



THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPACT REPORT #3

APRIL 2023 TO MARCH 2024

The City of Greater Geelong adopted a new Community Engagement Policy in March 2021.

We made a commitment to our community to report on the impact and achievements delivered under the policy every 12 months.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Under the guidance of the Local Government Act 2020 community engagement at the City of Greater Geelong saw some valuable advancements in the past 12 months.



We're living the **Community Engagement Policy** - relevance, transparent, inclusive



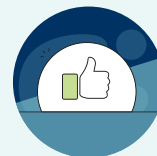
245,921 page views (**10.32%** increase) on the Have Your Say website



16,200 submissions via the Have Your Say website



6,524 Have Your Say Members



Engaged with priority populations (**22%** of engagements)

ALIGNING TO OUR PRINCIPLES

Engaging with the community ensures that Council listens and makes decisions based on community lived experience and in line with community views and values.

We have delivered our engagement activities under our five engagement principles in the design, delivery and reporting of all engagement activities.



A community engagement process must have a **clearly defined** objective and scope.



Participants taking part in community engagement must have access to objective, **relevant and timely** information to inform their participation.



Community consultation must engage with the people and groups affected by the engagement.



Participants taking part in community engagement are entitled to **reasonable support** to enable meaningful and informed engagement.



Participants taking part in community engagement are informed of the ways in which the community engagement process will **influence** Council decision making.

MONITORING AND REPORTING

We are committed to monitoring processes, information sharing and decision making to understand the overall level of success in the policy’s implementation. Measures of our success include:

CONNECTION WITH COMMUNITY



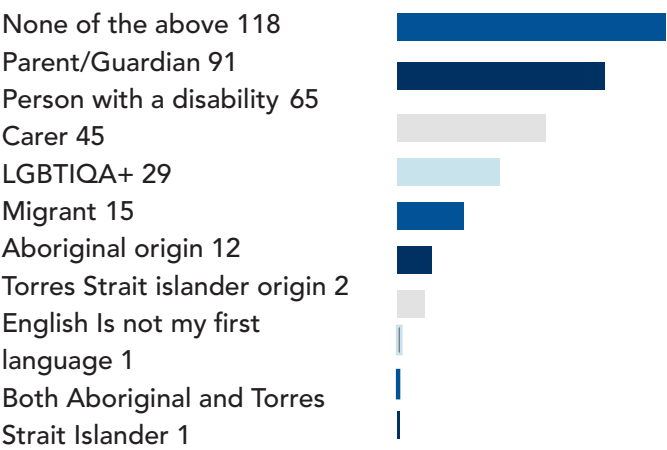
WHO WE ARE HEARING FROM

We have developed a range of optional demographic questions which community members can choose to answer. Their responses will help measure whether we are successfully reaching diverse communities across the Greater Geelong region. These questions include:

- Gender
- Connection to the area
- Age group
- Town or suburb
- Do you identify to any of the following?
- Additional supports

We included an optional ‘identity’ question in 10 engagements in the past 12 months and the people who chose to respond shared the following:

DO YOU IDENTIFY AS ANY OF THE FOLLOWING?

