

M2050 Vision and Council Plan 2025-2029

Phase One Engagement Summary Report

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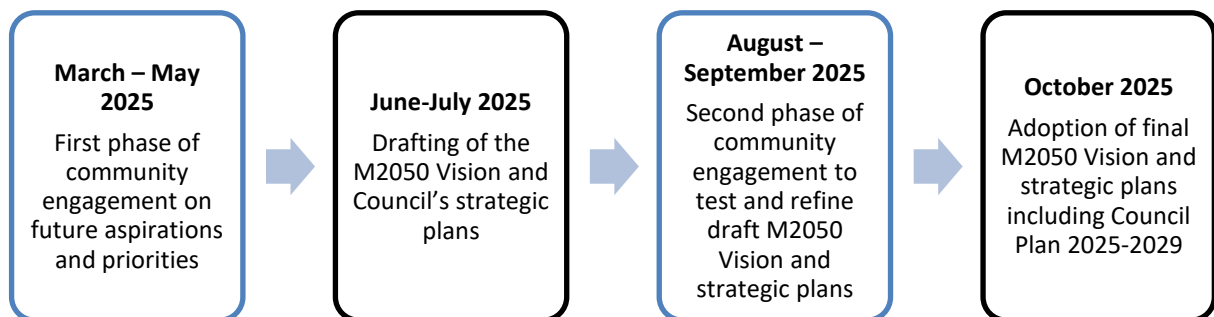
Project overview

The City of Melbourne is working with our community and stakeholders to create a 25-year vision, with a horizon to 2050. We are also preparing the next Council Plan, with a four-year horizon. Together, those documents tell a story about the kind of city we want to be in the future and the steps we plan to take over the next four years to get there.

The Council Strategic Planning Program is leading the delivery of this important work which encompasses the development of:

- The **Melbourne 2050 Vision** will set a 25-year blueprint for the type of global capital city we want Melbourne to be.
- The **Council Plan and integrated Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan** sets Council's priorities for the next 4-year term (2025-2029) - guiding the work that will help us achieve the long-term vision.
- The **Asset Plan** outlines Council's asset management priorities for the next 10 years. It includes the steps we will take to enhance this portfolio and deliver the best outcomes for our residents, visitors and ratepayers.
- The **Financial Plan** is Council's 10-year financial framework to support achievement of the long-term Vision and Council Plan.

We designed a broad and diverse engagement approach to generate meaningful insights from our community which will inform these strategic decisions. Engagement is being delivered across two distinct phases:



About this report

- This report is intended as a snapshot of engagement activities from March to May 2025 under the Council Strategic Planning Program.
- The report summarises the design, delivery and high-level insights shared through these activities.
- It provides a transparent record of the process and methods. Participation (who we heard from) and insights gathered (what was shared) have been synthesised, themed and are reported at a high level.
- This report is not intended to communicate how these insights have influenced strategic decisions at this point in time. However, the next phase of public engagement will share how community insights contributed to the strategic directions and priorities of Council, across the key relevant strategic documents.

Engagement limitations

- Online survey responses were self-directed and provided feedback based on top of mind responses, without context provided.
- In-person contributions were recorded and synthesised, with best efforts made to interpret these insights objectively.
- There were some limitations in hearing from diverse voices including communities who speak and/or read a language other than English due to project resource constraints.
- Detailed raw data and verbatim feedback has been collated, synthesised and themed, for the purposes of identifying common topics. Whilst not every detail has been included in this report, more detailed information is available to teams across the City of Melbourne to inform decision-making.

Engagement overview

Over 10 weeks from March to May 2025, we invited anyone with an interest in the future of our city to consider the following questions and share their aspirations and ideas.

What do you want Melbourne to be known as in 2050?

What would this look like in your everyday life?

What actions should the City of Melbourne take to achieve this vision?

