

Our Planet, Our People, Our  
Place, Our Promise



# **Bayside City Council**

## **Submission to Suburban Rail Loop Draft Precinct Vision for Cheltenham SRL East**

March 2024

## Acknowledgement of Country

Bayside City Council proudly acknowledges the Bunurong People of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land, and we pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

Council acknowledges the Bunurong's continuing relationship to the land and waterways and respects that their connection and spiritual identity is maintained through ancient ceremonies, songlines, dance, art and living culture.

Council pays tribute to the invaluable contributions of the Bunurong and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island elders who have guided and continue to guide the work we do.

## Introduction

Bayside City Council (Council) appreciates the opportunity offered by the Suburban Rail Loop Authority (SRLA) to make a submission to the Draft Precinct Vision for SRL East – Cheltenham Precinct (the Precinct).

The Suburban Rail Loop (SRL) is a major project which seeks to transform Melbourne's public transport system, particularly the way in which residents and commuters currently live, work and utilise activity centres and neighbourhoods surrounding the six SRL precincts. The true benefits of this project may not be evident for 20 to 30 years. However, metropolitan strategic planning is about thinking ahead and planning for the needs and benefit of future Victorians.

This submission has been endorsed by Council at its 19 March 2024 Meeting as per the following resolution:

*That Council endorses the Council officers' submission to the Suburban Rail Loop draft Precinct Vision Paper subject to the following inclusions:*

- 1. That Council requests that the State Government urgently provides Bayside City Council with a clear program outlining the planning responsibility and a detailed timeline for the structure plan*
- 2. That Council highlights the community's strong objections to the Suburban Rail Loop draft Precinct Vision for Cheltenham, including: building heights, density and lack of open space.*
- 3. That Council requests that the Suburban Rail Loop Authority facilitates the purchase of the Laminex site buffer area on Jack Road for the provision of additional open space.*
- 4. That No support is provided for the narrowing of Bay Road.*

Whilst Council is generally in agreement and supports the intent of the draft vision for the Cheltenham Precinct (the Vision), it is important that we use our platform, as a local government body, to express the community's strong objections to the Suburban Rail Loop project and the concerns they have with the implementation and delivery of this infrastructure. As you'll see within this Report and attached to Appendix 1, there are very real concerns shared by the community regarding the need for this project, the costs to provide it and whether it is 'well spent money'. Many community members are also concerned by the proposed high-density outcomes and where this would be directed to and what the amenity impacts would look like that come with this.

Council understands that the Vision for the SRL aims to transform Cheltenham into a vibrant and connected community by integrating the new rail station with surrounding areas, and that the project itself aims to enhance public spaces, create new jobs, and provide better access to education, healthcare, and recreational facilities.

However, the Vision and overall information provided about the project is still very high level and does not include the detail to determine how these aims will be achieved. Further comments have been made within this submission relating to detailed outcomes to be considered as part of the next stages of the SRL's precinct planning process to ensure the precinct and the ultimate station design successfully responds to Council and community needs and aspirations.

## Process

Council seeks to understand the timelines and process for the development of the SRL Precinct Plans, and the construction of the Station and surrounds. No clear process or timelines have been communicated to Council regarding the development of the Plans. The lack of timelines, and clear process prevents Council from being able to appropriately resource participation in the planning process and ensure quality outcomes for the Bayside community.

Furthermore, Council has not been included in any technical analysis being undertaken in preparation of the precinct plans. It is imperative that Council is included in this analysis as we understand the on-site conditions and hold the background data that ensures the studies, and the recommended interventions are reflective of local conditions.

Council seeks a collaborative approach with the SRLA moving forward. Prior to further planning being undertaken agreement between the SRLA and Council should be reached to outline:

- How SRLA will actively involve Council in the preparation of the precinct plans, rather than just requesting comment on the outcomes of them;
- The ongoing support that SRLA will provide to Council (resource funding) to support the Precinct Planning process;
- The provision of a clear program outlining the planning responsibilities of both the State Government and local government; and
- A detailed timeline for the structure plan is provided and engaged on with Bayside City Council and the community so that clear expectations and understanding of the delivery of the SRL can be set.

## Boundary Alignments

Council seeks clarity on how the boundaries of the declared planning area, precinct planning area and investigation areas have been determined. It is unclear what the assumptions and analysis have been undertaken to inform the preparation of the boundaries. Furthermore, we seek feedback on the operation of the declared planning area, and how this operates where it is outside of the structure planning boundary – particularly in respect to the status of Councils existing strategic planning framework.

## Environmental Effects Statement

The SRLA have been not provided information regarding the implementation of the findings of the SRL Inquiry and Advisory Committee (IAC) appointed by the Minister for Planning to consider environment affects. Council notes the IAC considered that the environmental impacts can be acceptably managed, with issues requiring additional mitigation related to:

- loss of part of the regionally significant Sir William Fry Reserve
- loss of recreational facilities
- potential impacts from contamination and odour from buried gasworks waste associated with the former and adjacent Highett Gasworks site.

The Minister supported the findings of the IAC and specifically to Cheltenham recommended the following:

- gasworks being a suitable replacement for the lost open space
- provision of replacement open space and facilities prior to construction

- replacement facilities, including skate park and basketball facilities to be located on or in the closest proximity to the existing site
- acknowledgement that the bridge connection between southland station and the SRL Cheltenham station is a critical connection and component of the cycling corridor
- bus interchanges have been removed from the surface and tunnel plans to allow broader consideration through the detailed design process as part of the Urban Design and Landscape Plans preparation
- acknowledging that drop-off and pick up points are unresolved and need addressing through the Urban Design and Landscape Plans preparation
- SRLA to work closely with Councils during the detailed design process to improve environmental outcomes in relation to surface water
- surface and tunnel plans amended so legend reads 'site subject to future precinct planning process, including possible additions to the public realm, community facilities and pick up/drop off spaces'
- requirements for a suitable air cover (ie. Tent or shed) and treatment controls required for excavations works with additional mitigation measures to limit effects.

Council requests the SRLA commit to implementing the findings of the IAC and recognise the importance in working closely and collaboratively with Council to achieve them.

#### Open Space

As the Precinct Planning Process progresses and technical reports and preparation of the Structure Plan commences, Council seeks confirmation from the SRLA that they will uphold their ongoing commitment to the public open space principles of:

- No loss of facilities used for sporting or physical activities requiring specific infrastructure; and
- Enhancement of remaining passive public open space to ensure access and amenity are maintained during and following construction activities.

Council notes that a decision has not yet been made as to the location of the replacement open space due to the delivery of the SRL Station in Sir William Fry Reserve. Council stresses that the replacement open space should be of the same size, if not larger, to support the increase in housing and population growth in the area. Council requests that the SRLA confirm the exact size of the replacement open space and whether there is any net increase in open space. Consideration should be given that although Sir William Fry Reserve is located in the City of Kingston, it is well utilised by the Bayside community. The location of replacement open space should be provided at an accessible location for the Bayside community.

In alignment with Council's resolution from its 19 March 2024 Meeting, Council requests that the Suburban Rail Loop Authority facilitate the purchase of the Laminex site buffer area on Jack Road for the provision of additional open space.

The Laminex site buffer area is within proximity to the Suburban Rail Loop precinct site and should not be overlooked as a potential for additional open space. Council understands that the Suburban Rail Loop project will seek to provide for increased housing opportunities within the precinct structure plan area and will in turn significantly heighten the need for increased open space of varying kinds and uses to support the current and future demographic profile of the area.

