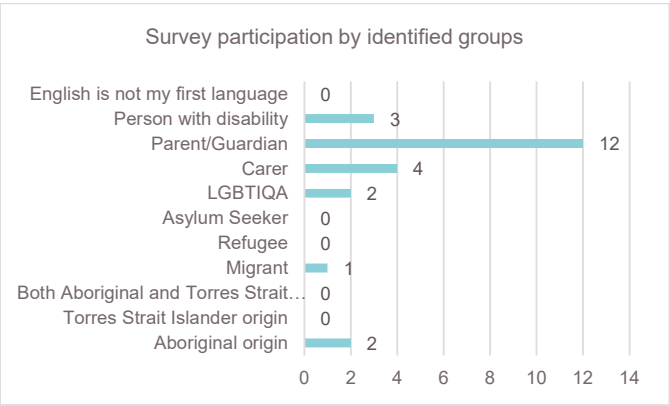


Figure 4 - Breakdown of survey participation by identified groups

What we heard

KEY FINDINGS OVERVIEW

COMMUNITY VISION

"I don't think clever and creative are the most important thing with a cost-of-living crisis and climate change problems."

"I think the community aspirations remain appropriate."

"The vision is good. Most of this however will be challenging with the anticipated population growth"

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Do you support the strategic direction?

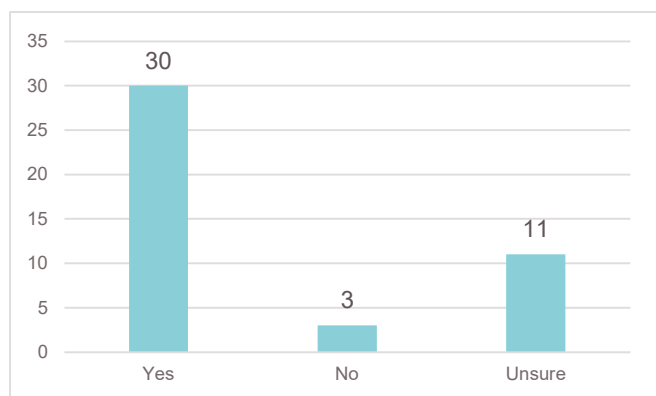


Figure 5 - Breakdown of support for the strategic direction

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Do you support the strategic objective 1?

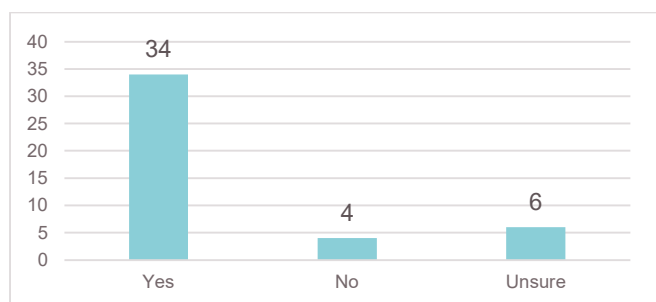


Figure 6 - Breakdown of support for strategic objective 1

"My comments relate to the Major Initiatives as follows:

Continue to advocate for, invest in, and deliver community sport and recreation infrastructure across Greater Geelong - this Major Initiative has a community sport focus, and lacks regard for community facilities (such as libraries, kinders, community hubs)...."

Do you support the strategic objective 2?

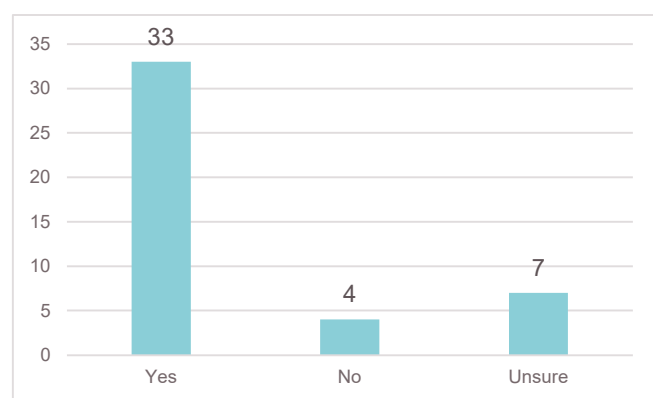


Figure 7 - Breakdown of support for strategic objective 2

Do you support the strategic objective 3?

