Bayside Community Plan

Stage 2 engagement findings and key issues paper

Final, 18 February 2016

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Stakeholder Engagement

Unless otherwise stated, all feedback documented by Capire Consulting Group and any person(s) acting on our behalf is written and/or recorded during our program/consultation activities.

Capire staff and associates take great care while transcribing participant feedback but unfortunately cannot guarantee the accuracy of all notes. We are however confident that we capture the full range of ideas, concerns and views expressed during our consultation activities.

Unless otherwise noted, the views expressed in our work represent those of the participants and not necessarily those of our consultants or our clients.

1 Introduction

The purpose of this report is to present the consultation findings and emerging issues that arose during the engagement activities undertaken as part of stage 2 engagement for the development of the Bayside Community Plan 2025.

1.1 Background to the project

It is Bayside City Council's (Council) aim that the Bayside Community Plan 2025 (the Plan) be built on the aspirations, needs, expectations and values of the Bayside community. The plan will enable Council to prioritise investments and highlight what initiatives, services and infrastructure its community values. Council are seeking to facilitate community ownership of the plan and for the community to assist with its development and implementation. To do so the community need to see their future needs, expectation and aspirations reflected in the final plan.

The Plan should also identify target service delivery and funding opportunities to assist in the implementation and clearly define roles and responsibilities. Council's role in the development of the Plan is to facilitate a process that engages with community members to listen, understand, gather feedback and articulate their priorities and guiding principles, while also providing insight to how Council can continue to govern and deliver efficient services to a thriving municipality.

The objectives of the Plan are:

- Develop a new community plan to affirm Council's commitment to public participation and to enable effective future planning that is evidence-based and driven by needs and values.

- Provide Council with an opportunity to capture the community's views and reference actions/activities that deliver on values, highlighting where to best invest.

- Effectively engage the community in development of the Plan; achieved through positive public participation and awareness of their impact on the decision making process.

1.2 Liveability Framework

Council's Liveability Framework has been adopted to set the context for the community engagement process regarding the Plan. This approach ensures that there can be balance of community outcomes, in cooperation with the internal approach of 'Building a Better Bayside.' This provides the community with scope to ascertain how they can influence change to meet their needs. Figure 1 illustrates Council's Liveability Framework.

Figure 1: Bayside City Council's Liveability Framework

Source: Provided by Bayside City Council 2015

In conjunction with the Liveability Framework Council has identified seven domains of liveability. These domains have been used as structure for reporting on the engagement findings. The following table details the seven domains and the important dimensions that relate to each domain.

Table 1: Bayside City Council domains of liveability

Domain of liveability	Important dimension
Open Space	Access, quality
Transport Options	Safety, convenience
Activity Centres	Vibrant, mix of services
Infrastructure	Good condition, fit for purpose, sustainable
Community	Engaged, supported, healthy, active, wellbeing
Environment	Safety, sustainable
Housing Choice	Diversity, Bayside character

Source: Provided by Bayside City Council 2015

1.3 Stakeholder and community engagement program

To inform the development of the Plan a community engagement and consultation program was developed to be delivered over four key stages. To date, two stages of engagement have been undertaken.

Stage 1 (completed in September):

The first stage of the engagement was undertaken by Micromex Research and Consulting. The objectives for this stage of research was to provide Council with a quantitative survey to measure levels of satisfaction, priorities and level of investment in regards to how people experience liveability across the municipality. Specifically, the quantitative research sought to explore the community's values, perceived future challenges, satisfaction levels, investment opportunities and relative priority of seven key community themes and their supporting indicators.

Telephone interviews were conducted from 5 to the 12 September 2015. In total, 502 people were interviewed. Of the 502 respondents, 473 people were selected using the White Pages. The remaining 29 respondents were recruited through face-to-face interviews conducted at a number of areas around Bayside, including Middle Brighton and Sandringham Railway stations, Church Street in Brighton, and Brighton Library.

A summary of the stage 1 engagement findings have been included in the key findings section of this report.

Stage 2 (completed in October)

The purpose of this stage of the engagement was to unpack the quantitative data collected in stage 1, and explore 'liveability' and what it means to residents. This stage of the analysis was to consider, discuss and gain a greater insight into the results of survey. This report gives a detailed summary of this process and outlines the key findings to date. Just under 400 community members we engaged through various activities undertaken in stage 2. The activities are outlined in more detailed in section 3.

Table 2: Summary of engagement activities undertaken for Stage 2.

Name of activity	Location of activity	Target participants	Number of participants
Beaumaris Farmers Market Listening Post	Beaumaris	General community	70
Brighton Shopping Strip Listening Post	Brighton	General community	48
Sandringham Village Festival Listening Post	Sandringham	General community	69
Hampton family fun Day Listening Post	Hampton	Public Housing tenants and families	Cancelled due to rain.
Targeted discussion with adults with special needs	Sandringham	Adults with a special need	12
Targeted discussion at parent information session	Black Rock	Parents	TBC
Targeted discussion with young people.	Sandringham	Students	16
Sent in surveys	Not applicable	General community	17
Online survey	Online	General community	34
Submissions & toolkits	Online and face to face	All	3
Community Plan Staff Day	Sandringham	Bayside Staff	80
Williamson Group Dinner	Brighton	CEO's and senior executive leaders living in Bayside	40
		Total	**389**

1.4 Stage 3

To be confirmed.

1.5 Stage 4

To be confirmed.

2 Summary of key messages

This section outlines the key messages identified during the stage 2 engagement program. The key messages included both successes and limitations of the some of the engagement activities, and gaps in information collected to date.