## Bayside Profile

The City of Bayside is located 16km south-east of Melbourne along the coastline of Port Phillip Bay. The municipality is characterised by its stunning foreshores, beautiful parks, open spaces and vibrant retail centres.

Bayside's 107,541 residents enjoy the leafy surrounds of the municipality and have identified the close proximity to the beach, access to open space and a strong sense of community as key factors for living in Bayside.

### Our Vision

**Bayside City Council's vision is to:**

Partner with our community to protect and care for the community of life in Bayside making an inclusive, active, healthy, connected and creative experience for all.

This vision forms Council's response to our community's expectations and our shared priorities for the next four years.

It also represents our strongly held belief that we represent a highly engaged and forward-thinking community; a community that expects us to lead and influence change on the big issues that affect all of us in Bayside and the broader global system.

**We will deliver this through a focus on:**



**Our Planet**  
Lead better, smarter and sustainable futures



**Our People**  
Nurture all people and thriving healthy communities



**Our Place**  
Foster Bayside's liveability, open space and exceptional places



**Our Promise**  
We promise open and accountable civic leadership

Many Bayside households are family households (36.5 per cent) comprising couples with children. This is followed by couples without children (24.2 per cent) and lone person households (23.3 per cent) with this number expected to increase over the next four years with an ageing population. Bayside is an 'older' community compared to metropolitan Melbourne with the average age of 44 years compared to 36 years in metropolitan Melbourne. There is a substantially higher percentage of aged persons in Bayside (85 years and over) when compared to metropolitan Melbourne. However, Bayside has fewer younger adults (25 to 34 years) residing in the area, as reports show those aged 25-34 tend to leave Bayside seeking more affordable housing or areas closer to work and entertainment opportunities.

Overall, the Bayside community is relatively advantaged in socio-economic terms with 35.8% of households earning \$3,000 or more per week. However, it is recognised that Bayside has small, scattered areas experiencing substantial

disadvantage, which are masked by the affluence across the municipality. There are 652 government managed households in Bayside, located across 18 sites. 46% of residents living in public housing are over 66 years old. Almost all disadvantaged areas in Bayside are public housing estates with most residents receiving a pension or benefit as their income sources. It is anticipated that there will be an increase in the number of people with a disability over the next four years in Bayside.

Over 13,923 residents reported to have a disability and 4,213 reported that they needed assistance in their day-to-day lives due to a disability, long-term health condition or old age. Currently, 9,800 Bayside residents are also providing unpaid care to family members or others because of a disability or illness.

Council has adopted structure plans in place for all activity centres within Bayside. These plans have been produced to implement the vision, objectives, and strategies for each activity centre within the Bayside Planning Scheme.

Building on the strengths of each area, the activity centres will accommodate for higher density residential living, as they are well-serviced and connected to public transport, making these centres the most accessible locations within the municipality to work, live and shop. This higher level of change in the activity centres supports the more incremental level of change that is envisaged in other parts of the municipality that do not benefit from the same level of access to services.

In Bayside's Minimal Residential Growth Areas (zoned Neighbourhood Residential Zone), building heights are capped at 2 storeys, recognising the Bayside community's desire to protect the low rise, leafy character of the established residential areas whilst enabling a mix of housing types including detached houses, town houses and low-rise apartments.

In the Housing Growth Areas, locations that are in close proximity to public transport, shops and services, permissible building heights range from 3 stories (generally in the residential areas), up to 6 storeys in the commercial areas of activity centres.

Bayside acknowledges that in Australia, the need for affordable housing has never been more urgent. For many jurisdictions across the State, now is the time to consider adopting robust equitable housing policies that build permanently affordable housing stock and in turn create inclusive communities.

The primary segment of the community that require access to affordable housing are those that fall within the low and very-low income households. This can often compromise people in lone person or single parent households, older people, persons with a disability, people born in non-English or English as a second language-speaking families and people outside of paid employment.

A household can access affordable housing if they meet the household income thresholds that are set annually by Order of the Governor in Council. Occupants can be at any stage of their lives and in need of affordable housing. As a result, dwellings should be designed to adapt the changing needs of its occupants and priced at a level which is affordable relative to the income of its occupants.

## Council's position – SRL Cheltenham Precinct

The completion of the SRL project is a major infrastructure development which requires continued and effective stakeholder engagement, particularly with affected Council's and communities.

Council has utilised the draft visions as a platform to reiterate and reinforce previous considerations put forth to the SRL Authority by Council through its submission to the draft SRL Precincts Discussion Paper, and as part of Bayside's Advocacy Action Plan 2021 and Council's submission to SRL Inquiry and Advisory Committee. This submission also discusses other considerations in response to the key themes and draft vision for the Cheltenham SRL precinct and how these can further align with Council's strategic framework and directions.

### Bayside Advocacy Action Plan 2021

Upon announcement that the first stage of the SRL would be the south-east segment from Cheltenham to Box Hill, Council prepared an Advocacy Action Plan. The Action Plan outlined the outcomes Council is seeking for the Bayside community to ensure strong input to the SRLA to inform Council's advocacy throughout the project. The plan outlines the focus of Council's efforts, actions and engagement, with the following 5 key objectives being set:

- Protecting community amenity during the various stages of construction
- Delivering an integrated transport system
- Delivering a precinct that responds to the challenges of the future
- Effective collaboration and transparent communication and engagement
- Maximising economic and social benefits

The advocacy priorities continue to be relevant to the current stage of delivery, being the precinct planning stage, and also align with the Bayside Community Vision 2050 and Council adopted Strategic Plans and Policies.

The Advocacy Action Plan alongside Council's adopted Strategic Plans and Policies helped inform Council's submission to the SRL Inquiry and Advisory Committee in 2022.

### Bayside City Council Previous submission – Suburban Rail Loop East Inquiry and Advisory Committee

Council has previously made a public submission to the Suburban Rail Loop East Inquiry and Advisory Committee appointed by the Minister for Planning to consider the environmental effects, draft planning scheme amendment and public submissions, and inquiry into the environmental effects of the SRL proposal. Bayside's submission provided support for the project in recognition of the broader benefits that SRL East will bring to future generations. Support however was not unrestrained, and the following improvements were put forward for consideration as part of the submission and hearing process:

- Securing the provision of 100 per cent renewable energy across all Project construction and operation phases
- Seeking suitable emissions reduction targets to be introduced with annual reporting of progress across construction and operation
- Seeking for suitable design and procurement of low carbon materials and recyclable materials as a priority

- Expressing concern about the loss of open space within the reserve and the lack of certainty about where replacement of open space would be provided
- Identifying relevant local policies were elements of the project required further refinement to take account of those policies
- Supporting the submissions made by Kingston and the evidence and changes proposed by their consultants
- Outlining the importance of the Sir William Fry Reserve as an integral open space for our community and how the Cheltenham site development will impact on Bayside residents in proximity to the site
- Highlighting the potential impact that the project could have in existing ground water bores in this area
- Proposing improvements to the urban design outcomes, access, connectivity and mobility around the station and the integration with other modes of transport and the southland railway station.

These improvements continue to be relevant and should be considered as part of the precinct structure planning process for Cheltenham. Council will continue to advocate for the consideration of the aforementioned improvements through this process.

