



City of Melbourne Community Vision and Council Plan 2021–25

Community Engagement Summary

Version 1 – May 2021

Acknowledgment of Traditional Custodians

The City of Melbourne respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Bunurong Boon Wurrung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin Nation and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. We are committed to our reconciliation journey, because at its heart, reconciliation is about strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, for the benefit of all Victorians.

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Introduction

In line with the Local Government Act 2020, the City of Melbourne undertook a period of deliberative engagement in March 2021. People from across the municipality's different neighbourhoods who live, work, study, visit or own a business, were invited to share their aspirations for the future of the city and help develop a new 10-year Community Vision and four-year Council Plan.

This report summarises the activities, insights and final aspirations that emerged from this period of engagement.

What is a Community Vision?

A Community Vision is designed to articulate the long-term aspirations that the community has for the municipality.

The City of Melbourne's community vision comprises two parts – a vision statement and narrative, supported by a series of aspiration statements that are derived from the insights that emerged from the community engagement.

The Community Vision also helps to guide the development of the new four-year Council Plan.

What is a Council Plan?

The Council Plan defines the Council's strategic objectives for the next four years and the priorities and initiatives it will deliver in order to achieve the strategic objectives. It also outlines a set of indicators and targets which will be used to measure progress. It is informed by the community's aspirations as outlined in the Community Vision, as well as Council's role, responsibilities and financial position.

What did we do?

In 2020, the City of Melbourne undertook work to develop a [COVID-19 Reactivation and Recovery Plan](#). As part of this work, we spoke to people across the municipality about what they valued most about the city, and how the municipality needed to respond to both the health and economic challenges presented by the pandemic. This work helped to establish a framework to test the community's long-term aspirations for the future.

In March 2021, the City of Melbourne undertook a period of deliberative engagement with a broad cross-section of the community, to help form the city's 10-year Community Vision and four-year Council Plan. Across online and intercept surveys, targeted and neighbourhood workshops, community members were presented with the seven community aspiration themes that emerged from the COVID-19 Reactivation and Recovery Plan. These aspiration themes were used as prompts for community members to discuss what was most important to them for the future of Melbourne, and why.

The seven theme areas that workshop participants were presented with, were:

In the future, Melbourne is...

- is healthy and safe
- considers climate change in everything we do
- is a vibrant and unique meeting place that attracts people, talent and investment
- has a strong economy for everyone
- leads in the use of technology to make our city better
- is inclusive, accessible and affordable
- involves the community as it recovers and changes