Key messages from the community

- Most residents are generally happy living in Bayside and feel a strong sense of pride and belonging. There is strong resistance to change and a desire to keeps things as they are.

- Pride in local access to a diverse range of small scale shopping precincts.

- Strong support for improving public transport options and services, both day and night and the need to provide continuous well maintained cycling and walking paths.

- Strong support and value placed on the location of Bayside including the ease of access to the bay, foreshore, parks and the city.

- Support for protecting and maintaining the greens spaces, tree lined streets, and a clean bay and foreshore area. Interest in improved provision of open spaces and parklands to be more inclusive of all ages and abilities.

- Strong connections to family and friends living in the area with many younger families choosing to stay local to be close to their network of family and friends.

- Interest in better understanding the indigenous history of Bayside and having this reflected through the open space and foreshore areas. Ideas included use of indigenous names of Council buildings and new trails and heritage walks.

- Strong concern about achieving a balance between protecting the sense of open space and the increasing pressure of housing development.

- Concern about traffic and parking, particularly lack of commuter parking at train stations and the impact this has on surrounding residential streets.

- Concern about the scale and quality of new developments and concern the designs are not in keeping with the local character. Also concern that new developments are not adequately supported with adequate car parking, road upgrades, and community facilities and services such as schools, transport and parkland.

- Desire to see an increase in the support for local businesses and employment, and activation of all local shopping areas. Church Street and Bay Street shopping strips are working well but more attention is required for other areas. Opportunities include using vacant shops to accommodate pop up galleries or space for start-up businesses.

- Need for Council to facilitate more opportunities for residents to get to know their neighbours, such as street parties and local festivals.

Engagement learnings

- Best engagement outcomes occurred during the face-face engagement at listening posts.

- The community did not engage well with online engagement tools illustrated through the low participation with all online tools.

- Due to cancellation (inclement weather) of the Hampton event, there has been limited input from tenants living in the public housing area and young families.

- The general community engaged well in conversations regarding environment, transport, housing density, activity centres and local character. It was more difficult to find residents interested in talking about issues associated with infrastructure, economic development and solutions for accommodating population growth. It would be useful to target these gaps by engaging directly with interest groups to get a better understanding of the issues, for example local small business groups, builders, and low income earners, young families.

- The listening posts were held in Sandringham, Brighton and Beaumaris. Given the low response to the online engagement, there was limited feedback on neighbourhoods outside these areas, such as Highett and Cheltenham.

Considerations for the next stage of engagement

- Further engagement with specific demographic and interest groups that were missed in the broader engagement and targeted conversation. These include local businesses, low income households, young families and also geographical gaps including residents living in Cheltenham and Highett.

- Further explore the contradictions of the findings, for example there is a strong focus on environmental sustainability and protection, but there is also appears to be high car dependency. Many residents don't see the benefits that increased densities have on environmental sustainability or increased service provision.

- Consider alternative methods of communication to promote the importance of the Plan and the role that the community plays in its development of the document. Learn from the low participation with online tools and consider targeting media and communications directly at stakeholder groups.

- Present the Plan in the context of the rate capping issue, the need for reduced spending and promote that the Plan will be used as the evidence base to identify priorities for spending. This approach will create a deeper more informed dialogue with the community to communicate the importance of making sure Council get it right.

- Provide a platform for the broad community to exchange ideas such as a community forum. Ensure there is a strong cross representation of all the community by targeting invitations with consideration for geographic spread, different age groups and abilities. Given the low participation with online engagement, it's important that recruitment of this event happens directly with community groups. One approach might be to list 20 top community groups across the different themes of liveability and request three to four members attend the session.

- Engage the community in a 'trade-off' conversation where they are presented with scenarios illustrating how and where funding is targeted to achieve the actions of the Plan.

- The Community Reference group established as part of this project currently represent a cross section of the community. It is important build on the engagement to-date with this group to play an ongoing role as a conduit between Council and the community as a cross representation of the Bayside Community.

3 Summary of stage 2 engagement activities

The consultation activities included a range of techniques to inform and engage the community on the project. The following table outlines a summary of the key tools and techniques, location of activities, number of participants and key observations.

Table 3: Summary of stage 2 engagement activities

Activity	Location	Target participants	Number of participants	Key observations
Community Reference Group A community reference group was formed by Council at the beginning of the project. Regular meetings were held with the group to provide feedback to the process and progress of the Plan. IAP2 Level of Engagement Involve – Collaborate	Not applicable	Community champions for the project who represent a cross-section of the community	10-15	The meetings worked well as an avenue to keep the group up to date with activities and information about the project. A number of members from the group attended consultation activities to assist. Members of the group include a broad cross section of the community who are active and have strong community networks.
Listening Posts Provided an opportunity for the community to obtain more information about Plan and to participate in a short survey or activity. IAP2 Level of Engagement: Consult	Bayside City Council Staff Day Sandringham Village Festival Beaumaris Farmers Market Church Street, Brighton Hampton Family Fun Day[1]	Council staff General community	Staff Day: 80 Sandringham: 69 Beaumaris: 70 Brighton: 48	Beaumaris Farmers Market: Strong focus on environment issues and conservation. Participants paid a small entry fee to the market. This may have limited representation from across the local community. Church Street Shopping Strip: High participation of older adults, along with a mix of young and teenage families Not a lot of space for people to stop and participate in the activity and many passers-by were shopping and didn't have time to engage in the activity

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[1] An additional Listening Post was schedule in Hampton at a Family Fun Day and targeted as residents living in public housing, however due to poor weather the event was cancelled.