## Council's response to the SRL Draft Precinct Vision

The Draft Precinct Vision sees Cheltenham as:

*“A place where people love to live, work and visit.”*

*“SRL's southern gateway, connecting Melbourne's east with the south of Melbourne and the bay. The station will provide a generous urban square that flows into Sir William Fry Reserve – creating a green heart for the precinct.*

*The mature trees that support biodiversity, existing wildlife and characterise the area will be protected.*

*New and enhanced green corridors and shaded streets will make walking and cycling easier and more enjoyable.*

*More walking and cycling paths will encourage people to leave the car at home and support a healthy and active lifestyle.*

*Cheltenham will boast new homes that provide choice for people at all stages of life, without losing the village feel that is much loved by the community today.*

*Cheltenham's three already established activity centres will be re-energised with an uplift in retail, dining and entertainment options, catering to an expanded community.*

*The intensified Moorabbin Industrial Area and Bayside Business District will be home to the next generation of makers, creators, and specialist manufacturers – bringing new job opportunities and boosting the local economy.*

*Cheltenham will be a vibrant and thriving economic hub with better connections to retail, diverse housing, reinvigorated green spaces”*

For this to occur, the draft visions are supported by implementing change to the broader precinct areas by unlocking land use opportunities that include:

- diverse retail, commercial and industrial outlets;
- places for increased employment, enterprise and job opportunities;
- places of change for more housing and mixed-use buildings appropriate to the location;
- places for parks, gardens, trees and landscaping;
- places for better walking, cycling and transport connections and
- places for community facilities, local services, education and recreation.

These statements are generally supported by Council and align with many of Council's adopted Strategic Plans and Policies.

The draft Vision details opportunity areas within the Cheltenham Precinct and ask questions of the Vision's "preliminary ideas". Council is generally supportive of the preliminary ideas for Cheltenham. But it will be the finer detail of built form outcomes, siting, design and function of the precinct that will ultimately determine their impact.

Council has concern regarding the identified change areas across the precinct plan area. It is Council's view that significant change areas should be maximised across the precinct core, and Southland areas. Furthermore, we consider the level of change allocated to the existing residential areas of the Bayside is too high. Care needs to be taken to maximise the opportunities of 'urban core' to protect the amenity and character of the existing residential areas.

It is understood the draft Vision is intended to provide a high-level overview of the desired precinct outcome. However, the success of the achievement of these desired outcomes will be in the detail. Council considers the use of quantitative targets and requirements (such as percentages of canopy cover, green cover or open space and affordable housing targets) important to the achievement of these outcomes. It is considered they will provide certainty and measurability to ensure the SRL precincts are delivered in alignment with Local and State Policy, and best practice, as well as provide communities with certainty.

Council encourages the SRLA to align the precinct plans with the values and themes contained in the Bayside Community Vision, Council Plan and other relevant Council strategies, as these documents are based on robust community engagement and should be regarded by SRLA as a reflection of community views.

#### [Preliminary Idea 1: Create an urban square and town centre at the new SRL station at Cheltenham](#)

Access to distinctive and high-quality environments is a priority that aligns with Council's adopted Plans and Policies. The Bayside community highly values its low rise, leafy character of the established residential areas whilst enabling a mix of housing types including detached houses, town houses and low-rise apartments.

Stations can serve as anchors for neighbourhoods. The SRLA should ensure density is concentrated around the station/ urban squares to maximise the opportunities that the SRL station at Cheltenham offers and allow for the retention of the existing

amenity and character of established residential areas of Bayside. Opportunities within the urban square and town centre should be maximised to create an urban centre which maximises the opportunities for transit oriented development in the precinct.

Significant water sensitive urban design (WSUD) including planting, greening, and expansion of permeable surfaces within the urban square should be used to improve amenity, mitigate the urban heat island effect, and stormwater management in and adjacent to the rail corridor. Consideration should also be given to maximising the provision of civic and social infrastructure to support the expanded community.

Focus should be provided in the provision of high quality spaces. This should be achieved through the use of urban design frameworks providing detailed guidance on desired built form, to ensure that the urban square and town centre at Cheltenham is an attractive urban environment, that is well connected to our existing neighbourhoods.

The SRL and Level Crossing Removal Projects provide a unique opportunity to knit together two neighbourhoods that have been separated by a rail line through newly established pedestrian cross connections. Figure 1 below shows the opportunity for up to 6 logical cross connections where existing streets abut the rail corridor which could lead to and provide greater access to an urban square and town centre at the new station whilst improving permeability across the precinct for the community.

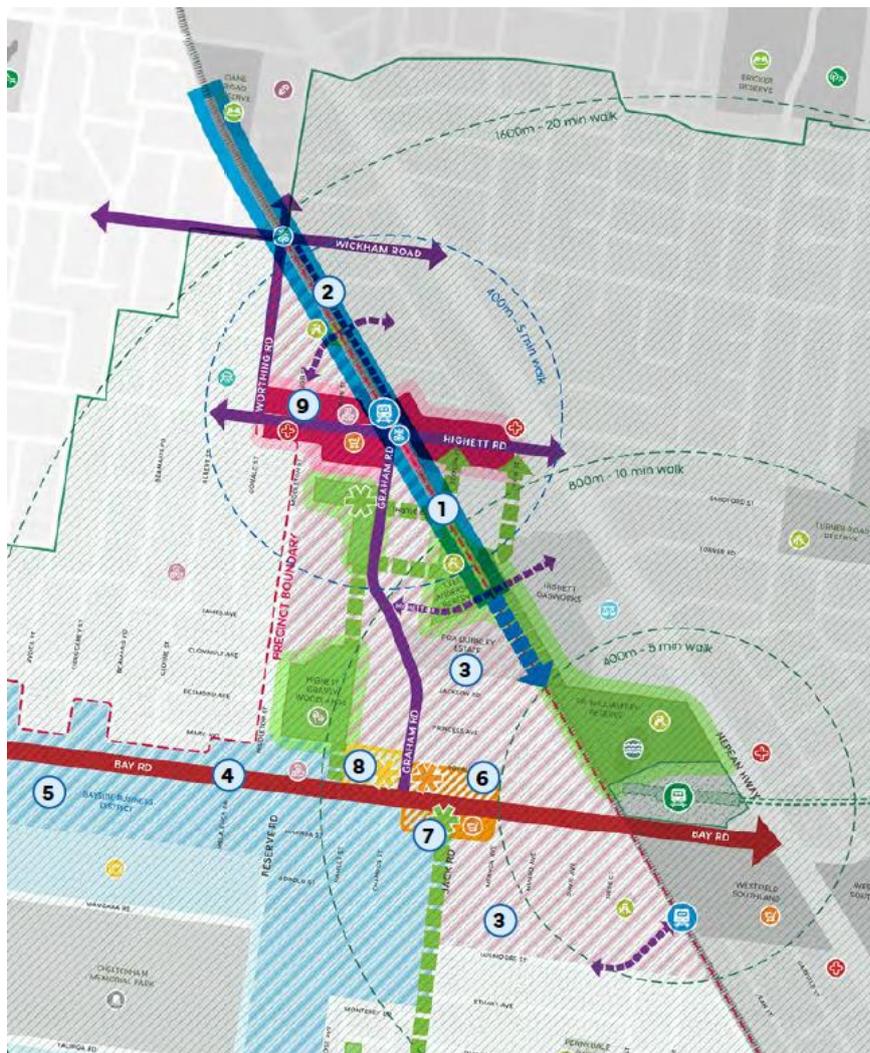


Figure 1 - Map showing up to 6 potential areas to increase connectivity

### Preliminary Idea 2: Encourage future growth within and between the existing activity centres at Highett, Southland and Cheltenham

Council understands the opportunity of increasing the density of people living and working within a short walk of the new Cheltenham SRL Station and Highett Station, to maximise the impact of these significant transport assets. There is a unique opportunity to integrate the planning of this area with two place changing projects being undertaken at the same time – SRL and Level Crossing removal at Highett and Wickham roads.

