

WAURN PONDS NEIGHBOURHOOD CONVERSATION



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Our final Neighbourhood Conversation for 2024 was held at Leisurelink and the Waurn Ponds skate park on Thursday 7 December from 9.30-11.30am and 3.30-5.00pm.

Our Neighbourhood Conversations are an opportunity for community members to come and speak to City officers about what matters most to them about where they live. It's also an opportunity for us to promote open engagements we are seeking feedback on and hear how we can improve the way we communicate and ask for feedback.

The Neighbourhood Conversations were promoted via City News advertisements, social media, through the Swim, Sport and Leisure network, as well as signage in the Waurn Ponds library, Leisurelink and the skate park.

The City was represented by members of the Community Engagement, Community Inclusion, Corporate Affairs, Youth Development and Open Space Planning teams. Three members of the Youth Council also attended.

We had conversations with approximately 40 community members over the three and a half hour period.

WHAT WE HEARD

The projects and open engagements we promoted at the session were:

- Priorities for consideration in the 2024-25 Budget
- Waurn Ponds Skate Park
- Morena Street Reserve
- Draft Market Square Quarter Masterplan
- Mercer, Gheringhap, Bayley Streetscape Masterplan
- Central Geelong Stormwater Management Strategy
- Aldershot Reserve Playground Renewal
- Outdoor Exercise Equipment Renewal at Barwon Valley Fun Park and Rippleside

The community members for the most part preferred to have general conversations about their ideas for improving greater Geelong or specific concerns they had. Feedback has been summarised below and categorised into one or more themes.

Pleasingly, a number of people thanked the City for the following programs, projects and improvements:

- Waurm Ponds skate park upgrade – feel it's now more inclusive of younger children
- Upgraded playground on Heyers Road, Grovedale
- Free parking for Vietnam Veterans
- Children's services and programs
- Christmas and school holiday programming
- Leisurelink creche facilities
- Street planting and round about plantings

Council decision making and budget allocation

- Want to see council being bold and making brave decisions, not backing down even when items get voted down
- Want to see councillors and City officers out in the community more
- Important to hear the voices of children
- Grovedale and Waurm Ponds residents missing out on improvements and budget allocations



The environment

- Climate change – more information about how the City will reach net zero carbon emissions by 2035
- More education for council employees and community about:
 - Food systems
 - More diverse, water retentive and drought resistance plantings, including edible plants
 - Flood mitigation
- Better use of (ie. improved planting) council outdoor spaces, example provided: Leisurelink



Traffic, parking and roads

- Truck traffic on Aberdeen Street, Newtown
- Ghazepoore Road, Waurm Ponds – concerns about the amount and flow of traffic, and heavy machinery using it
- Want the City to take a lead on road safety education; educating the community on right of way and responsibilities of pedestrians, cyclists, motorists and truck drivers
- Improved cycling infrastructure for children to ride to school; linking the schools up to the bay and river
- Extension of Green Spine in Malop Street – concerned for traders
- Want to see free parking for blood donors
- Issues with tap and pay parking and the EasyPark app



Footpaths and shared trails

- An extension of the footpath along Colac Road between Waurm Ponds and Bunnings. It gets very muddy in winter.
- Electric scooter driver concerns about the standard of footpaths in and around Meadowvale Drive, Grovedale



Young people

- A lengthy conversation was had with a group of young people at the skate park about their views on the upgraded skate park, City services targeted to young people, and support available



Other

- More land releases required, particularly for affordable housing
- Dumping of hard rubbish
- Request to remove all cats
- Maternal and Child Health feedback
- Should be more entry level employment opportunities to start a career at the City

NEXT STEPS

In total, four requests for information and/or responses were sent to the relevant City departments for action since the Neighbourhood Conversation. Specific information relating to the Maternal and Child Health program, Leisurelink and the Waurin Ponds skate park has been provided directly to the relevant teams.

This report has been provided to the City's mayor and councillors, Youth Council and to all those who attended and is available on the [Neighbourhood Conversations Have Your Say](#) page.