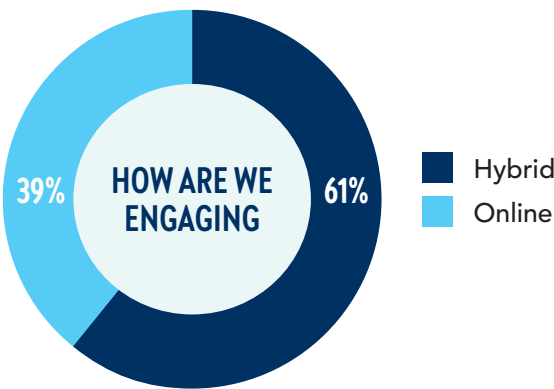


TOP HAVE YOUR SAY PAGES VISITED

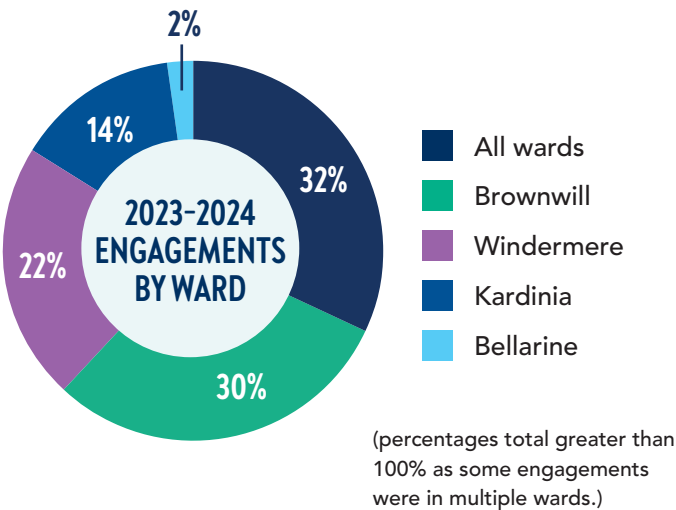
- Council's 2023-2024 Budget
- Draft Market Square Quarter Masterplan
- Cat Curfew Review
- Geelong Waterfront Masterplan
- Portarlington Footpath Network

HOW WE ARE ENGAGING

As we emerged from the pandemic, we moved from a dependence on online engagement, to a hybrid approach of face-to-face and online engagement. Our future approach will be to engage face-to-face as much as possible.



WHERE ARE WE ENGAGING



DELIVERING DELIBERATIVE ENGAGEMENT

Deliberative engagement is a tailored process that ensures a representation of participants that reflect our community are brought together and closer to the decision makers than other forms of engagement.

Deliberative practices, which may be co-designed, take place to allow for a representative group to deliberate on an issue in depth, over time, before coming to an informed consensus or decision.

Deliberative engagement methods this year have included advisory committees, community panels, steering committees, project reference groups and networks.

Advisory Committees

The City's Advisory Committees and the Youth Council are made up of volunteers and are chaired by a councillor and supported by City staff. These important committees have provided valuable insight and lived experience, and have represented and advocated for their communities on a number of community engagements this year, including:

- Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee
- Heritage Advisory Committee
- LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee
- Kilangitj Advisory Committee
- Rural and Peri Urban Advisory Committee
- Women in Community Life Advisory Committee
- Youth Council
- Multicultural Action Plan Advisory Committee

Pakington Street North Precinct Community Panel

The City engaged Capire Consulting Group to design and deliver a deliberative engagement process to co-design an agreed outcome for the Pakington North Precinct Urban Design Framework (UDF), with a community panel reflective of the wider study area (including residents, business owners, landlords, visitors and people with social connections to the area). 118 community members submitted their expression of interest to participate on the panel and 66 community members were invited to participate. Between 32 and 51 community members participated in each of the five sessions held over a 10 week period (8 Feb – 18 April).

The Panel came together to learn and discuss key themes in detail and developed recommendations and identified preferred solutions to inform the UDF. At its final session, the majority of panel members indicated they were comfortable or very comfortable to progress the UDF to a Council Meeting for consideration and adoption. Four Panel members volunteered to represent the Panel and report of Panel outcomes in the Councillor briefing. The UDF was adopted by Council on the 28 May 2024.

Other deliberative engagement processes with the community and stakeholders were used throughout the year to help shape projects including the Moorpanyal Park Master Plan, Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan, St Leonards Foreshore Pavilion and the Ocean Grove District Ride Centre.



SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS

The City has delivered 357 projects on the Have Your Say platform since the adoption of the Community Engagement Policy, some examples of successful projects from the past 12 months include:



MARKET SQUARE MASTERPLAN

Objective:

Community engagement was undertaken in two stages between November 2023 and February 2024 to seek feedback on the Draft Market Square Quarter Masterplan.

