CITY OF MONASH

SHAPE YOUR MONASH 2025-2029

Community Engagement Summary



Integrated Planning Project Engagement Summary

This report presents the three stages of community engagement for the Integrated Council Planning activities conducted in 2024 and 2025, along with the main themes from engagement from our community who live, work and play in Monash.

This is a summary of the engagement activities and findings that were used in the development of the below key Council strategies and plans:

- 2025-2040 Community Vision
- 2025-2029 Council Plan
- 2025-2029 Health and Wellbeing Plan
- 2025-2035 Financial Plan
- 2025-2029 Revenue and Rating Plan
- 2025-2035 Asset Plan
- 2025-2026 Annual Budget

These documents were developed in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020 and in partnership with the Monash community.

Stages of Community Engagement

Stage 1 – May to July 2024
Council asked the community for their ideas, thoughts and aspirations to shape the future of Monash for the next four years and beyond. Broad community engagement included a project website and survey (Shape Monash), several on site listening posts and meetings with Council Advisory Committees. We heard from over 450 residents, workers and students across Monash.

Splitting the engagement activities into three streams allowed Council to hear from community members in different formats and locations. From quick conversations in public spaces, to people taking 10-15 minutes to complete a more detailed survey, and in-depth conversations with our various advisory committees.

The information received through these activities was rich in detail and, when combined with results and findings from other public consultations over the last two years, helped inform and inspire more conversations and direction from Council's community panel during the deliberative engagement process in Stage 2.

Stage 2 – August to September 2024
Council coordinated a Community Panel to deliberate on Council's role in helping the Monash community to shape the liveability of Monash in the next 10 years. This panel was formed as part of the requirements under the Local Government Act 2020, which mandates Victorian councils to undertake deliberative engagement for the development of their Community Vision, Council Plan, Financial Plan, Rating and Revenue Plan, Asset Plan, and Health and Wellbeing Plan.

Over 100 people nominated to be part of the panel, and 19 people were randomly selected to form our Community Panel. Over four sessions, the panel members were provided with detailed information from subject matter experts and results from Stage 1 community engagement. They engaged in extensive discussions, critically analysed the information, and reached a consensus on 13 recommendations. The

recommendations were then presented to the newly elected Council in early 2025 and were taken into consideration when drafting the strategic plans.

Stage 3 – March to May 2025
During this period, the community, deliberative panel and Advisory Committees, were invited to review and provide feedback on the draft plans via Shape Monash. This was supported by promotional activities including social media and Monash publications. This process included broad promotion and engagement including reaching out to people involved in previous engagement activities. Council received 49 submissions of feedback.

Main themes in community engagement

Our community told us they are concerned with the **amount of development** in Monash and are worried that we are **losing the 'green, leafy city'**. Concerns included the loss of trees and too many high rise buildings, and our community want Council to develop planning controls to prevent this. The Community Panel recommended that Council develop and enforce regulations that promote high standard building quality which ensures longevity, streetscape and green space.

Our community also highlighted the importance of **environmental sustainability and climate resilience**, acknowledging the work Council has done and encouraging Council to do more. Our community want Council to protect trees and vegetation and increase planting in spaces and places across the municipality. The Community Panel recommended that Council implement clear rules, guidelines, and regulations, to govern and manage existing and future flora and fauna while balancing safety and infrastructure considerations. They recommended to Council the importance to increase, improve, maintain and protect green spaces to ensure they are inclusive, equitable, multi-functional and used to maximum effect.

When it comes to Council **priorities**, our community wants Council to focus its efforts and spending on the services for which Council is usually the main provider, that is 'planning, building, renewing and maintaining community infrastructure, assets and public space'. The top three Council asset priorities selected by the community were services provided primarily by Council that impact day-to-day liveability. These were parks and open space, roads, drains and footpaths as well as street trees and bushland.

Our community would prefer Council to renew and modernise existing **facilities and assets** rather than build new ones. The Community Panel recommended Council repurpose existing facilities, where practical, into affordable multi use facilities, spread through the municipality. Our community demonstrated a preference for Council to prioritise using environmentally friendly and sustainable methods in infrastructure projects over more cost-effective, less sustainable ones. The community was divided in their support for spreading investment in assets across all suburbs versus where it is needed most. The community was also split in their support for maintaining current single-use facilities compared to new multi-purpose hubs. The Community Panel recommended reviewing and preparing Council's assets and operations for future opportunities, challenges and needs.

Council's short- and long-term challenge is funding its current operations and offerings to the community. Consultation across the **funding levers** showed there was most support (albeit still moderate) for attracting additional revenue sources such as external grants and increasing fees and charges, and there was the least support for reducing services. The community were divided on revenue generation options such as separate waste charge or reducing Council's subsidy level on user pay services, and there was low support for introducing paid parking. Comments from our community clearly showed a desire for Council to look within its own operating costs, budget allocation to assets, rather than employing financial levers or generating

additional revenue. The Community Panel recommended Council generate additional revenue sources in innovative and creative ways and consider community feedback on this topic.

Our community's **health and wellbeing** priorities and aspirations for the future community of Monash focused on centred around themes of safety, respect, physical and mental health, equal access and social connection. There was also a strong desire for a community that embraces diversity, addressing discrimination and accessibility. The community want everyone to feel safe and included with a strong sense of community and identified that there is room for improvement for this in Monash.

Council received strong encouragement from our community to continue **seeking the community's voice** and proactively capture diverse voices to shape decision-making and reflect the needs of our diverse community.

Council was also encouraged to **partner and collaborate** with other organisations, such as community groups, neighbouring councils, service providers, to share resources, optimise efficiency, reduce duplication as well as improve services and strengthen networks and local connections.

Council thanks our community for their time and expertise and supporting the development of these key strategies and plans that will shape the future of Monash.



CITY OF MONASH

Monash Civic Centre | 293 Springvale Road, Glen Waverley, 3150 | 8.30am to 5pm | Monday to Friday
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