Activity	Location	Target participants	Number of participants	Key observations
				Sandringham Village Festival The engagement activity was one of three Council activities operating from the one location. At times this caused confusion to participants. Broad range of participants took part in this activity.
Online forum A moderated online forum was used to host discussion with stakeholder who have access to the internet and choose to participate. IAP2 Level of Engagement Consult – Inform	Not applicable	General community with access to internet	15 participants	The Bayside community did not engage well with the online tools, illustrated by the low participation rates for the online forum.
Survey A structured survey was developed to obtain detailed feedback from stakeholders about priorities identified in the telephone survey. The survey was available online and hard copy. IAP2 Level of Engagement Consult	Not applicable	General community	Hard copy survey: 17 Online survey: 34	As with online forum there was low participation rates in the survey.
Targeted discussions with hard to reach groups Focus groups were held with 'hard to reach' groups to allow feedback from groups who may not get involved in other activities. Tailored sessions were developed to include a series of interactive activities that reflected the audience type. IAP2 Level of engagement: Consult	Parent Play Group Information Session, Black Rock[2] Adults with a disability Sandringham Secondary College	Hard to reach groups	Adults with a disability: 12 Young people: 16	Adults with a disability Great group and strong input from these representatives. Young people: Great group and strong input from year 10 students from Sandringham Secondary College.

[2] This session was facilitated by Council and no observations were made about the activity.

Activity	Location	Target participants	Number of participants	Key observations
Engagement toolkit and submissions An engagement toolkit will be available for interested community groups and networks to host their own conversations about the Plan.	Not applicable	General community and community groups	3	The toolkit included a range of materials to support a conversation including discussion prompts and protocols for recording information. Bayside community did not engage well with the engagement toolkit,
Williamson Group Dinner Provided an opportunity to engage with highly educated group of the community IAP2 Level of engagement: inform and educate	Not applicable	CEOs and business leaders.	40	The dinner provided an opportunity to drawn on the expertise of an excusive group of CEO and senior managers living in Bayside. The dinner was successful in engaging a different segment of the Bayside community in the conversation about aspiration and opportunities for the Plan.

4 Key findings

The following section details the key findings summary from stage 2. The findings have been group under Council's seven domains of liveability.

Each domain theme has been presented to provide a brief description of the theme, outline the target questions relating to this theme, key findings from the quantitative research (stage 1) and how these has been unpacked through the qualitative research. At the end of each theme, the preliminary priorities to inform the development of the Plan are listed. It is acknowledged that some themes will overlap.

4.1 Liveability theme 1: Open Space

Description of theme

This theme relates to open space and the dimensions of access and quality.

There is strong research to support the importance of community access to nature and public open spaces. Some of the key benefits include the promotion of physical activity and improved mental health. There are a number of factors within open space that need to be considered in assessing the adequacy of provision including distance, quantity, quality and variety.

Access to open space was identified as a key priority by participants across all discussions relating to the liveability of Bayside and what they value most about living in Bayside. The feedback received under this theme also overlaps with feedback received in relation to the environment theme.

Key questions asked in the stage 2 engagement relating to this theme included 'What sport and recreation facilities do you currently use and how can we improve access to them?', and 'What is it about Bayside's foreshore and beaches that are important to you?'

Key findings from the quantitative research (stage 1)

The following points highlight the key findings of the quantitative research in relation to open space options and are grouped by overall priorities for Bayside, current levels of satisfaction, and priorities for investment:

Overall priority for Bayside:

- Beaches and foreshores in Bayside (high).

- Playgrounds (low).

Level of satisfaction:

- Beaches and foreshores in Bayside (high satisfaction).

- Parklands and Gardens (high satisfaction)

- Places to walk your dog (high satisfaction) Places to play sport and be physically active (high satisfaction).

Priorities for investment:

- Beaches and foreshore in Bayside.

What we heard through the qualitative research

The provision of open space in Bayside was consistently highlighted by participants as a key factor for what residents love about living in Bayside. References to open space included the beaches and foreshores, parks and ovals, places to walk your dog, off-lead dog areas, bushland, and also the overall sense of open space with lower density housing and the amount of greenery in the streets.

A number of participants disagreed with the low priority rating that playgrounds received in the quantitative research and thought this might reflect the recent investment and high satisfaction with some of the larger existing playgrounds. Others suggested that playgrounds are a key priority for residents with many seeing the beach and foreshore as a playground. Participants gave attention to specific playground needs, including new equipment, more play opportunities for older children, increase in the provision of shade and seating, and the need for more all-ability play equipment.

'Open space is why we moved here. It is the number one priority' (Beaumaris Listening Post)

In relation to sporting fields, participants focused on the need to improve and maintain sporting facilities. It was also identified by several participants that there needs to be more sporting fields, 'there aren't enough to accommodate all the sporting clubs' (Sandringham Listening Post). The need for additional female sport facilities was also cited as a facility gap and the subsequent gender inequity in some locations across the municipality.

'Facilities for female sporting clubs are lacking. Funds should be provided to address this immediately' (Beaumaris Listening Post)

Beaches and foreshores were identified as a key component of open space provision in Bayside and were highly valued spaces across all participant groups. Some suggestions were made to improve the usage/usability of Bayside's beaches and foreshores including 'opportunities for more cafés on the foreshore', 'outdoor gym equipment', 'shaded picnic areas', 'kids playgrounds', and 'food vans in the evening' (Sandringham Listening Post).