Positive outcome from engagement:

During the two stages of engagement, the Draft Market Square Quarter Masterplan Have Your Say page received 9263 views from 6609 visitors. Four drop-in sessions were held in addition to face to face conversations, and key landowners and stakeholders including state government agencies were surveyed.

Based on the engagement results, changes are being made to the draft Masterplan. The final Market Square Quarter Masterplan will be presented to Council for a decision, along with a detailed engagement report that will provide a response to the written submissions received.

RAINBOW CROSSING

Objective:

In response to community interest and suggestions, the City sought feedback about the installation of a permanent rainbow crossing in central Geelong. This crossing was hoped to be a vibrant and colourful representation of our region's support of the local rainbow community and continue to celebrate our local LGBTQIA+ communities.

Positive outcome from engagement:

During the engagement a series of possible locations were explored, with community identifying three most popular locations in the Geelong CBD. The City determined the best option as Yarra Street. This crossing was hoped to be a vibrant and colourful representation of our region's support for the local rainbow community and a celebration of the residents within it. The City's LGBTQIA+ Advisory Committee was supportive of this option.

In December 2023 the permanent rainbow pedestrian crossing on Yarra Street, under the Westfield flyover, was unveiled as a permanent symbol of pride in the diversity of the people of our region and a celebration of the LGBTQIA+ community.



YOUTH HUB

Objective:

To understand the needs of young people in Geelong, the City commenced engagement in January 2024 with young people, youth service providers, parents, teachers, and the local community to inform the design of the Geelong Youth Hub's governance and operational models, locations, and the physical space for the hub.

Positive outcome from engagement:

Early in 2024 more than 1226 people engaged with the City about the establishment of a Central Geelong Youth Hub pilot proposed to run from January 2025 to December 2026.

Co design workshops were held. Feedback was received from over 40 young people who indicated that they want a fun, warm, comfortable, colourful, welcoming, inclusive and sensory safe hub with clear wayfinding and entry, an open social area and access to spaces for a range of activities including life skills, creative spaces, gaming and quiet study.

The City has reviewed the engagement results to inform the detailed design development to be presented to the Project Control Group (PCG) for ratification and approval to proceed to construction tender. Engagement with service providers has informed the proposed operational model.



SPARROW PARK

Objective:

As part of the City's playground renewal program, and in line with the City's Play Strategy, the City wished to renew the playground at Sparrow Park, Geelong West. Sparrow Park is a 'district' playground and has loads of equipment and activities for all age groups. The majority of the play equipment was approximately 20 years old and is in need of renewal.

Positive outcome from engagement:

The subsequent engagement about the park proved that community strongly value Sparrow Park as a destination playground with, lots of people making the time to attending pop-ups at the park and providing feedback online. Many people referred to the space as a community hub. Whilst Sparrow Park is identified as a district playground the community see it as much more.

Council shared initial drawings for a refurbished playground and quite a few changes were made to the design based on common themes that came through in the 625 responses received.

The renewal construction phase is now underway and will see the current playground equipment replaced with new equipment, a seat installed, and additional trees planted for shade. The City also undertook rectification works in the park, and is partnering with Rotary to identify any plastic and steel playground components that can be utilised as part of their playground harvest program.

SUMMARY

There have been many positive outcomes as a result of community engagement activities over the past 12 months, however we recognise that there is always room for improvement.

As we look to the next 12 months, we aim to continue to build on our relationships with community, to conduct successful community engagement projects with a focus on being community-centred that deliver positive outcomes for both community and council, in line with our engagement principles.

We also aim for a consistent approach to community engagement across the organisation to provide a synonymous customer experience whether the feedback is being sought for a strategy, project or service.

Thank you for your support of our engagements over the past 12 months and we look forward to hearing from you again soon.

www.yoursay.geelongaustralia.com.au

**We Acknowledge
the Wadawurrung People as
the Traditional Owners of
the Land, Waterways and
Skies. We pay our respects
to their Elders, past,
present and emerging.**

**We Acknowledge all
Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander people who are
part of our Greater Geelong
community today.**

**HAVE
YOUR
SAY** 

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