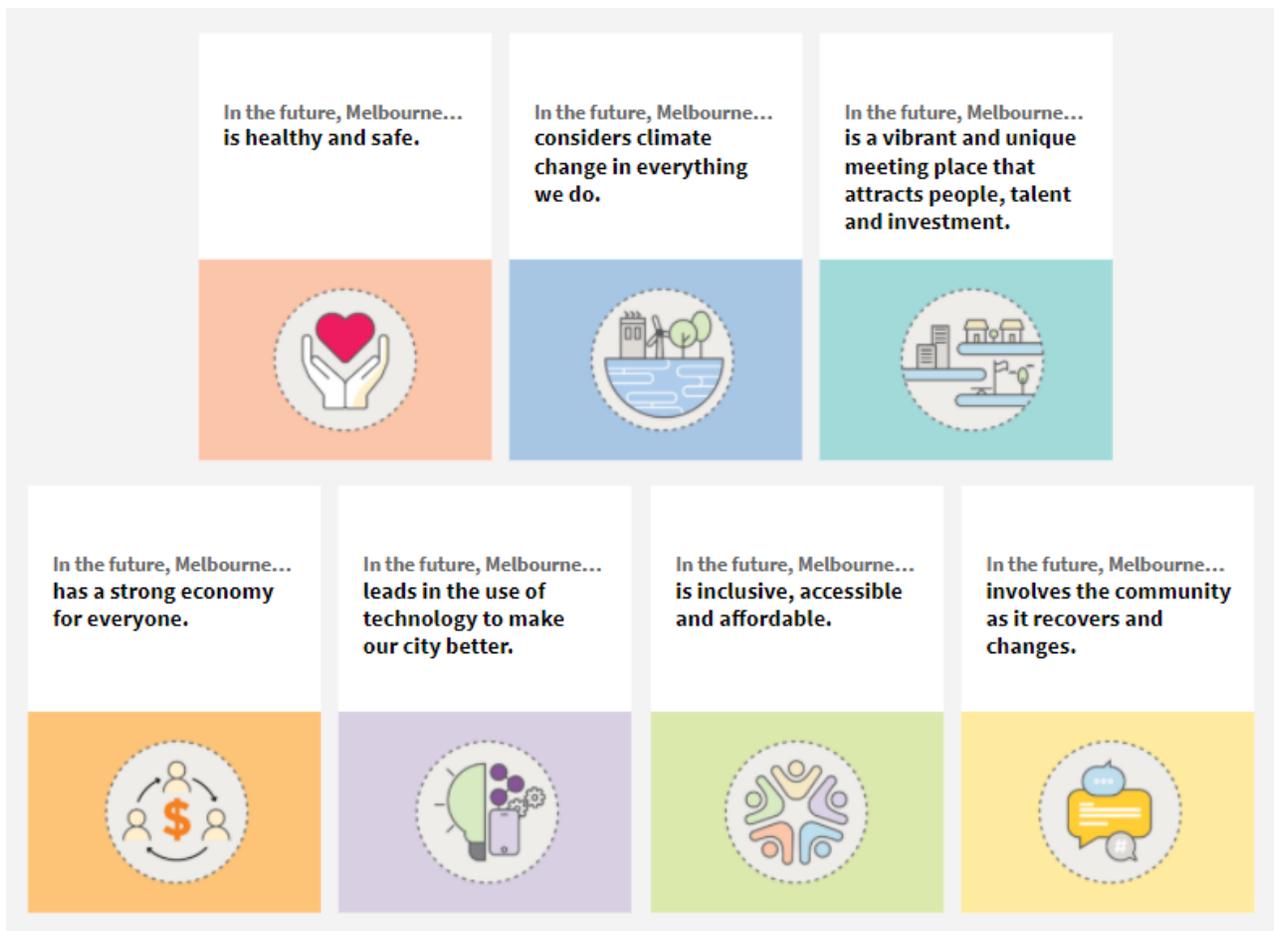


Figure 1: Seven community aspirations used as to start the community engagement for the Community Vision project

The surveys and workshops asked participants to identify and prioritise the community aspirations in order of importance. The neighbourhood workshops and the online survey explored these seven aspirations in greater detail, with each aspiration broken down into three key elements, or 'sub' aspirations.

Participants had the opportunity to provide feedback outside the scope of these community aspirations to address anything that might have been missing, or any additional aspirations that were not covered in the initial seven aspirations. Participants were also asked to 'dream big' and submit one idea they'd like to see for Melbourne in the next 10 years. This ensured that any ideas or priorities that were more specific in nature were also captured as part of the community engagement process.

Deliberative engagement activities were held across a number of channels to ensure that the conversations captured reflected City of Melbourne's diversity and a 'real mix' of voices from people who live, work, study, own a business and visit the City of Melbourne.

CHANNEL	ENGAGEMENT TYPE	PARTICIPANTS
Participate Melbourne	online surveys in March 2021	192
Intercept surveys	in person surveys at nine locations across the municipality	411
Neighbourhood Workshops	Four public workshops in different neighbourhoods across the municipality	72
Targeted Workshops	<p>Eight targeted workshops held to ensure that we heard from a mix of voices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities (CALD) - People with a disability - Children and young people (7 to 25 years old) - People with lived experience of homelessness - Traditional Custodians groups (Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, the Boon Wurrung Foundation and the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation) 	80

[Participate Melbourne](#) was used as the central hub for people to learn and participate in activities for the 10-year Community Vision and four-year Council Plan. It continues to also serve as a central point of communication so that the community can stay informed about the project's progress.

The following photos capture some of the deliberative engagement activities held in March 2021 where the voices of the community helped to inform the development of the 10-year Community Vision and four-year Council Plan.



Figure 2: Children drawing their big ideas for Melbourne in one of the targeted workshops



Figure 3: Community members prioritising their aspirations during intercept surveys



Figure 4: Community members considering and prioritising their aspirations collectively during a neighbourhood workshop.



Figure 5: A community member sharing their group's discussion during a neighbourhood workshop

Who participated?