Priorities to inform the development of the Community Plan

- Continue maintaining and investing in foreshores and beaches in Bayside.

- Further investigate the needs of sporting clubs in relation to the quantity of recreation reserves and associated amenities e.g. change facilities.

- Continue to maintain and upgrade playgrounds to broaden the users groups that can access these spaces.

- Preservation of open spaces.

4.2 Liveability theme 2: Transport options

Description of theme

Transport options has been considered in terms of the dimensions of safety and convenience. Transport is key in facilitating movement in, around and beyond the Bayside area. This includes access to employment, shops, education, health, social and community connections.

Factors considered in this theme include distance to transport options, frequency of public transport services, walkability, and network connections.

Responses relating to this theme arose in discussions around the liveability of Bayside and also how Bayside can be an even better place to live.

Key findings from the quantitative research (stage 1)

The following points highlight the key findings of the quantitative research in relation to transport options and are grouped by overall priorities for Bayside, current levels of satisfaction, and priorities for investment:

Overall high priority for Bayside:

- Ability to walk safely and easily in Bayside

- Safety and maintenance of roads

- Ease of access using your preferred mode of transport.

Level of satisfaction:

- Ability to walk safely and easily in Bayside (high satisfaction)

- Ability to cycle safely and easily, with access to facilities (moderate satisfaction).

Priorities for investment:

- Availability and access to public transport options

- Ease of access using your preferred mode of transport.

What we heard through the qualitative research

Access to a range of high quality and regular transport options was a strong theme across all ages and conversations.

Cycling was a particularly strong theme. Participants frequently identified a shortage of designated and integrated bicycle paths along with a lack of supporting bicycle infrastructure such as secure bike storage and signage. This was seen as barriers to cycle in Bayside. The conflict between cars and cyclists along Beach Road is an apparent issue. Comments from participants focused on the need for additional interventions such as separated paths, lane closures, and better monitoring and enforcement of road rules to manage behaviours.

'We need a consistent approach to planning for cyclists. Shared bike paths are challenging and many bike paths just run out' (Sandringham Listening Post)

A number of participants focused on the issue of increased traffic congestion and insufficient parking as a result of residential development an increasing population. Participants frequently commented on the need for an 'increase in commuter parking at railway stations' (Beaumaris Listening Post) and the need for additional parking spaces within residential developments.

Community members repeatedly provided observations around the impact limited commuter parking has on surrounding residential streets. Many attributed this to the public transport zone changes and the increased popularity of Sandringham and Brighton Beach Stations (now located within Zone 1).

'Parking in the shopping strips is a problem and the one-hour parking limit is not practical if one wants to meet a friend at a cafe for lunch, nor is two hours to go to the movies. This does not promote a good community feel where friends are limited with time to catch up or shop' (Online participant)

Parking restrictions along shopping strips was also a common concern raised by participants. A number of respondents felt that the parking limits were too short and were impacting local businesses and their customers. Some participants thought that parking limits were also forcing cars into residential streets that don't have parking restrictions which is impacting on local amenity of the neighbourhood.

Several participants also raised concerns around the impact of increasing traffic on safety, asking for 'improvements in traffic management around schools and shopping strips' (online participant).

In regards to public transport, it was highlighted by participants that there are inequalities in the current levels of provision. One participant commented that 'some areas receive hourly services, with no service after 9.30pm' (online participant) while other areas of the municipality had services every ten minutes. Inadequate frequency of and poor connections between modes were expressed as the major public transport concerns, particularly bus connections at train stations.

'There is a lack of bus services and cohesion between train and bus timetables' (Beaumaris Listening Post)

Participants at the targeted youth discussion suggested the need for buses to run later in the evening and more frequently over the weekend. Some young adults said that the areas in the south of the municipality had poor access to night bus services for example the Night Rider bus service stops at Nepean Highway.

The need for a community bus system was also suggested by a number of participants to 'assist older residents in accessing social activities' (Hampton resident).

With regards to the walkability of Bayside, there was a mix of responses. Many participants identified the walkability of Bayside as a key factor for why they love Bayside. However, several comments were made around the need to improve pedestrian footpaths and increase the number of pedestrian crossings. Several respondents also raised concerns over confusion regarding shared bicycle and pedestrian paths.

Priorities to inform the development of the Community Plan

- Understanding resident's behaviour with regard to car dependency and the high demand for parking.

- Improvements to cycling networks to ensure better more continues cycle network

- Improvements to pedestrian paths to ensure a better and more continues walking path network, including more opportunities to cross the road safely.

- Understanding Council's role with regards to advocating for improvements to the public transport system and access to community bus services.

4.3 Liveability theme 3: Activity Centres

Bayside has a number of activity centres including one Principal Activity Centre (Southland) which is shared with Kingston City Council, as well as two Major Activity Centres (Church Street and Bay Street). Activity Centres are the focus of new housing, employment, retail and service provision and seek to encourage less car dependence and more active modes of transport (e.g. walking and cycling). Council seeks to promote vibrant and service rich activity centres across Bayside.

Factors to consider in this theme include the variety of retail and employment options within activity centres, accessibility by different modes of transport, and provision of services.

Responses relating to this theme arose in discussions around the liveability of Bayside, how Bayside can be an even better place to live, and what Council should keep, stop, or start doing. The online survey also asked 'How can we ensure Bayside residents have access to a diverse mix of local retail, businesses and employment options?'

Key findings from the quantitative research (Stage 1)

The following points highlight the key findings of the quantitative research in relation to activity centre options and are grouped by overall priorities for Bayside, current levels of satisfaction, and priorities for investment:

Overall priority for Bayside:

- Live close to services, shopping strips and public transport.