This was the first phase of engagement with our community and stakeholders to develop the M2050 Vision and Council Plan (2025-2029), Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan, and long-term Asset and Financial Plans.

Over **1850** people contributed during this period. By involving the breadth of the Melbourne community in the process, we aim to build a shared vision and identity that connects everyone who has a stake in the city to its future.

Community engagement ran from 19 March to 31 May 2025. A range of opportunities to participate were offered including:

- an online survey on Participate Melbourne, inviting future aspirations and potential actions
- the M2050 Summit, a major event hosted by the Lord Mayor with over 700 attendees reflecting the many interests and connections within our city who shared their future priorities and big ideas
- two bespoke roundtables delivered by City of Melbourne teams and peer facilitators, to elevate young people and First Nations voices in the long-term vision and planning for our city's future
- a deliberative People's Panel, who were tasked to delve deeper into the opportunities and challenges our city is facing, consider trade-offs in decision making and provide a set of principles to guide Council's strategic plans to realise the M2050 Vision.

In addition, City of Melbourne Neighbourhood Partners and Business Concierge proactively promoted initiatives and engaged with their respective networks and communities. More than 200 interactions occurred across approximately 20 community events and meetings, reaching businesses and multicultural communities within established networks.

The opportunity was promoted across City of Melbourne social media, Hyperlocal News, Participate Melbourne and hard copy postcards distributed at council sites and community events.

We consistently heard rich insights throughout the engagement process, revealing a strong alignment to key themes. This has provided some clear directions for Council to consider in planning for a future, in line with community aspirations and priorities.

Emerging common threads across all Phase One Engagement activities

Emerging common themes across all engagement activities:

- Accessible: with affordable housing, services, food systems, transport and education.
- A city that considers 'people-first' design, including great transport and walkability.
- Connected and intercultural.
- Country-centred: connected to First Nations culture, knowledge and systems.
- Exciting and engaging: with arts, entertainment and creativity.
- Full of opportunity and choice: fostering business, nurturing new ideas, unlocking creativity, and collaboration.
- Future-focused: with an emphasis on regeneration principles.
- Green: connections between parks and open spaces, and greenery across buildings and streets, with trees and green walls.
- Health and wellbeing focused.
- Safe and welcoming: with fair leadership, governance and democracy.

Gathering insights

M2050 Summit

The M2050 Summit brought together Melburnians from across the community to share their ambitions for our city's future. This took place at Melbourne Town Hall on Friday 9 May 2025, to explore what a long-term vision for Melbourne could look like. Participants included key stakeholders who represented a broad cross-section of industry, knowledge and interests in Melbourne's future. Community members were also invited through an open Expression of Interest (EOI) process. The 371 community members who registered were all invited to attend.

Discussions focussed on the kind of city we aspire to be in 2050, creating opportunities to hear what matters most and generate big ideas for a Melbourne we can all be proud of. The event included inspirational speakers in a morning plenary, followed by workshops talking about priorities and big ideas across six themes: liveability and wellbeing, economy and innovation, movement and infrastructure, climate and environment, creativity and knowledge and democracy and leadership.

A Youth Stream was also held, with 80 young people from secondary schools across the City of Melbourne, and young leaders aged 15 to 25, putting forward their ideas for the future.

A detailed report including the common themes and priorities from the Summit has been shared with all registered participants and is available on the City of Melbourne website.

<https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/m2050-vision-council-plan>



Image: Over 700 attendees participated in the one-day Summit on Friday 9 May 2025



Image: Small group discussions were supported by CoM staff to document priorities and big ideas

M2050 survey

The M2050 survey was open between 19 March and 31 May 2025 and received 849 responses. Promotion across various City of Melbourne channels and networks invited anyone with a connection and interest in the future of the city to answer the following open questions:

- Finish this sentence: *In 2050 I want Melbourne to be known as...*?
- *What would this look like in your everyday life?*
- *What actions would we need to do now to achieve this vision?*