Over the course of the engagement period, we spoke to more than 750 people from a range of different backgrounds. The majority of participants contributed to both qualitative and quantitative data, some participants did not prioritise their aspirations and instead focused on sharing their insights and ideas on these aspirations and the future of Melbourne.



96
People who identify as LGBTIQ



11
People who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander



36
Children and youth (under 18)



102
Young people (18-25)



5
People with lived experience of homelessness



39
People with a disability



44
People who own a business



254
Spoke languages other than English at home



114
Students



90
People over 65 years old

What we heard

The seven community aspirations served as a starting point to identify the community's priorities. Throughout the deliberative engagement activities, we collected quantitative data to identify the aspirations that were most important, and qualitative data to explain why these priorities were held by the community.

The aspiration most frequently chosen as the top priority over the next ten years for participants was that “in the future, Melbourne is a healthy and safe city”, followed by the aspiration that Melbourne is a city that ‘considers climate change in everything we do’ and a city that ‘is inclusive, accessible and affordable’.

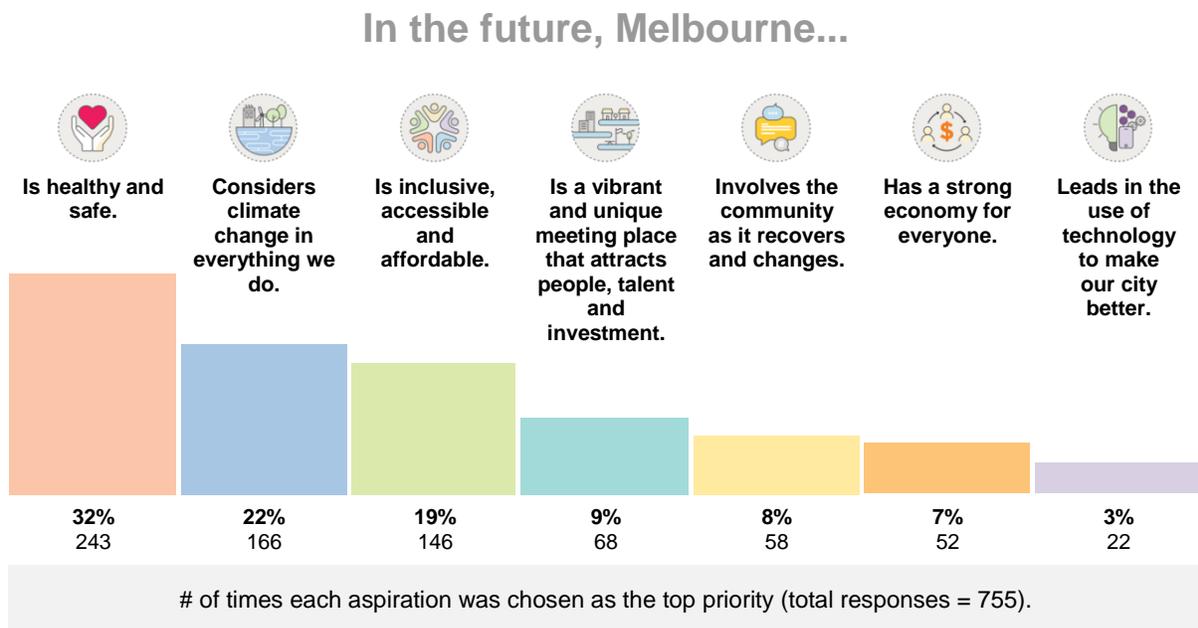


Figure 6: Community prioritisation of seven community aspirations

A number of key themes emerged when the community were asked ‘what is missing’ from the initial aspirations and to share their ‘big ideas’ for Melbourne in the next ten years. Many of these relate to specific outcomes for the city, rather than goals or aspirations. The following list represent the key themes that emerged from this activity:

- Enhancing and integrating nature into the city through more open spaces and trees
- More events in the city
- Greater access to different community services
- A safer and more efficient transport network
- Reducing waste in the city through better recycling programs
- Protecting heritage and managing development in the city
- Addressing affordable housing and homelessness

The participating community members also shared their insights into **why** certain aspirations were important to them, highlighting how their current experiences and perspectives shape their aspirations for the future. The community's qualitative feedback was synthesised into the following 15 community insights and aspirations.

Community Insight:

Whilst many people have a strong connection to Melbourne, the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted that some feel isolated and lonely in the city and lack a strong sense of connection to their community.