Level of satisfaction:

- Live close to services, shopping strips and public transport (high satisfaction).

- Bayside's shopping strips and activity centres (moderately high satisfaction).

- Mix of retail, services, and entertainment (high satisfaction).

What we heard through the qualitative research

The diversity and scale of the different shopping strips was identified as a priority of participants. Several participants expressed a desire to see more variety of shops within the local shopping strips. Observations made by participants included that 'Hampton Street doesn't need any more hairdressers and bakeries' (online participant), and that there is a need for 'a quality butchers, fruit and veg shop, fresh seafood, and a delicatessen in Sandringham' (online participant).

'Keep small businesses in Bayside and encourage people to use them. Small businesses are more likely to employ local people and most owners are locals themselves.' (Brighton East resident).

Participants frequently mentioned the need for support for small business along shopping strips. A wider variety of commercial and studio spaces, at a reasonable cost was a suggestion to encourage local business start-ups and artists. A business incubator was also suggested to support home-based and/or new businesses.

Youth employment opportunities in Bayside were expressed as a concern, one resident suggested 'incentives for local businesses to give youth employment experience' (online participant) as a way of addressing this issue.

Residents often raised the issue of the 'excess spend on Christmas decorations' that had 'little effect' (Sandringham Listening Post).

Throughout consultation participants mentioned specific examples of activity centre improvements where the quality of the upgrade was questioned. For example the Hampton Street upgrade was described as 'cheap, with furniture of poor quality, and design that barely improves amenity' (Sandringham).

'Improve public realm, places to sit and rest, more open space within the shopping strip' (Brighton Listening Post)

Priorities to inform the development of the Community Plan

- Better engage the community regarding the role of activity centres being a mix of housing retail and business.

- Understand how Council can better support start-up and local businesses in Bayside.

- Understand Council's role in promoting local businesses.

- Consider the provision of low cost office or studio spaces for home-based and small businesses, such as a business incubator.

- Consider street scape improvements that can enhance the public realm for people to rest and socialise within activity centres.

4.4 Liveability theme 4: Infrastructure

The infrastructure theme includes feedback relating to the condition, maintenance and sustainability of Council's civic assets such as community facilities, playgrounds, lighting, signage, roads, drainage, footpaths and street space.

This themes will overlap other themes that consider access and use of the assets such as open space, transport, community and environment.

Responses relating to this theme general arose through questions around how Bayside can be an even better place to live, and what are the ideas for projects, programs and initiatives for a liveable Bayside. The online survey also specifically asked 'What community facilities and services do you need and how can we improve access to them?' and 'What community facilities and services do you believe are lacking in Bayside?

Key findings from the quantitative research (Stage 1)

The following points highlight the key findings of the quantitative research in relation to infrastructure and are grouped by overall priorities for Bayside, current levels of satisfaction, and priorities for investment:

Overall priority for Bayside:

- Safety and maintenance of roads

- Overall cleanliness and appearance of Bayside.

Level of satisfaction:

- Condition and use of infrastructure and facilities (moderate satisfaction)

- Safety and maintenance of roads (moderate satisfaction).

Priorities for investment:

- Safety and maintenance of roads

- Ability of the stormwater system/drains being adequate to prevent flooding during major storm events.

What we heard through the qualitative research

A desire for more and improved bicycle paths was a strong theme from participants, including dedicated bike lanes or separated pedestrian/bike paths to improve safety on major roads and popular cycle routes such as the Nepean Highway, Beach Road and Balcombe Road. Bicycle end of trip facilities were also identified including the need for bike storage and lockers at shopping centres and public facilities. One participant specifically identified a shortage of bike storage boxes in Sandringham.

'Ensure improvement to broken or uneven footpaths receive high priority for repair to increase the safety of walkers' (Online participant)

The need for improved footpaths and pedestrian infrastructure such as lighting and new pedestrian crossings was identified. Participates also identified pot holes and trip hazards on roads and footpaths as areas requiring general attention, particularly to 'aid movement of the elderly'.

Participants frequently identified a lack of parking at train stations, shopping centres, community centres, schools, and along the beach. One participant also suggested that additional disabled parking spaces should be provided in Bay Street and Church Street.

'Parking spaces for public transport is desperately needed. No parking available during the day within walking distance of the station. How about a multi-level car park…' (Beaumaris Listening Post)

Sandringham Station was most commonly identified as having a shortage of commuter parking. Some participants suggested that multistorey car parks should be introduced at stations to increase the provision of car spaces. Other improvements to public transport infrastructure suggested by participants included bus shelters, benches and improved signage. One participant emphasised that this is particularly important for elderly residents that rely on public transport.

While some participants told us that there 'has been good investment in playgrounds' in Bayside, other suggested that additional improvements are required such as more monkey bars, shade sails, seating, dog walking facilities,and replacing equipment that 'is a bit too old fashioned'. Specifically, participants identified the need for greater disability access including accessible play equipment and bathrooms, and more inclusive parks. Improvements to infrastructure to support female sports such as women's changing rooms was also identified by several participants.

Participants supported upgrades to public realm infrastructure through the municipality, including bins, streetlights, public toilets, street furniture, and surveillance. Some participants suggested that public facilities and civic infrastructure such as water should be upgraded to improve environmental sustainability. Participants supported a shift to renewable energy sources and reduced carbon emissions targets.