In response to the first question, respondents could share up to 150 characters. The word cloud below reflects thematic words that were referenced most frequently:



The key themes synthesised in the table below are based on how people answered the next two questions. The percentages show the proportion of survey responses that mentioned each theme, and the actions are a summary of those most frequently referred to:

Theme from M2050 survey	Prominent actions	Theme from M2050 Summit
52% – "A city with great transport and walkability"	• Increase and improve public transport. • Encourage safe active transport. • Pedestrianisation.	Movement and infrastructure
49% – A green, environmentally friendly city	• Increase open space creation and acquisition. • Increase circular economy practices. • Invest in renewable technology. • Mitigate and prevent the impacts of climate change.	Climate and environment

43% – A welcoming, inclusive city	• Increase community spaces. • Fund cultural events. • Embed inclusivity into all council projects.	Liveability and wellbeing
39% – A safe city	• Increase and improve police services. • Increase homelessness and mental health services. • Increase street lighting.	
27% – An affordable, healthy and wellbeing focused city	• Prioritise affordable housing. • Deliver cheaper public services.	
23% – A clean city	• Increase penalties for graffiti/littering. • Use technology to make cleaning more efficient.	
27% – A city with arts, entertainment and creativity	• Make Melbourne an international destination for arts industries. • Activate underused spaces.	Knowledge and creativity
15% – An innovative, economically strong city	• Simplify processes for opening a business. • Foster partnerships between industries.	Economy and innovation
7% – A city with fair leadership, governance and democracy	• Expand civic education programs. • Embed more co-design and lived experience opportunities.	Democracy and leadership

Melbourne 2050 People's Panel

The Melbourne 2050 People's Panel (the panel) is a group of 48 citizens who were randomly selected to represent the diverse connections of the city's residents, businesses, workers, students and property owners. The group was brought together to deliberate on the opportunities and challenges a global capital city faces, and respond to the key remit:

Our city is evolving and this presents opportunities and challenges for all.

What do you want Melbourne to be in 2050, and what is important for us to do now to get there?

To support this work, the panel built their knowledge through pre-workshop reading, hearing directly from City of Melbourne staff and integrating insights from wider community feedback including priorities from the Summit, reports from the First Nations and Youth Roundtables and interim results of the M2050 survey.

The recruitment process included 8,000 letters distributed to resident and business addresses across the city and an open EOI process, promoted through Participate Melbourne. Over 271 EOI's were received with 50 people selected who represented the demographic makeup (closely matching ABS census data).

Representation was achieved across gender, age and location (in line with 2021 ABS census data) with specific selection criteria on:

- 50% residential connection
 - ✓ Renters.
 - ✓ Owner/occupier.
 - ✓ Non-resident ratepayer.
- 50% business connection
 - ✓ Business owners.
 - ✓ Employees.

(across scale of sole traders to large businesses)

The final makeup of the panel comprised 48 randomly selected participants, as two dropped out between the first and second session. Participants met over five sessions, commencing with a meet and greet online on 15 May 2025 and concluding with the final deliberative session in-person on 31 May 2025.

The key focus of the panel was to provide a set of decision-making principles to guide the strategic direction of Council over the next 4-10 years. The panel developed eight principles and two minority reports*, that encompass the breadth and depth of the information provided and deliberations held. These include:

Principle	Description	Why this is important?	What would this look like in action?
Future focused resource stewardship	We invest public resources where they deliver the greatest long-term benefit to Melbourne's resilience and liveability, choosing	• Funding in the best interest of essential services in the present, without compromising the quality delivered. • Avoid short-term spending that fails to	• Spending to scale with the growth. • Adaptability to changing circumstances. • Prepare for known impacts from global