Planning for this precinct should encompass both the SRL and Level Crossing projects to ensure quality outcomes are achieved for these centres. Council looks forward to working with both authorities to understand the opportunities this precinct offers, and appropriate planning outcomes through the precinct planning process.

### Preliminary Idea 3: Leverage the Bayside Business District and Moorabbin Industrial Area to support jobs growth

The Bayside Business District (BBD) is the major focal point for business development and employment in Bayside. Its purpose is to provide for a range of commercial and industrial land uses to provide services and employment opportunities for residents of Bayside and surrounding areas. The BBD serves an important role in accommodating businesses unable to be located within activity centres due to their spatial or infrastructure needs.

Council is committed to the growth of the BBD and sees the SRL as an exciting opportunity to reinvigorate its growth. As such, Council requests that the entirety of the BBD is included within the precinct planning boundary. To exclude the BBD would be a missed opportunity in maximising the benefits of a once in a generation infrastructure project.

Given the importance of the BBD to the precinct plan, Council requests that the SRL undertake specialised analysis of the anticipated changes to the local economy as a result of the SRL. This analysis should consider at a minimum:

- Review of the current planning controls and their impact
- An audit of the current status of the BBD to understand how the land is being used
- Identify the impacts of the SRL on the BBD – changed role, accessibility by customers, attractiveness to business and vehicle access
- Streetscape masterplan that defines the BBD as a precinct with an emphasis to increase open space and canopy associated with Council's Urban Forest Strategy
- Determination of the post SRL identity for the BBD
- Recommendation for planning controls to reflect the new vision and purpose of the BBD post SRL implementation

The Bay Road corridor plays an important role in the BBD as the key corridor for business. Consideration needs to be given how to improve the amenity of the

corridor for pedestrians and cyclists, whilst still preserving the operation as a major support corridor for the BBD. Any proposed narrowing of Bay Road would not be supported by Bayside City Council and this is stressed within this submission.

#### Preliminary Idea 4: Enhance Bay Road as a gateway to the new SRL station at Cheltenham

Council welcomes the enhancement of Bay Road. Bay Road plays an important role in Bayside as a key gateway to the BBD, and connection between Sandringham and Nepean Highway.

Bay Road should be re-envisioned to be an activated, multi modal and safe transport connection. Enhancements of Bay Road should include (but not limited to):

- Expanded street tree canopy;
- Consideration of the intensification of the Jack and Bay Small Neighbourhood Activity Centre and possible redevelopment opportunities to provide a small but vibrant neighbourhood centre in Bayside;
- Investigate the possibility of a pedestrian connection from Pennydale to Southland Station;
- Bay Road underpass to be widened at rail corridor to accommodate multi-modal use. Currently the underpass portion of Bay Road includes very little space for pedestrians or bikes; and
- The carriageway width of Bay Road should be retained to preserve its function as a major East – West arterial in Bayside.

Consideration should be given to the appropriate level of change along the Bay Road corridor, noting that Council does not support any narrowing of Bay Road. There are opportunities to consider higher levels of change along the vicinity of the Bay Road to maximise the use of this infrastructure, and connection to the Urban Core of the SRL precinct. This then provides opportunities to ensure the amenity and character of existing residential areas are preserved.

Any planning for the Bay Road corridor should be undertaken for the entirety of the corridor – from Sandringham to the Nepean Highway. This will ensure the maximum benefit of any changes to the corridor to the surrounding areas.

#### Preliminary Idea 5: Improve movement and connectivity across the precinct

The SRL and Level Crossing Removal Projects provide a unique opportunity to knit together two neighbourhoods that have been separated by a rail line through newly established pedestrian connections. As discussed previously, Council estimates there could be the opportunity for up to 6 logical connections where existing streets abut the rail corridor.

The Hihett Structure Plan, The Bayside Active Transport Connections Study 2023 and the Bayside Integrated Transport Strategy 2018 – 2028 all identify the importance of improving active transport connections and accessibility between open spaces, Bay Road, the Bayside Business District and Hihett Station.

Bayside is in need of more sustainable transport options, particularly cycling, buses and public transport connections, from east to west of the municipality. Improving cycling infrastructure between Cheltenham and Sandringham is an action identified within the Bayside Bicycle Action Plan 2019 and positively contributes towards addressing the climate emergency.

Council seeks improved bus connections to the SRL Cheltenham station from key activity centres within Bayside including Sandringham, Beaumaris and Black Rock. Improvements to the bus services should include increasing frequency of service and more priority bus lanes. These will also aid the accessibility, safety and amenity for people walking and/or riding to and from the Cheltenham SRL station.

#### Opportunity Area 1: Cheltenham Precinct Core

Council considers the Cheltenham Precinct Core should be where the majority of increased density should be accommodated, maximising the benefits of the infrastructure the SRL will develop. Planning for the precinct should include consideration of additional civic uses, community facilities and open space to the precinct to ensure a lively, vibrant centre.

Council recommends the SRL to change the name of the Cheltenham Precinct core to avoid confusion between the Core area and the Cheltenham Activity Centre.

#### Opportunity Area 2: Southland Shopping Centre

Council welcomes the opportunity to create a mixed-use and walkable urban centre on the Southland Shopping Centre site. Council considers it important to maximise the opportunities of the Southland site, given its proximity to the new SRL station.

Council encourages the SRLA to consider innovative ways to connect the precinct to the SRL station (and Cheltenham Precinct Core) and ensure pedestrian connectivity. Consideration should be given to how the shopping centre can have more of a street presence – achieving activation of street and pedestrian frontage and encouraging non-vehicular mode of transport.

Opportunities should be maximised to incorporate higher density housing within the precinct. The focus should be the development of an urban centre, well connected to the Cheltenham Precinct Core to maximise the infrastructure that the precinct will have access to.

#### Opportunity Area 3: Cheltenham Activity Centre

As discussed for the Cheltenham, and Southland precincts the Cheltenham Activity Centre is an excellent opportunity to provide a vibrant urban centre, which provides opportunities for a range of retail and residential options.

Consideration should be given to the preparation of a detailed urban design framework to ensure that quality urban design can be achieved. Planning should

ensure that an emphasis is placed on good pedestrian design through the use of urban design frameworks to provide detailed built form guidance to ensure quality outcomes.

#### Opportunity Area 4: Highett

Precinct planning in the Highett precinct provides an opportunity to maximise the benefits of the Level Crossing removal and promote integrated planning across the activity centre.

Traditionally, the Highett activity centre has been divided by the rail line. The rail line forms the Municipal Boundary between the Cities of Bayside and Kingston and provides an impediment to the integration of the two sides of the activity centre.

The removal of the level crossing creates an important opportunity to integrate the activity centre. Consideration should be given to how to maximise this opportunity to create a legible, vibrant and walkable centre. Council recommends that consideration be given to creating a consistent suite of street furniture, paving and planting in collaboration with both Councils to ensure the centre presents in an integrated fashion with a clear identity.

Consideration should also be given to how to incorporate a greater residential mix in the activity centre, particularly encouraging residential uses above commercial facilities.

#### Opportunity Area 5: Pennydale

Pennydale is a residential area traditionally dominated by single dwellings. Redevelopment of housing stock is occurring with single dwellings being replaced with larger houses, and townhouse development.