Participant quote:

"Knowing your neighbour means that you belong. Knowing your neighbour means that you can rely on them in times of need"

Community Aspiration:

The community is connected to each other.

The city's places and spaces bring people together and create spaces where they feel supported and can foster a sense of belonging.

Community Insight:

Many members of the community said they have been exposed to harassment or discrimination in the City, which impacts on their sense of physical and psychological safety. This in turn, impacts on how they participate in and enjoy city life.

Participant quote:

"I don't always feel safe in the city, which limits my ability to experience and enjoy"

Community Aspiration:

People feel safe in the city

All people who work in, live or visit the city can do so, and feel safe, at any time of the day or night.

Community Insight:

Many community members have a renewed appreciation for both physical health and mental health, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. They see health as being a fundamental requirement for creating a strong and resilient Melbourne.

Participant quote:

“If you don’t have health, what is the point? You can’t enjoy your world you can’t enjoy yourself”

Community Aspiration:**Health and wellbeing is prioritised**

The City of Melbourne's policies, spaces and services support the community's physical health and mental wellbeing for the benefit of all.

Community Insight:

The community is concerned that Melbourne’s neighbourhoods and buildings are not being built to the highest quality and environmental standards. They see this as playing an important role in how we respond to climate change, while retaining Melbourne’s unique character.

Participant quote:

“The built environment contributes 30% of emissions overall. We could [run] all buildings [on renewable energy], the effect would be significant”

Community Aspiration:**Our neighbourhoods and buildings are built to the highest environmental standards**

Planning policies guide development in the city and ensure that our neighbourhoods and buildings are built to the highest quality and environmental standard.

Community Insight:

Many parts of the community feel that urgent action must be taken on climate change because they believe it directly threatens the health and wellbeing of the community.

Participant quote:

“It’s an urgent threat now and will be even more urgent in 10 years. Taking action now is productive, because later will be too late”

Community Aspiration:**We have taken urgent action on climate change**

The City of Melbourne commits to renewable energy and circular economies to ensure Melbourne remains liveable for future generations.

Community Insight:

Many Melburnians feel there is a lack of opportunity to engage with green spaces in the city. They believe the wellbeing of our natural environment is closely connected to the mental and physical health of our community.

Participant quote:

“Making nature and [the city] habitat better [will] make the city better”

Community Aspiration:**We prioritise nature in our city**

Nature is brought back into the city through a dense network of green streets and spaces where plants and animals can thrive and communities can come together.

Community Insight:

Many Melburnians struggle to afford the cost of living in the city, from access to affordable creative spaces and housing, to nearby services. As such, some limit their time and activities in the city, while others are considering leaving altogether.

Participant quote:

“This is about being a great place to live, having the right services for people so community can thrive”

Community Aspiration:**Melbourne is affordable**

Our city remains vibrant and diverse by being affordable for everyone.

Community Insight:

Some community members said that the design of our city and services limits their ability to access and experience the city, which impacts on how welcome they feel.

Participant quote:

“Everyone has the right to be at home and leave home with ease and accessibility”

Community Aspiration:**The design of our city is inclusive**

The city is made up of safe and accessible places and services where everyone can come together.

Community Insight:

Some members of the community do not feel consulted regarding council decisions that will impact their lives. They believe their lived experience is critically important to consider when it comes to making decisions about the city.

Participant quote:

"I lived in North Melbourne flats during COVID lockdown – and it highlighted the importance of involving people who are impacted by decisions"

Community Aspiration:**The community participates in city decisions**

Members of the community feel empowered to contribute their ideas and knowledge to the decision making process, finding solutions to complex problems that will work for everyone.

Community Insight:

Many in Melbourne's community appreciate how aboriginal culture and heritage is featured through place names and public art. They noted that while this symbolic recognition is important, more needs to be done to make aboriginal culture part of Melbourne's identity.

Participant quote:

"Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal cultural values is really important... Needs to be translated into concrete practices"

Community Aspiration:**Aboriginal culture is central to Melbourne's identity**

Traditional knowledge is implemented practically and can be experienced by the whole community, so that Melbourne is seen, experienced and thought of as an Aboriginal city.

Community Insight:

Many Melburnians value the physical and cultural heritage of the city and remain concerned that developments do not complement their surroundings or accommodate a mix of uses for Melbourne's changing climate, community and economy.