	strategic, evidence-based spending over immediacy.	serve long-term goals. • Build resilience for future shocks. • Enables Melbourne to maintain world-class infrastructure.	developments e.g climate change, artificial intelligence. • Data driven, evidence based decision making.
Deepening connection to Country	Naarm/Melbourne exemplifying Treaty with all residents sharing a deep connection to Country in the same way First Peoples do. A proud city that creates intergenerational and intercultural belonging through caring for Country and embracing collective intelligence.	• Connection to Country is central to Australian culture—it heals, unites, and guides better decisions. Embedding First Nations self-determination, reconnecting to homelands, with access to economic opportunities, strengthens communal wellbeing, environment, and community futures for everyone. • First Nations wisdom safeguards our well-being and environment, and helps us all make better decisions.	• The Birrarung flows clean and alive, where we're learning to swim within ten years. • Partner with traditional owners on city design informed by living patterns of country, and consider intergenerational urban planning and civic education. • Embedding of First Nations art, culture and knowledge throughout the fabric of the city (e.g. First persons precinct, education tourism, dual-naming).
Creativity and innovation	Nurture a culture of bold imagination. Melbourne will be at the forefront of creativity, innovation and problem solving by empowering diverse communities, supporting risk taking, and making space for new ideas that benefit all.	• Council can and should be a greater conduit between its community members' ideas and the larger institutions that can innovate and deliver upon these. • Melbourne is known as a place of 'arts, cultural expression and innovation' as a result of creativity at its core identity (sense of belonging), and we want to keep it that way!	• Invest in the spaces, organisations, tools and systems that enable creativity and entrepreneurship to flourish. • Creating/providing a forum to enable proposals of different and creative solutions to problems.
Climate action as a collective responsibility	All policies, partnerships, and decisions should prioritise reducing emissions, eliminating waste, and regenerating ecosystems. We embrace shared commitment and accountability between industry, community and government.	• Invest in the spaces, organisations, tools and systems that enable creativity and entrepreneurship to flourish. • Creating/providing a forum to enable proposals of different and creative solutions to problems.	• All stakeholders (government, industry, community) play a part and price in climate action. It's a shared civic mission. • Everyone is benefiting from better access to nature, green spaces, waterway and good air quality.
Future ready Melbourne	Future readiness is imperative. To achieve this, we prioritise	• Proactive rather than reactive. • Considering inter-	• Build internal capacity for future planning and foresight.

	responsiveness and adaptation. We consider the implications, consequences and impact across the board. Planning for the long-term ensures Melbourne systems remain robust and flexible whatever the future holds.	generational impact and equity. Measure and evaluate the impact of today's decisions on the future.	- Integrating decision-making process across the board. - Council is accountable and communicates its rationale for all decision-making.
Always consider health and wellbeing	Always consider public health in all dimensions - social, physical, environmental. To build towards 2050, education and prevention initiatives are fundamental in contributing to public safety, health and wellbeing.	- To build a thriving and resilient city in 2050, it is important that Melbourne has elevated the standard of safety, health and wellbeing as a prosperity factor for all community groups. - Health and wellbeing is a theme that impacts all of Council's decisions, projects and plans. - Having preventative measures is an investment in the positive effects of public health and wellbeing.	- Consider how to provide support to particular, vulnerable parts of the community, to elevate their level of safety, health and wellbeing to a higher standard over the next 25 years. - Safety, health and wellbeing equity. - Establish and maintain direct health and wellbeing services as a baseline. - Provide targeted health and wellbeing services to lift up the people who need it the most. - All citizens are aware and well-prepared for the city's future climate. - All citizens both feel - and are - safe in their home environment, work environment, community spaces, and moving through the city.
Safe and accessible by design	Everyone should feel equally safe and capable of getting in, through and around at any time, 24/7, in any way, mode, or means. Council should ensure that the city is accessible and safe to all people, especially the most vulnerable members of the	- This is a people centred city. A safe city doesn't just happen; it requires conscious and holistic design and the desegregation of activities and uses to support our 24/7 city. - We want people to come and celebrate Marvellous Melbourne. A feeling of safety, mobility, a legible and understandable city and support for those	- Creating a hierarchy of mobility, to ensure that pedestrians and people who need additional supports to navigate City of Melbourne can, to engage to their fullest. - Prioritising sustainable transport options, which are innovative and environmentally