Strong community sentiment exists in Pennydale relating to the protection of the existing character and amenity of the suburb, and the need to improve the urban forest and increase tree planting in both the private and public realms. This was also a common theme raised by the community as part of Council's recent engagement on the SRL draft Precinct Vision, where many respondents raised concerns by the proposed high-density outcomes and where this would be directed to and the amenity impacts that would come with this (35 comments). There is also strong concern in the community and from Council about the impact of overdevelopment in residential areas (53 comments). Further results from Council's engagement can be found in Appendix 1 – Community Engagement Summary Report.

The Pennydale area has been identified as an area of medium change in the draft precinct vision. Council firmly objects to the excessive use of 'medium change' shown in the precinct. Whilst Council acknowledges the need to intensify residential development surrounding the SRL station, care should be taken to maximise the opportunities for densification inside the urban core, and along the Bay Road precinct. This will allow the creation of vibrant urban centres, whilst maximising the opportunity to protect the amenity and character of our existing neighbourhoods such as Pennydale. It is vitally important there are street wall heights, upper level

setbacks and building separation to preserve the special character of Pennydale and surrounds from increased density.

#### Opportunity Area 6: Nepean Highway East

Consideration should be given to the increased greening and planting along the Nepean Highway corridor. Council also considers there is a clear opportunity to improve the pedestrian environment at the Bay Road and the Nepean Highway crossing. Bay Road, as one of only 2 major arterial roads connecting the Bay to the Nepean Highway should not be narrowed in any way.

#### Opportunity Area 7: Bayside Business District

See comments under Preliminary Idea 3 – Bayside Business District.

#### Opportunity Area 8: Moorabbin Business District

With the Moorabbin Business District located in close proximity to the BBD, careful consideration should be given to how each area can support and compliment the other. Council looks forward to working with the SRLA to undertaking this work.

#### Social and Affordable Housing

Council welcome the opportunity to work with the SRLA on providing greater social and affordable housing outcomes throughout the precinct planning process. The precinct planning process offers a once in a generation opportunity to put in place targets and planning mechanisms to achieve greater social and affordable housing outcomes.

Council considers that mandatory affordable housing targets should be incorporated into the precinct plans to ensure housing opportunities are provided to all income groups.

The precinct planning process also provides an opportunity to consider the vast areas of State controlled housing such as the Dunkley Fox public housing estate. These large parcels of land present a unique opportunity to develop an increased social housing offering in close proximity to the SRL.

#### Buses

Council welcomes the Vision document advocating for an increase in '*turn up and go*' buses. Improvement of bus services that can serve a mass transit function are sorely needed in Bayside to allow for greater frequency, coverage and operating hours as well as improved speeds and dedicated bus lanes. Buses provide a unique opportunity to improve the linkages between Bayside's Activity Centres and Business District to the SRL East Cheltenham Station and Precinct.

Council will to continue to advocate for improved bus connections to the SRL Cheltenham station from key activity centres within Bayside in alignment with

## Community Infrastructure

Council is concerned about the impacts of additional population on existing Bayside community facilities. Analysis should be undertaken of the impact of the additional population on existing community infrastructure (such as schools, daycare, kinder and libraries), and the development of a full cost recovery mechanism. Local Government is now operating in a rate capped environment and cannot bear the shortfalls associated with the increases in population associated with the SRL.

## Engagement undertaken by Bayside City Council

In addition to the Suburban Rail Loop Authority's (SRLA) community engagement (concluding 3 March 2024), Bayside City Council undertook a seven-week engagement from 21 December 2023 to 11 February 2024 to inform its response to the draft Precinct Vision.

Bayside City Council received 221 responses to its online survey. The full engagement summary is attached as Appendix 1 to this submission. In summary, the data shows that there is a general opposition to the SRL, with over 65% of respondents (221) expressing a level of opposition (61.54% strongly opposed and 5.43% somewhat opposed) to the SRL's draft precinct Vision for Cheltenham.

Furthermore, over 60% of respondents expressed a level of opposition (58% strongly opposed and 6.79% somewhat opposed) to the SRL's proposed location of medium, higher and significant change areas included in the new precinct plan for Cheltenham.

Common themes through written responses with regard to respondents overall support for the SRLA's draft Precinct Vision for Cheltenham include concerns that the project is not needed (46 comments), concerns regarding the costs to provide the SRL and precinct (42 comments) and that it is a waste of money (36 comments) with many respondents also of the feeling that this money would be best spent elsewhere (33 comments).

Many respondents were also concerned by the proposed high-density outcomes and where this would be directed to and the amenity impacts that would come with this (35 comments).

The data also shows the engagement program received strong participation from the 25 to 59 (47.6% of respondents) age group. Age groups 60 to 84 (43% of participants) were the next largest sample size. One reason for this finding may be because the SRL East project will not be complete until 2035 and the younger generations may benefit exponentially in comparison to the older generations. Increase provision of medium and higher density housing may also benefit younger generations, as they seek to live or stay in Bayside.

## Appendix 1

### Bayside City Council Community Engagement Summary Report

#### Background

This document provides a summary of stakeholder and community feedback on the Victorian government's Suburban Rail Loop project, with a focus on the Draft Precinct Visions for Cheltenham.

Suburban Rail Loop (SRL) will deliver a 90km rail line linking every major train service from the Frankston Line to the Werribee Line via Melbourne Airport, better connecting Victorians to jobs, retail, education, health services and each other.

SRL East from Cheltenham to Box Hill will connect major employment, health, education and retail destinations in Melbourne's east and southeast. The new underground station at Cheltenham will be the southern gateway to the SRL network, providing faster and more convenient public transport to key destinations across Melbourne's middle suburbs.

Beyond the rail line, SRL will open up a host of new social and economic opportunities for hundreds of thousands of Victorians by creating greater access to jobs, health services, education and a diverse range of quality and affordable housing.

Sir William Fry Reserve in Cheltenham on the Bayside/Kingston border has been selected as the location of the SRL anchor station. The first stage of the SRL is the south-east segment from Cheltenham to Box Hill. Initial works for Stage One commenced in 2022, with commissioning of the railway expected by 2035.

Bayside City Council is providing strong input to the Suburban Rail Loop Authority to advocate on behalf of the Bayside community. We want to minimise impacts from the construction of the new station and maximise the opportunity to improve sustainable, efficient, and connected public transport across and onward from Bayside.

In addition to the Suburban Rail Loop Authority's (SRLA) community engagement (concluding 3 March 2024), Bayside City Council undertook a seven-week engagement from 21 December 2023 to 11 February 2024 to inform its response to the draft Precinct Vision.

Bayside City Council received 221 responses to its online survey. Community feedback provided directly to Council is summarised in this report and will inform Council's advocacy and submission to the SRLA.

#### Consultation process and purpose

Council is providing strong input to the Suburban Rail Loop Authority (SRLA) to advocate on behalf of the Bayside community. Council wants to minimise impacts from the construction of the new station and maximise the opportunity to improve sustainable, efficient, and connected public transport across and onward from Bayside.

The consultation was designed to provide the Bayside community and stakeholders with the opportunity to provide input into refining the SRL East draft Precinct Vision papers and raise awareness within the community of the SRL East project.

During Q1 and Q2 2024, SRL will continue to shape the precinct visions and draft structure plans with the aim to be on Exhibition by late 2024. The Exhibition period will provide another opportunity for feedback from the community. An advisory committee will consider the structure planning documents and draft planning scheme amendments in early 2025.

Community feedback will inform final structure plans and planning scheme amendments.

The Structure Planning Phase of the SRL East will culminate in an adopted structure plan for the area surrounding the Cheltenham Station in early following a planning scheme amendment 2026. There will be further opportunities for community engagement at various points during the planning scheme amendment process.

