

Homelessness Strategy 2024-2030

Background

Between March and April 2024, the City of Melbourne undertook community engagement on its Draft Homelessness Strategy 2024-2030. The strategy aims to articulate a bold vision for the City of Melbourne's future work to end homelessness and create lasting change. The engagement will help inform the final strategy. This is a snapshot of the results.

Reach



86 surveys received



122 focus group participants



6 email submissions

Participants



Females made up 48% of participants; 43% were male; 4% were non-binary/gender diverse; 5% didn't identify their gender.



The largest age groups represented were 35-39 years (13%) and 50-54 years age group (12%).



53% of participants were home-owners; 35% were in private rentals; 5% were in social housing; 1% were either in temporary shelter/without conventional accommodation.

What we did



Implemented an on-going media plan and communications to promote the community engagement



Facilitated round tables with stakeholders including local businesses, residents, the Homelessness Advisory Committee, Melbourne Service Coordination Project, Victoria Police and Wurundjeri Elders



Facilitated tailored focus groups with four priority cohorts



Opened the Participate Melbourne survey to all community members for seven weeks



Facilitated online Q + A sessions with the wider community

Feedback



Vision

An inclusive city where every person has a home and support to break the cycle of homelessness

The majority of participants across the survey, focus groups, and emailed submissions expressed a strong commitment to helping tackle homelessness and to ensuring that the City of Melbourne is a better place for everyone to live - **86%** of survey participants selected that they **support the vision**.

Priority 1 A city where everyone has a home

- **78%** of survey participants **agreed with Priority 1**.
- There was agreement across discussions that solving homelessness would benefit both people directly affected by it and the wider community.
- There were requests to adjust the priority groups outlined in the strategy to ensure no-one is left behind.

"Without secure, affordable housing poverty becomes an insurmountable barrier. We are one of the richest countries in the world. There is no excuse for not housing everyone."

- participant

Priority 2 A city where no-one is left behind

- **85%** of survey participants **agreed with Priority 2**.
- The importance of homelessness prevention was a key focus in discussions on this priority, as well as the need to recognise that homelessness can happen quickly.
- Collaboration between services was raised as an important way of working.

"The transient nature of homelessness in the city was recognised, with a request for people to be supported whichever LGA they moved to, without having to re-tell their stories and re-do paperwork."

- Peer Education Support Program

Priority 3 A city unified to end homelessness

- **85%** of survey participants **agreed with Priority 3**.
- The need for a unified approach to the complex problem of homelessness was raised.
- The importance of reducing stigma and informing the community to enhance empathy toward people experiencing homelessness was expressed.

"The group gave feedback that using young people as lived-experience spokespeople would help break down stigmatisation and increase community understanding...."

- Young People focus group

Future opportunities

Participants were asked to highlight key future opportunities for responding to homelessness. The most popular opportunities were as follows:



Service hubs for people experiencing homelessness



Pilot a safe space for women at risk of homelessness



Focus on ending homelessness



Enhanced social and affordable housing

Strategy updates



Strengthen the Vision and Goal to more clearly define CoM's role as a local government authority in preventing and ending homelessness.



Acknowledge the long term, intensive support needed by people experiencing chronic homelessness



Ensure that the drivers of homelessness for young people are clearly communicated.



Add a Priority 1 outcome that reflects CoM's commitment to amplifying the voices of groups who may experience exclusion, including LGBTQIA+ communities, older people, people with a disability, and people from multicultural communities.



Acknowledge that the unique experience of Aboriginal women experiencing homelessness requires a tailored, self-determined response.



Modify Priority 3.2 to reflect our commitment to work more closely with people with lived experience of homelessness

Rename Priority 2 from 'A city where no one is left behind' to 'A city focussed on ending homelessness through prevention, partnerships and collaboration'.