	community. Decisions for the creation, adaptation and reinvigoration of urban and built environments should be made on a holistic basis with respect to design, activities and operations. Individual mobility and safety should be prioritised as far as possible whilst preserving the city's unique character and heart.	who need it are integral to creating this.	friendly. • Innovative community safety, utilising technology to communicate with people about how they should adapt their transport plans. • Making our transport infrastructure safe and fit for purpose, this means protecting pedestrian zones, creating protected bike lanes. • Creating ways for people to give feedback and helping them make change to feel safe.
A people-centred city enabling affordable, equitable living opportunities	Prioritise equity and inclusion for all residents, workers, students, and visitors by providing attractive green open spaces and community infrastructure. Putting people at the centre of affordable and sustainable solutions to meet the needs of an evolving community.	• A sustainable future city plan attracts and retains residents to create thriving, stable, and connected communities that promote wellbeing, social cohesion, and liveability. • It builds a community that is more engaged and resilient with improved sustainability, infrastructure and housing outcomes for all. It can ensure everyone has an equitable access to the services and built-form outcomes they need to thrive.	• People-centred solutions that make Melbourne liveable for everyone, across every stage of life. • All people have access to affordable energy. • Accounting for future climate change impacts for a resilient city. • Prioritise affordable and adequate housing in all developments. • Third spaces, and places of play to be embedded in design and strategy.

**Note: to reach consensus on the final set of principles, the Panel were asked to vote, with 80% support required.*

The panel also contributed their long-term aspirations for the 2050 Vision, reflecting on initial outputs from the Summit, and insights from the Youth and First Nations Roundtables. Through a creative ideation process, the panel were asked to consider life in Melbourne in 2050 and developed the following, to supplement the decision-making principles:

We see Melbourne in 2050 to be a global capital city that integrates:

- **CONNECTIVITY**
 - We are a diverse and equitable city that is always connected to Country.
- **CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION**
 - We are a city that fosters creativity, is always agile and responsive to change, is adaptable to new technology, and leads with innovation.
- **LIVEABILITY**

- We are a people centred city, that is accessible and affordable to all, and demonstrates sustainability.
- **ECONOMIC VIABILITY**
 - We are a thriving 24-hour city that fuels inclusive growth and fosters business of all sizes.

Our Vision for the City of Melbourne is to always apply an intersectional approach when considering the panel decision-making principles.

Our Vision for 2050 Melbourne is that we all live in a vibrant, diverse, and green city.

The Melbourne 2050 People's Panel was the key activity to meet Council's deliberative engagement requirements in line with the Local Government Act (2020) and City of Melbourne's Community Engagement Policy. The panel provided a meaningful opportunity for Council to engage with a representative group of everyday citizens and share knowledge about the challenges and opportunities of a global capital city.

Participants each gave 35 hours of their time to take part in the process. The City of Melbourne is incredibly grateful to each person who attended all sessions and contributed with much passion for the future of their city.

Participant feedback included the following:

- Direct access to City of Melbourne staff was highly valued, particularly the opportunity to engage with senior leaders.
- Valued the opportunity to connect, collaborate and be heard in a civic setting.
- Many described a sense of personal growth and increased civic awareness, and pride in being part of a meaningful initiative.



Image: The People's Panel were made up of 48 everyday citizens who have a residential or business connection to the city.

Elevating voices of youth and First Nations

During this period of engagement, the Youth Services and Aboriginal Melbourne teams worked with peer facilitators to design and deliver engagement suitable to their communities and networks, to contribute to the M2050 Vision and Council Plan.