### Consultation methodology

Details	Engagement Activity
<b>21 December 2023 to 11 February 2024</b> Online only <b>221 contributions</b> <b>3182 views of Council’s SRL Have your say page</b>	<b>Have your Say engagement website survey</b> Bayside City Council online survey and promotion of the SRLA consultation materials. A survey of questions was sent to the subscribers of the SRL Have Your Say page. A series of social media posts were used to raise awareness of the survey on the Have your say page. Community members provided feedback as well as community neighbourhood associations. No written submissions were received outside of the survey responses.
Details	Communication Activity
<b>Social media</b> <b>8 posts</b>	Eight (8) social media posts, including sponsored advertising to raise awareness of the consultation and SRL project.
<b>Website news</b> <b>2 articles</b>	Two news stories published on Council’s website regarding the consultation period and encouraging participation
<b>This week in Bayside e-newsletters</b> <b>4 editions</b> <b>12,042 recipients</b>	Featured in four editions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 21 December 2023</li> <li>• 29 January 2024</li> <li>• 1 February 2024</li> <li>• 8 February 2024</li> </ul>
<b>Direct email</b> <b>2 January</b> <b>59 project subscribers</b>	Invitation to participate in consultation sent to 59 project subscribers.
<b>Project webpage</b> <b>3,254 views</b> <b>2,383 unique visitors</b>	Have Your Say webpages where participants could complete the online survey, provide a written submission, or post a general enquiry. Project webpages included links to read the Precinct Vision paper for Cheltenham, participate in the SRLA consultation, and raise awareness of the precinct planning program timeline.

## Participant profile

Most respondents were aged over 50 and resided in either Beaumaris, Highett, Hampton East and Sandringham – with respondents from these suburbs over-represented compared to the Bayside census population profile. This is to be expected, as the SRL precinct incorporates Highett, Cheltenham and parts of Sandringham.

	Demographic	Bayside 2021 Census	Participants (%)
Age	15-24	7.8%	3%
	25-39	7.8%	10.9%
	40-49	19.4%	15.4%
	50-59	15.7%	21.3%
	60-69	12.1%	20.4%
	70-84	12.2%	22.6%
	85+	3.4%	0.96%
	Undisclosed	-	
Suburb	Beaumaris	12.8%	20.4%
	Black Rock	6.2%	-
	Brighton	23.7%	8.1%
	Brighton East	15.6%	4.5%
	Cheltenham	3.9%	13.1%
	Hampton	13.6%	-
	Hampton East	4.9%	12.2%
	Highett	7.6%	18.10%
	Sandringham	11.8%	11.8%
	Outside Bayside	-	7.25%

We did not ask for gender data from participants as this was not deemed relevant to the engagement.

The data shows the engagement program received strong participation from the 25 to 59 (47.6% of respondents) age group. Age groups 60 to 84 (43% of participants) were the next largest sample size. One reason for this finding may be because the SRL East project will not be complete until 2035 and the younger generations may benefit exponentially in comparison to the older generations. Increase provision of medium and higher density housing may also benefit younger generations, as they seek to live or stay in Bayside.

This data is drawn out in section 4.2.2, which highlights there is no clear stand out priority for the project from different demographics. Feedback also shows that the SRL East project has divided community views.

### Consultation findings

The engagement was undertaken to help inform Council’s Advocacy Position Paper and represent the views of the community to the SRLA. No actions, outside of advocacy, were presented to the community for feedback.

The following section summarises the key themes which arose in community feedback on Suburban Rail Loop: Draft Precinct Visions for Cheltenham. In the interest of stakeholder and community privacy, individual quotes have not been included within this public document. Where there was more than one mention of a topic or item, the number of mentions has been specified in brackets.

### Overview of Feedback

Participants strongly opposed the proposed increased density of built form outlined within the draft precinct plan visions. Participants also raised concerns the project will cost too much money and other State-provided services may suffer as a result of budget blowouts.

Community members were also concerned at a loss of amenity (traffic congestion, reduced services) because of overdevelopment and overcrowding.

### Common themes in feedback

Common themes through written responses with regard to respondents overall support for the SRLA’s draft Precinct Vision for Cheltenham include concerns that the project is not needed (46 comments), concerns regarding the costs to provide the SRL and precinct (42 comments) and that it is a waste of money (36 comments) with many respondents also of the feeling that this money would be best spent elsewhere (33 comments).

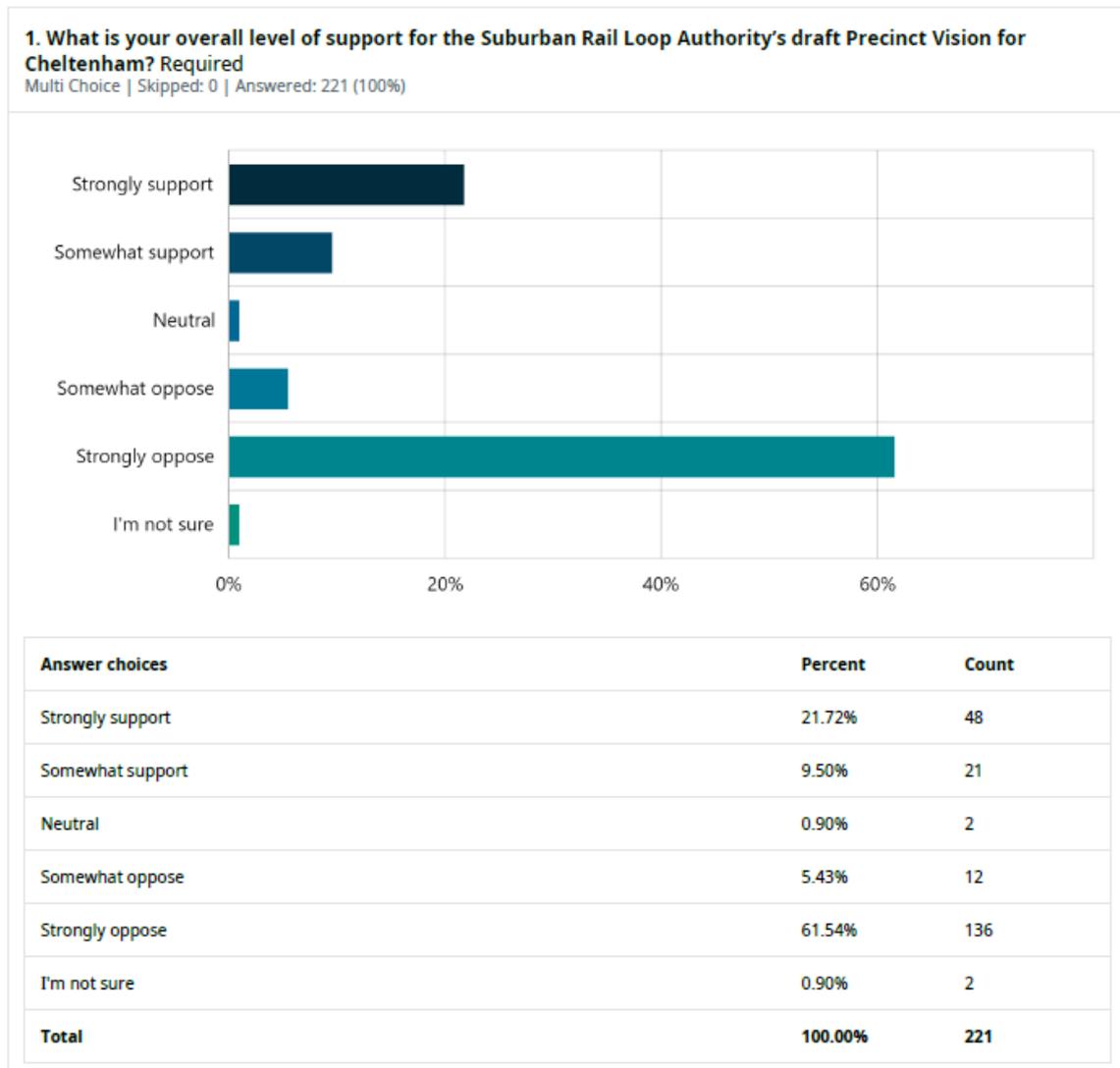
Many respondents were also concerned by the proposed high-density outcomes and where this would be directed to and the amenity impacts that would come with this (35 comments).