Participant quote:

"I would like to see Melbourne retain its unique character with the laneways in the city and the Victorian and Edwardian buildings in the inner suburbs close to the city"

Community Aspiration:**We celebrate and protect Melbourne's unique places**

Melbourne's unique streetscapes, open and green spaces, built environment and neighbourhood character are protected and enhanced as the city grows and evolves.

Community Insight:

The community believes that the diversity of Melbourne's people, places and businesses should be at the core of our identity as a liveable city.

Participant quote:

"We need to create opportunities that bring people together"

Community Aspiration:**Celebration of diversity is at the heart of a liveable city**

There is an opportunity for events to celebrate Melbourne's diversity to improve connections between local communities and create a sense of belonging in the city.

Community Insight:

Some Melburnians feel that systemic inequality limits their access to economic opportunities and the possibility of a better future. They do not see enough diversity in leadership positions or support to believe that everyone can thrive in the workforce regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity, disability or economic background.

Participant quote:

"People being able to see diversity in the workforce is important—police force, tram driver, Lord Mayor... helping people feel that things are possible"

Community Aspiration:**There is diversity in Melbourne's workforce**

The City of Melbourne champions diversity in the workforce, driving a stronger and more resilient economy, with opportunity for all.

Community Insight:

Our community sees a need to rally behind our retail, hospitality, creative and innovation industries (e.g. small business, startups, biotechs, and fintechs) to prevent losing their essential contribution to what makes Melbourne vibrant and unique.

Participant quote:

"People being able to see diversity in the workforce is important—police force, tram driver, Lord Mayor... helping people feel that things are possible"

Community Aspiration:**We support Melbourne's existing and new industries**

The creative energy of the city is harnessed and enhanced to be a defining feature of Melbourne's unique character and contributes to its ongoing economic resilience and viability.

Community Insight:

The community expressed a strong desire for an affordable and efficient transport network so they can be better connected to different places, people and economies in Melbourne.

Participant quote:

“To be viewed globally as a progressive city in public transport and bike riding”

Community Aspiration:**Industries and communities are supported by a strong transport network**

An efficient and affordable transport network is a basic element of an accessible city and a strong economy.

Final community aspirations

The following table presents the 15 community aspirations that resulted from the deliberative community engagement activities held in March 2021. These aspirations will inform the development of the 10-year Community Vision and the four-year Council Plan.

The community is connected to each other	The design of our city is inclusive
People feel safe in the city	The community participates in city decisions
Health is prioritised	Melbourne is affordable
Our neighbourhoods and buildings are built to the highest environmental standards	We celebrate and protect Melbourne's unique places
We have taken urgent action on climate change	Celebration of diversity is at the heart of a liveable city
We prioritise nature in our city	There is diversity in Melbourne's workforce
Aboriginal culture is central to Melbourne's identity	We support Melbourne's existing and new industries
Industries and communities are supported by a strong transport network	

How do the community's insights inform the Council Plan?

The 10-year Community Vision is made up of a vision statement, narrative and 15 community aspirations. Each aspiration is supported with a statement that explains what the aspiration means.

The community's aspirations were presented to Councillors and the City of Melbourne's executive leadership in early April to inform the development of the four-year Council Plan.

Whilst the Community Vision plays an important role, there are a number of other factors that also inform the development of the four-year Council Plan. Every four years, the City of Melbourne prepares a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan to embed the community's public health and wellbeing priorities within the four-year Council Plan. Council's role, responsibilities and financial position are also be considered in the development of the four-year Council Plan.

The 10-year Community Vision and the four-year Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan have been incorporated into the Council Plan 2021-2025. The 15 community aspirations have also formed the basis for the Council Plan's six strategic objectives that summarise what Council will focus on for the next four years:

- Economy of the future
- Melbourne's unique identity and place
- Aboriginal Melbourne
- Climate and biodiversity emergency
- Access and affordability
- Safety and wellbeing

Next steps

A draft of the Community Vision and Council Plan has been released for public exhibition in May 2021 via Participate Melbourne. The community's feedback from public exhibition will be synthesised into a series of recommendations and presented to Council for consideration. A revised four-year Council Plan will be presented to Council for endorsement in June 2021. Participate Melbourne will continue to be used as the central hub for communication with the community throughout the development of the 10-year Community Vision and four-year Council Plan.