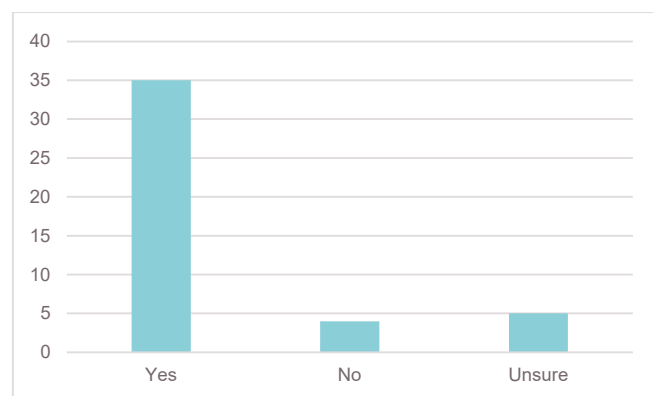


Figure 8 - Breakdown of support for strategic objective 3

Do you support the strategic objective 4?

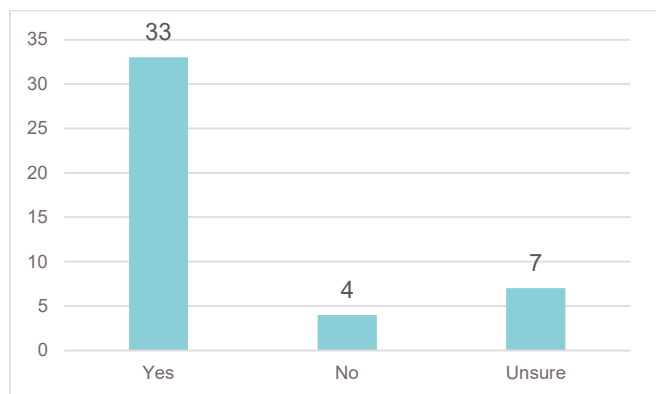


Figure 9 - Breakdown of support for strategic objective 4

Do you support the strategic objective 5?

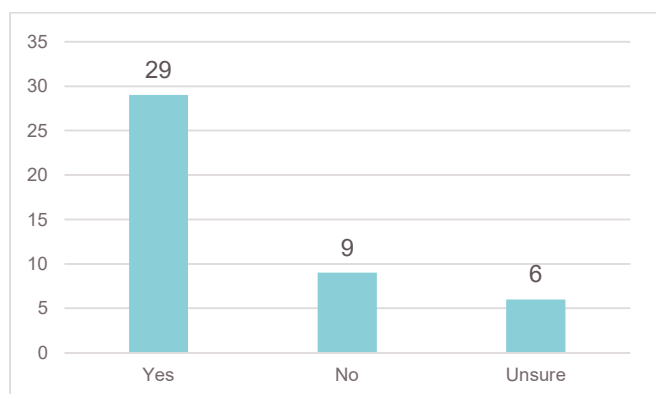


Figure 10 - Breakdown of support for strategic objective 5

“Why have the circular economy in the objective title when there are no direct outcomes listed underneath it? It's tokenistic as it is. The brief description of the objective is very narrow and limited to the natural environment. How about adding text in relation to reducing consumption and increasing resource recovery - these are important elements of the circular economy.”

Do you support the strategic objective 6?

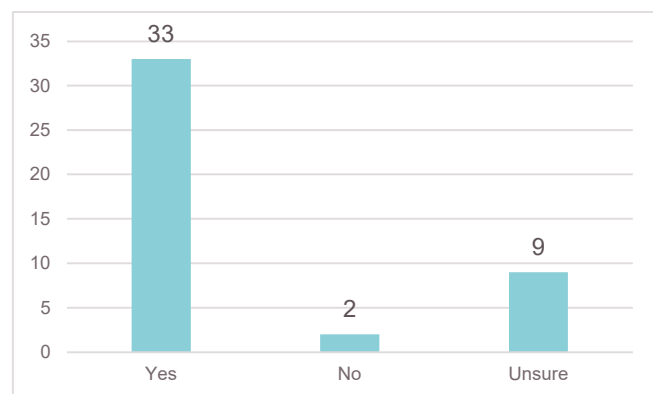


Figure 11 - Breakdown of support for strategic objective 6

What we have done and next steps

WHAT WE HAVE DONE

The findings from this engagement inform the refinement of the final Council Plan 2025-29, its strategic direction and objectives. Consideration of the feedback received will be considered in the final drafting of the document.

NEXT STEPS

Council will vote whether to endorse the Council Plan 2025-29 at the July 2025 Council meeting.