'The council should be setting goals to become carbon free. This could be achieved by having all council facilities powered by solar and have grey water recycling which can be used to water parks' (online participant)

Priorities to inform the Community Plan

- Improved bike paths, more dedicated bike lanes and more supporting infrastructure such as bike lockers and bike parking to encourage more non-vehicular transport options.

- Increase the range of equipment within playgrounds such as more seating, more shade and more play areas for all ages and abilities

- Improved public realm infrastructure such as bins and more street furniture

- Educate the community about the trade-off regarding more parking. Review the role of parking and car dependence and ways to make public transport, walking and cycling a more desirable mode of transport.

4.5 Liveability theme 5: Community

This dimension refers to the promotion of an engaged, supportive, healthy and active community. It includes opportunities for building social capital, promoting civic engagement and providing opportunities to build social and community relationships.

Community infrastructure plays a key role in promoting social connection and participation while also providing access to important community services and programs such as education, health, childcare, social support etc. Key factors considered in this theme include accessibility, quality and variety of opportunities.

Responses relating this theme generally arose through the questions around how Bayside can be an even better place to live, and what are the ideas for projects, programs and initiatives for a liveable Bayside. The online survey also specifically asked 'What community facilities and services do you need and how can we improve access to them?', 'What community facilities and services do you believe are lacking in Bayside?' and 'How can Bayside further improve provision and increase participation in arts and culture?'

Key findings from the quantitative research (stage 1)

The following points highlight the key findings of the quantitative research in relation to Community and are grouped by overall priorities for Bayside, current levels of satisfaction, and priorities for investment:

Overall priority for Bayside:

- Health and safety of your community (high)

- Access and availability to services that help people in need or when they are unwell. (moderate).

Level of satisfaction:

- Health and safety of your community (high satisfaction)

- Places to play sport and be physically active (high satisfaction)

- Opportunities to socialise or meet with friends (high satisfaction)

- People with a disability can easily access their community and services (moderate satisfaction).

Priorities for investment:

- Access and availability to services that help people in need or when they are unwell

- Opportunities for young people to be supported

- People with a disability can easily access their community and services

- Older adults receive the support they need to maintain their independence.

What we heard through the qualitative research

Participants often mentioned their support of community events, such as festivals and markets. Participants mentioned events such as Dendy Park Carols and Sandringham Festival as being enjoyable and beneficial to the community. Participants made observations that 'cultural and creative activities are lacking' (Sandringham) and that 'most of the events are a bit predictable and not very exciting' (online). Participants suggested frequent farmers markets as well as 'street parties to build a sense of community and friendship' (Hampton resident). A local community garden, for education and community gathering was suggested regularly by participants as a missing feature in Bayside.

'Need more community based activities, people currently do not know their neighbours. One event a year does not engender community spirit' (Brighton Listening Post)

Residents expressed that there are limited opportunities to socialise for certain age groups, young people, older adults and the elderly and were mentioned. In terms of opportunities for older adults one resident suggested 'U3A or Men's Sheds' (Brighton Listening Post). It was also suggested that there is the need for 'better healthy aging programs and services - especially around social connectedness for older people' (Beaumaris Listening post).

Libraries are identified as highly valued by participants in Bayside. Participants mentioned the need for increased hours, programs and activities, particularly for older children.

'Increase the capacity for study at all the local libraries. I use the library to study, and I often can't due to a lack of space. They are terrific places to be and study' (Sandringham Listening Post).

In regards to civic engagement, participants often suggested that Council could increase the level of communication with residents. Participants mentioned it was unclear where to access information about available services, facilities and events in the area, as well as planning and development issues and opportunities to get involved. Improved communication would ensure that all residents are aware of the 'services and facilities that anyone in the community can access' (online participant). Some suggested that information is offered in too many places and too much is through Council's website. "We need two options, online and a newsletter for us oldies".

'Have more community events to break down the "us and them" mentality' (Brighton Listening Post)

The need for greater promotion of events and programs was evident, as participants made comments such as 'I wasn't aware there were art and culture events in Bayside' (online participant) and that 'more publicity about youth services on posters at school" is needed' (Targeted Youth Session).

Priorities to inform the Community Plan

- Better Council branded and promotion of community events and festivals.

- Review the variety of events and festivals and consider opportunities to target different community groups, such young families, youth, arts focus etc.

- Explore opportunities to streamline and improve communication between Council and the community to strengthen relationships.

- Determine needs for age-specific services and programs and ensure adequate access from where residents live.

4.6 Liveability theme 6: Environment

The Environment theme refers to both the built-form and natural environments of Bayside. The environment plays a significant role in shaping people's experience of a neighbourhood such as how safe they feel moving around it and how the character of an area is defined e.g. heritage buildings, sense of open space, greenery etc.

Environment also includes the sustainability of the natural environment and links to the preservation and maintenance of the natural environment, how the built-form impacts the natural environment, and the behaviours of residents, businesses and councils in relation to environmentally sustainable practices.

Responses relating to this theme generally arose through the questions around the liveability of Bayside, how Bayside can be an even better place to live, and what Council should keep, stop or start doing. The online survey specifically asked respondents 'What is it about Bayside's foreshore and beaches that are important to you?', 'How can we conserve or enhance Bayside's bushland reserves and native vegetation?', 'What does taking leadership in environmental sustainability in Bayside look like?', 'How would you describe the character of Bayside or your area and how can the character be protected and enhanced?', 'Do you feel unsafe anywhere in Bayside and why?', and 'How can we improve safety for the whole community?'.