<b>Comments about overall support for the SRLA’s draft precinct vision</b>	
Project not needed	46
Concern about costs to provide	42
Waste of money	36
Concern about social impacts of multi-story apartments (future ghettos, isolations)	35
Other priorities: Invest in education, healthcare, etc instead	33
Concern about amenity impacts of high density apartments (traffic and parking)	21
Need to make sure integrated public transport outcomes are enhanced	20
Rail is needed/best to avoid traffic congestion	16
Not planned properly	14
Concerned about traffic congestion and safety	13
Infrastructure changes needed to address population and housing growth	12
Concerns about loss of open space	8
Concerned about consultation process	7
Miscellaneous	7
Project should be delayed/cancelled (State debt concerns)	6
Concerns that development will impact environment	6

Concerns that design and masterplanning so far do not provide for high quality outcomes	6
Provide much needed housing	4
Need vibrant precinct	3
Improve sustainability (reduce fossil fuel use)	3
Concerned by increased social housing	2
The Vision and future outcomes for the area is vague	2
Project is needed – provides various benefits	1
Supports opportunity to be involved in consultation process	1
Promote activity centres, employment and growth	1
Will be beneficial to small local businesses	1
Concern that the boundary of the train line would restrict access	1
Not supportive of the location of Station chosen in Sir William Fry Reserve	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>348</b>

### Overall Support for the SRLA's draft Precinct Vision for Cheltenham

Over 65% of respondents (221) expressed a level of opposition (61.54% strongly opposed and 5.43% somewhat opposed) to the SRL's draft precinct Vision for Cheltenham.



When asked to provide a reason for their response all participants (221) provided comments which have been themed and summarised in a table below.

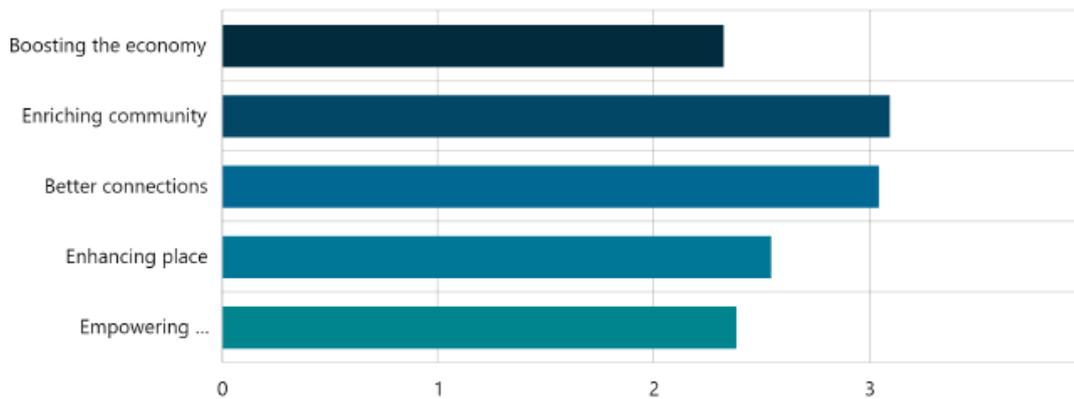
Topic	Community feedback
<p><b>Project not needed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cost / Benefit analysis needs to be undertaken</li> <li>- Unsure how State government have identified the need for this</li> <li>- The route of the SRL train line won't be of benefit</li> </ul>	<p>Many respondents were concerned that the State Government had not built a sufficient case to justify the benefits that the Suburban Rail Loop would bring.</p> <p>There was also many comments made that the destinations on the train line would not be accessed by passengers and therefore not required.</p>
<p><b>Amenity impact</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Density increase</li> <li>- Overdevelopment</li> <li>- Traffic congestion</li> <li>- Loss of open space</li> </ul>	<p>Concern with overdevelopment the precinct, increase the density of built form and increasing traffic issues.</p>
<p><b>Funding and budget</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- State budget blowouts</li> <li>- Impact on other state provided services</li> </ul>	<p>Waste of state money and should be directed elsewhere. Cost blow outs.</p>
<p><b>Community infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- State needs to plan and provide sufficient community infrastructure (schools, daycare, health services) for the increase in population.</li> </ul>	<p>Planning and provision of community infrastructure to cater for the population growth.</p>

What is your highest priority in terms of the following precinct themes as set within the SRL draft precinct Vision for Cheltenham?

The highest priority expressed by the respondents was for better connections, with 37.3% of respondents (143) ranking “*better connections*” as their highest priority in terms of the precinct themes for Cheltenham, followed by “*enriching community*”

**3. What is your highest priority in terms of the following Precinct Themes as set within the SRL draft Precinct Vision for Cheltenham?**

Ranking | Skipped: 78 | Answered: 143 (64.7%)