The Youth Services team ran two engagement activities with young people aged 16-25 years in May. This included a **Youth Roundtable** held on 2 May and a **Youth Stream at the M2050 Summit** to feed into the 2050 Vision process.

Engaging with over 100 diverse young people across the two events, there was a mix of residents, workers, students and visitors of Melbourne under the age of 25.

Youth-friendly workshops provided safe and supported spaces, to ensure young voices are included in the 2050 Vision process, and that decisions about Melbourne's future are intergenerationally fair for young people.

From the roundtable, young people designed creative visions for Melbourne in 2050, and a set of nine principles. These were used in each workshop space at the Summit as a guiding document for attendees to cross check their ideas against, acting as a compass to ensure intergenerational fairness for young people in the future.

Do your ideas...

- Create a future more inspired by hope than fear?
- Enable Melburnians to feel a sense of belonging within the city, respecting and nurturing their identity, culture and values?
- Ensure transparent and community-driven policies that lead to positive, long-term and measurable impact?
- Increase economic stability and sustainability in the long run?
- Affect our relationship with countries?
- Create something that can be easily improved or changed into the future?
- Intersectionally acknowledge the climate emergency and employ transparent accountability in all actions?
- Promote equity and opportunity for groups including: youth, vulnerable? communities, small businesses, migrants and First Nations peoples?
- Create a positive impact on our planet and opportunities for everyone?

Two young people also attended the second day of the People's Panel on the 18 May 2025, to share a youth perspective on Melbourne's future vision.

Five common threads were identified across the events which will guide City of Melbourne's work with young people:

- Affordability and access.
- Educational and economic opportunities.
- Safety and wellbeing.
- Social inclusion and connection.
- Youth voice and empowerment.

A First Nations Roundtable was held on 12 May 2025, following the Summit and prior to the People's Panel.

A key outcome from this roundtable was a bold, First Nations led vision for Melbourne in 2050:

Melbourne is led by First Nations self-determination and Blak cultural resurgence, with all citizens sharing a deep connection to Country in the same way First Peoples do. The Birrarung flows clean and alive. Treaties are in place. First Peoples shape governance, and urban design is informed by living patterns of Country. Language and cultural knowledge are shared across generations of everyone in Melbourne, embedding care, truth-telling and intergenerational belonging. Culture is visible, ecologies thrive, and all people share responsibility for a culturally meaningful, interconnected, just and regenerative future.

In addition, a set of priorities came out of roundtable discussions including:

Short-term:

- Embedding First Nations knowledge and language.
- Progressing Treaty and truth-telling processes.
- Elevating cultural visibility.
- Renaming sites.
- Investing in Traditional Owner leadership.
- Vacant city buildings repurposed as cultural hubs and housing.

Medium-term priorities focus on scaling efforts:

- Normalising Aboriginal-led governance and education.
- Embedding cultural protocols in city life.
- Establishing innovation precincts.

Overarching workshops outcomes that emerged from the roundtable included:

- **Democracy and leadership:** co-designed governance, Treaty, the First People's Assembly, land-back strategies and Aboriginal-led city leadership.
- **Knowledge and creativity:** education strategies, cultural storytelling, public art, and visible First Nations presence across all city systems.
- **Liveability and wellbeing:** culturally safe housing, thriving intergenerational community hubs, and care-centred health and social systems.
- **Economy and innovation:** repatriations-linked benefit sharing, Indigenous innovation centres, and creative industries rooted in culture.
- **Movement and infrastructure:** renaming colonial infrastructure, relational placemaking guided by Songlines, and planning connected to Country.

Both roundtables produced detailed reports that were presented back to participants of the roundtables, and to the People's Panel, to integrate and elevate these voices into deliberations.

Next steps

The insights gathered will inform a draft M2050 Vision and a suite of draft strategic Council plans that we will share for community feedback in August and September this year.

Follow the project to stay informed of future opportunities to help shape this important work.

<https://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/m2050-vision>