Key findings from the quantitative research (stage 1)

The following points highlight the key finding of the quantitative research in relation to Environment and are grouped by overall priorities for Bayside, current levels of satisfaction, and priorities for investment:

Overall priority for Bayside:

- Beaches and foreshores in Bayside

- Federal government is showing leadership in protecting Australia's environment and developing plans for a sustainable future

- Health and safety of your community

- State government is showing leadership in protecting Victoria's environment and developing plans for a sustainable future

- Local government is showing leadership in protecting Bayside's environment and developing plans for a sustainable future

- Overall cleanliness and appearance of Bayside.

Level of satisfaction:

- Beaches and foreshores in Bayside (high satisfaction)

- Overall cleanliness and appearance of Bayside (high satisfaction)

- Health and safety of your community (high satisfaction)

- You know how to save water, reduce waste and save energy (high satisfaction)

- Development is responsive and reflective of the Bayside Character (low satisfaction).

Priorities for investment:

- Federal government is showing leadership in protecting Australia's environment and developing plans for a sustainable future

- State government is showing leadership in protecting Victoria's environment and developing plans for a sustainable future

- Beaches and foreshores in Bayside

- Local government is showing leadership in protecting Bayside's environment and developing plans for a sustainable future

- Development is responsive and reflective of the Bayside Character.

What we heard from the qualitative research

'The beaches are one of the best parts of living in Bayside and need to be protected at all costs' (online participant)

The beaches and foreshores were consistently referred to as the most valued asset of Bayside with the protection and maintenance of beaches and foreshores a high priority. Participants provided some observations that beach cleaning services need to be improved to address issues of dumping and rubbish in general.

Participants placed emphasis on the protection of biodiversity within marine reserves and along the foreshores. Participants frequently expressed that there is a need for increased awareness and education of Bayside's bio-diversity to ensure its protection. Proposals included 'programs to work with young people to protect the environment, and encourage advocacy and action' (Brighton Listening Post) and 'schools need to be involved in preservation' (Black Rock resident).

'Less than half the original flora of Bayside remains, and about one quarter of that is at risk of local extinction, as it occurs naturally only one of the reserves or exists in such small numbers that propagation is not currently viable (online participant)

Off leash dog areas were mentioned by a large number of residents, some in support of and other indicating the need for further restrictions, therefore suggestions to mitigate the issue often clashed. A number of residents proposed 'greater accessibility and extended hours of off-leash dog areas along the beach' (Sandringham Listening Post), while others suggested better regulation and increased restrictions.

'I would like to see all stormwater ocean outfalls within Bayside to be upgraded to ensure stormwater is cleaned prior to discharge to bay' (online participant)

Participants expressed concern over stormwater drainage into Port Phillip Bay. The quality of the water and lack of filtration was cited as an issue for residents, participants have concerns about the 'dirty storm water run-off' (online participant) entering the bay.

Hard rubbish was raised frequently, particularly the change to an on call collection system. Participants suggested a return to set days, twice a year, as the new system means there is 'rubbish all the time' and streets look 'un-tidy' (Sandringham Listening Post).

'Get rid of the on call hard rubbish service – the street always looks like a dump because there is always one house that has put out hard rubbish for collection, it looks like a tip!' (online participant)

A number of participants highlighted the importance of education in regards to environment sustainability, including 'educating the community on the environmental trade-offs, you can't keep living and wanting to live on large blocks and protect the environment' (Brighton Listening Post). Suggestions included running programs with residents around sustainable gardening, programs targeted at kids and youth, education programs in local schools, and the development of an education centre.

There was strong interest from young people and adults with special needs to better understand the indigenous history of Bayside and having this reflected through the open space and foreshore areas. Ideas included use of indigenous names of new trails and heritage walks.

The character of Bayside was explored in the qualitative research however the responses were greatly focused around the character of residential developments and the need to support lower density housing to protect Bayside's character. This is discussed in more detail in the following section (Housing).

'Bayside landscape is missing an important part of our history- the story of our indigenous past!' (young person focus group)

Priorities to inform the Community Plan

- Determine Council's role in planning for a sustainable future including advocacy to State and Federal government.

- Continue to protect and enhance the beaches and foreshores of Bayside.

- Determine Council's role in the protection of bio-diversity and promoting sustainable practices, including its role as an educator.

- Interest in better understanding the indigenous history of Bayside and having this reflected through the open space and foreshore areas.

4.7 Liveability theme 7: Housing

Description of theme

This theme includes housing choice and diversity, and Bayside's local character.

Housing affordability often links to the quality of houses, access to employment, retail, transport options and services, and housing density. Having access to a diversity of dwelling types is also important to cater to different demographics and needs such as residents who are looking to downsize, first home buyers, single person dwellings, families etc.

Housing was a strong theme in the responses to what Council can 'stop' doing and was raised in conversation focused on what participant's value about living in Bayside. The online survey also specifically asked 'How can we provide housing choices for all people at different stages of their lives?'

Key findings from the quantitative research (Stage 1)

The following points highlight the key findings of the quantitative research in relation to housing and are grouped by overall priorities for Bayside, current levels of satisfaction, and priorities for investment:

Overall priority for Bayside:

- Development is response and reflective of the Bayside character.

Level of satisfaction:

- Bayside provides housing choices for people at all stages of their lives (moderate satisfaction)

- Development is response and reflective of the Bayside character (low satisfaction)

- Neighbourhood housing and character (moderate satisfaction).

Priorities for investment:

- Bayside provides housing choices for people at all stages of their lives

- Development is response and reflective of the Bayside character.