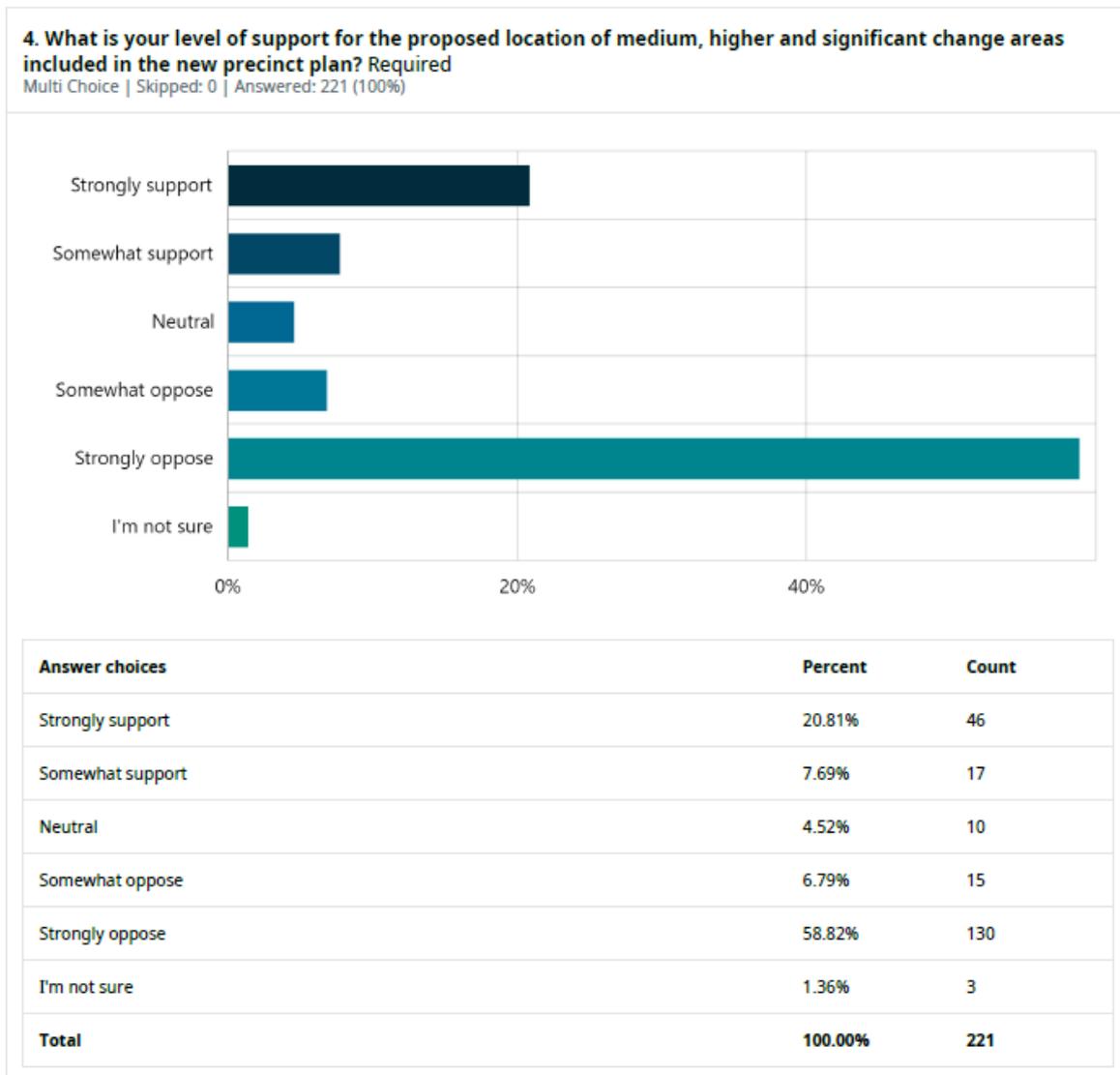


	1	2	3	4	5	Count	Score	Avg Rank
Boosting the economy	22.69% 27	14.29% 17	12.61% 15	20.17% 24	30.25% 36	119	2.32	3.21
Enriching community	26.02% 32	30.89% 38	23.58% 29	15.45% 19	4.07% 5	123	3.09	2.41
Better connections	37.30% 47	15.08% 19	17.46% 22	15.87% 20	14.29% 18	126	3.04	2.55
Enhancing place	11.57% 14	28.93% 35	20.66% 25	25.62% 31	13.22% 16	121	2.54	3.00
Empowering sustainability	18.40% 23	12.80% 16	21.60% 27	16.80% 21	30.40% 38	125	2.38	3.28

**Score** - Sum of the weight of each ranked position, multiplied by the response count for the position choice, divided by the total contributions. Weights are inverse to ranked positions.  
**Avg Rank** - Sum of the ranked position of the choice, multiplied by the response count for the position choice, divided by the total 'Count' of the choice.

(26%)

What is your level of support for the proposed location of medium, higher and significant change areas included in the new precinct plan?  
 Over 60% of respondents expressed a level of opposition (58% strongly opposed and 6.79% somewhat opposed) to the SRL's proposed location of medium, higher and significant change areas included in the new precinct plan for Cheltenham.



All participants (221) provide a comment explaining the reason for their view. As to particular concerns regarding the medium, high and significant change areas, many comments were made regarding concerns of overdevelopment (53 comments), the design of the high-rise development and how this may impact neighbourhood character (50 comments).

There were 30 comments made that did support the vision of the SRL, however, noting this was outweighed by concerns with the SRL.

<b>Comments about change areas</b>	
Concern about overdevelopment	53
Concern: design of high-rise, neighbourhood character	50
Other (see previous response)	30
Support the vision	28

Support: Higher density near public transport	27
Concern: increased traffic	26
Support: Improved sustainability outcomes	24
Not properly planned	20
Waste of money	17
Concern: Loss of public open space/poor environmental outcomes	16
Cancel project	10
Increase in crime	9
Population need to be close to public transport	9
Affordable housing near employment is needed	8
Low-rise (townhouses) more suited to Bayside	7
Need more mid rise housing	7
Concern: fast-tracked planning; lack of Council involvement in planning decisions	3
Limited land for higher density development	2
Extend Frankston to Baxter rail line	1
Total	347

Do you agree with the enhancement of Bay Road as a gateway to the new SRL station at Cheltenham?

Over 50% of participants strongly disagreed to the enhancement of Bay Road as a gateway to the new SRL station at Cheltenham.

A range of specific concerns were raised during the consultation regarding this item, when asked how they would like to see movement and connectively improved across the precinct.

As to how connectivity and movement could be improved, the following suggestions were raised, which have been themed in the table below:

Topic	Community feedback
<b>Needs to function well</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide an integrated front to transport</li> <li>- Increase frequency of bus service</li> </ul>	Many respondents provided feedback on site-specific requirements, including the need to implement a shared user pathway and walking and cycling options.
<b>Encourage sustainable transport</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Walking paths</li> <li>- Cycling paths</li> <li>- Accessibility</li> </ul>	Similar to above, many respondents provided site-specific examples to implement within the precinct, including a pedestrian/cycle bridge over Bay Road and connectively through William Fry and Lyle Anderson Reserve.
<b>Other</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- General comments reinforcing respondents opposition to the SRL</li> </ul>	Respondents provided comments such as ‘there’s enough movement and connectivity! Leave people alone” and general opposition.

<b>Comments relating to improving connectivity and movement</b>	
Needs to function well	50
Other	58
Encourage sustainable transport (cycling)	28
Fix roads and footpaths	23
Develop traffic management plan	18
Future maintenance of parkland	17
Leave parks alone	16
Reduction of traffic lanes will cause congestion	14
Traffic congestion	11
Concern about cost/affordability	11
Planning too high level	5
Use buses instead between universities	5
Improved sense of community	4
Consider aesthetics and quality	3
Needs more car parking	2
Sky Rail to airport	1
Total	266

Is there anything in the SRL's draft Precinct Vision for Cheltenham that you think has been missed or could be improved?

There were several comments made by respondents with suggestions for improvements to the draft Precinct Vision. It is important to note the high level of comments that were in request that the project be cancelled (42 comments) and that this has been reiterated by respondents throughout majority of survey responses.

Other topics raised by majority of respondents include that the project is a waste of money (13 comments) and 'other' which include general comments in opposition (18 comments).

<b>Comments relating to how the Precinct Vision could be improved</b>	
Cancel project	42
Other	18
Waste of money	13
Data on traffic/parking impacts	12
No improvements	10
Need to consider sustainability/natural environment	9
Make sure community is consulted	9
Connection to Sandringham station	7
Need to protect current neighbourhood character	7
Walking/cycling connections	6
Enhanced public spaces/facilities	6
Need to consider costs more thoroughly	5
Sky Rail to airport	3
Quality first approach	3
Need more stations	3
Contamination at site	3
Greater detail	3
Need for better public transport links	1
Total	160

## Project Evaluation

The main purpose of the engagement program was to raise awareness among the Bayside community of the SRL East project as a whole, and highlight the start of the precinct planning phase of the project.

Feedback was sought to help inform Council's submissions to the SRLA and advocate for the community on their concerns about the project. Community feedback will also help inform Council's advocacy Position Paper which will be considered for adoption by Council at its 23 April 2024 meeting.

The engagement program took place over the festive and period between 21 December and 11 February 2024. Despite this, there was a strong response with 221 submissions received – 8% of visitors to the project page. The strong response validates the success of the digital communications program.

Extensive community engagement had already been undertaken by the SRLA themselves as well as hosting pop up sessions and the Precinct Reference Group (PRG) sessions.