What we heard through the qualitative research

Overall there was little community support for higher density development in Bayside. Participants regularly commented that Council needs to 'limit development and improve the standard of development' (Sandringham Listening Post) and 'stop granting permits to increasing numbers of subdivisions and large scale development' (Sandringham Listening Post).

Residents frequently commented on the negative visual impact higher density developments has on the urban character of Bayside. Providing more parking in new residential apartments was raised by many residents as a priority, as a lack of parking is increasing traffic and 'clogs street parking' (Sandringham Listening Post). Participants suggested that future development should occur 'away from residential areas, and be focused along main roads and train stations' (Sandringham). There was strong support to maintain a low density in Bayside in order to maintain the character of Bayside.

'The State Government's initiative of increasing the density of housing in the middle leafy suburbs of Melbourne is not the way to go in Bayside' (online participant)

Housing affordability was raised as a concern for some participants, with particular focus on families and the difficulties entering the property market in Bayside. One participant commented that it is 'near impossible for first home buyers to buy into the area as it is too expensive' (Brighton East resident). One participant suggested introducing policies where a 'percentage of any multi-unit development built are sold as affordable housing. This will assist keeping young and elderly people within the community' (online participant). Additionally, the need for single level housing to cater for 'elderly people who are downsizing' (online participant) was recognised as a gap in current housing provision.

Priorities to inform the development of the Community Plan

- Inform the community about Council's role in planning for a sustainable future including advocacy to State and Federal government and commitment to accommodating population growth.

- Outline Council's role and commitment in protecting local character through planning policies.

- There is strong resistance to increased housing density. To help move people into a deeper and more empathetic conversation, the housing needs discussion must move to a future housing needs debate. For example, downsizing, opportunities for young people entering the property market, and housing diversity to meet the needs of all ages and abilities.

4.8 Other findings

As part of the engagement activities, there were two activities that explored ideas outside of the domains of liveability. These activities were the Williamson Group Dinner and the Bayside Community Plan Staff Day. The findings from these events focused around the role of the Community Plan, key challenges for Council, ideas to strengthen service delivery or improve satisfaction, and ideas for projects programs and initiatives.

Key challenges for Council

The most commonly discussed challenge for Council was managing the pressures of increased housing density in Bayside. Specifically maintaining and providing the supporting infrastructure to meet population growth for example storm water assets, transport and traffic infrastructure, open space, schools, and health services.

Managing community expectations with rate capping was another persistent theme. This was often discussed in the context of an ageing population that will put pressure on Council resources. Participants expressed concern about Council's ability to support older community members to 'remain safe and independent in their homes'. It was also highlighted that desire for older residents to downsize is adding to density pressures.

Environmental challenges were commonly mentioned specifically climate change, retaining trees, environmentally sustainable design, managing waste, and protecting the natural coastline.

Participants at the Williamson Dinner highlighted the reluctance to change as a key challenge for Bayside. It was suggested that Council should educate the community of the benefits of change. There is also a need to educate Councillors in tools and tips for managing and enabling change.

Other challenges identified were the importance of community engagement, high car dependence, road management, parking congestions, and supporting volunteers, people with a disability and youth in Bayside.

Participants at the Williamson Dinner highlighted the need for improved engagement with the community. Suggestions to stimulate engagement included:

- tap into networks – current and new such as. parent groups and Rotary Clubs

- create opportunities for free discussion

- create time for discussions

- skill up community members to initiate conversations

- go directly to the people

- incentivise engagement

- make engagement fun

- Council demonstrating action in response to community consultations

- feedback to community after consultation

- develop innovative methods to engage the communities e.g. Citizen juries

- provide language courses to improve engagement with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) residents

- create participatory programs to engage with youth and educate them on Council's activities, such as engaging them around how Council should be spending funds.

What does this plan need to deliver in order to be effective in the community and assist Council officers in their roles?

Participants provided a clear narrative in their responses to this question. Firstly, they want the Plan to understand the true community's needs and engage the whole community not just 'the most vocal'.

The want to see the Plan deliver clear strategies that are realistic, specific, achievable and enable staff to prioritise funding. Participants highlighted the importance of clearly communicating these strategies and priorities to the community to manage community expectations.

To deliver the Plan participants would like to see greater partnerships within and outside Council and also greater support for staff 'who have expertise in this area'.

It was highlighted at the Williamson Dinner that Council needs to better communicate its role to the community. Suggestions included improving transparency around what Council is doing, mentoring programs and scholarships to improve awareness.

Ideas for projects, programs and initiatives for Bayside

The majority of the ideas participants put forward applied to the community. Recurrent ideas were greater encouragement and support for volunteering in the community, connecting with community members on the public housing estates, more programs for youth and ageing, and providing more art activities and programs.

The environment both natural and built was the next most discussed theme. Participants had several recommendations for waste management; increasing pick up of recycled waste and reducing hard waste collection to twice a year. There were also suggestions for Council to lead more energy efficiency programs particularly with schools. The built environment discussion focussed on increased density, specifically building awareness of the impacts of high density development and the commitment Council has to accommodate population growth.

Finally, there were a few suggestions for supporting activation within open spaces specifically the foreshore for example seasonal businesses hiring towels, umbrellas etc.

Ideas to strengthen service delivery or improve satisfaction

Participants frequently suggested improving Council's online services and website, specifically making it more engaging and enabling online payments. Faster response times to community requests around building and planning applications was another common improvement put forward.

Many participants discussed improving Council's engagement with the community. They wanted to see quality engagement over quantity, and a greater variety of avenues that community can use to communicate with Council.

Several participants called for greater consistency in corporate decision making. Finally, a few participants would like to see better communication and integration between departments.