

# Budget 2024-25

CONSULTATION REPORT



# INTRODUCTION

Each year Council must prepare an Annual Budget which outlines the financial and non financial resources that Council requires to achieve the strategic objectives as described in the Council Plan.

In 2023-24 the budget was allocated as follows:

<b>\$58.33m</b> Capital Works	<b>\$22.18m</b> Parks, community facilities, sport and recreation	<b>\$16.82m</b> Libraries, arts, culture and community events
<b>\$29.10m</b> Buildings, roads, traffic management and drainage maintenance	<b>\$20.81m</b> Planning, building and regulatory services	<b>\$15.33m</b> Health, aged and community services
<b>\$28.07m</b> Waste collection, street and public facilities cleaning	<b>\$16.71m</b> Families, children and youth	<b>\$5.89m</b> Customer service and communication

As part of this process Council undergoes a community consultation phase in line with the Community Engagement Policy. The feedback received from the community is then used to inform Councillors and Council Officers and assist with the allocation of resources throughout the budget process.

# CONSULTATION PROCESS



## Activities

The consultation process was conducted from 30 October until 26 November 2023 and incorporated both online and hard copy activities (outlined below) to ensure a range of methods to participate were offered to the community. 36 people participated over the 28 day period, 29 used the online Social Pinpoint tool, six respondents emailed their feedback and one community member submitted a hard copy form.

Activities	Details	Engagement
Hard copy form and email	A hard copy survey form was placed in customer service centres for completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One person submitted a hard copy form and six people emailed their feedback.</li></ul>
Ideas Wall*	This provided an opportunity for people to share their ideas and vote on other people's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 35 comments were posted on the ideas wall.</li></ul>
Budget Prioritiser*	This activity asked participants to choose their top 5 priorities from a list of 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 32 responses were received.</li></ul>
Online survey*	The survey enabled participants to provide their ideas and identify what they would spend less, the same or more on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 16 surveys were completed.</li></ul>

\* Social pinpoint activities

# PROMOTION



**A number of methods were used to promote the consultation to the community including:**

- Website and social media
- Posters and hard copy forms in Customer Service
- Staff networks - newsletters, stakeholder lists
- School newsletters and networks
- Media release and follow-up with Dandenong Journal
- Paid advertisement in the local paper

# SUMMARY

## WHO PARTICIPATED?

The majority of the respondents who registered their suburb were from Noble Park (40%), Dandenong (20%) and Springvale (20%). The remainder of respondents were from Keysborough, Springvale South and Noble Park North. This was a change on the previous year where most respondents were from Keysborough South (39%).

## WHAT SERVICES WERE SEEN TO BE MOST IMPORTANT?

The survey results showed that the top five services which are still the most important to residents are:

- Roads and footpaths
- Rubbish and recycling
- Parks and gardens
- Libraries, and
- Street lighting

# SUMMARY

## **WHAT WOULD OUR COMMUNITY LIKE TO SEE MORE OF?**

Respondents to the survey highlighted that they would like to see more of the following:

- Public lighting
- Cycling and walking paths
- Playgrounds, parks and sportsgrounds
- Affordable housing

Festivals and events, arts and cultural exhibitions and children, youth and family services were seen to be adequately provided for.

## **SPENDING - LESS, THE SAME OR MORE?**

Planning, building and regulatory services, along with libraries, arts, culture and community facilities were highlighted as the areas that Council should consider spending less on.

Areas where more spending could occur included health, aged and community services; and buildings, roads, traffic management and drainage maintenance.



# CONSULTATION ACTIVITIES

## IDEAS WALL

The Ideas Wall was a way for participants to post ideas publicly, read what other community members were saying and vote on the ideas they most agreed with.

*Share with us what you think are the most important services and/or projects for Council to invest in*

 Something I Like	 Ideas and Suggestions	 Transport	 Climate Change	 Community Facilities	 Parks and Playgrounds
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Best Ten Tidy Streets, Best Tidy Ward. Annual Competition. Youth Leadership. Ask for secondary school students ideas for a guideline. Set up this kind of locally led competition to generate the City's entries in Victorian and Australian competitions.

[Start a discussion](#)

 Ideas and Suggestions | 2 days ago    Like     Dislike 




Create inclusive and accessible outdoor environments. Promote healthy ageing. Provide opportunities for older adults. The National Ageing Research Institute in partnership with several local governments, government bodies and stakeholders have been working together to create age-friendly outdoor spaces for older people to engage in physical and social activities for healthier and liveable cities and communities in Victoria. The design of outdoor public spaces, including parks, leisure spaces and

[Start a discussion](#)

 Ideas and Suggestions | 2 days ago    Like     Dislike 

Please consider investing in community programs to create awareness in domestic violence & substance abuse. Community dynamics are seriously affected by the increase in substance abuse across the board and this is directly connected to violence, not only domestic but also in other environments like schools, community centres, work places. Etc.

[Start a discussion](#)

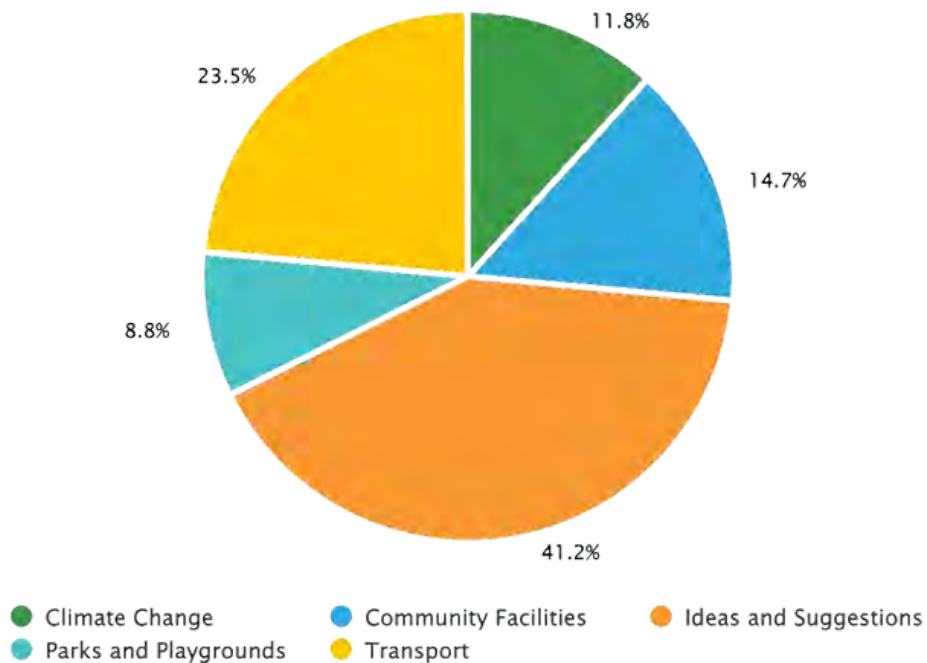
 Ideas and Suggestions | 6 days ago    Like     Dislike 

Sealing the footpath along dandenong creek from hammond road to Allan street

[Start a discussion](#)

 Ideas and Suggestions | 6 days ago    Like  +4    Dislike 

The comments were tagged in the following categories:



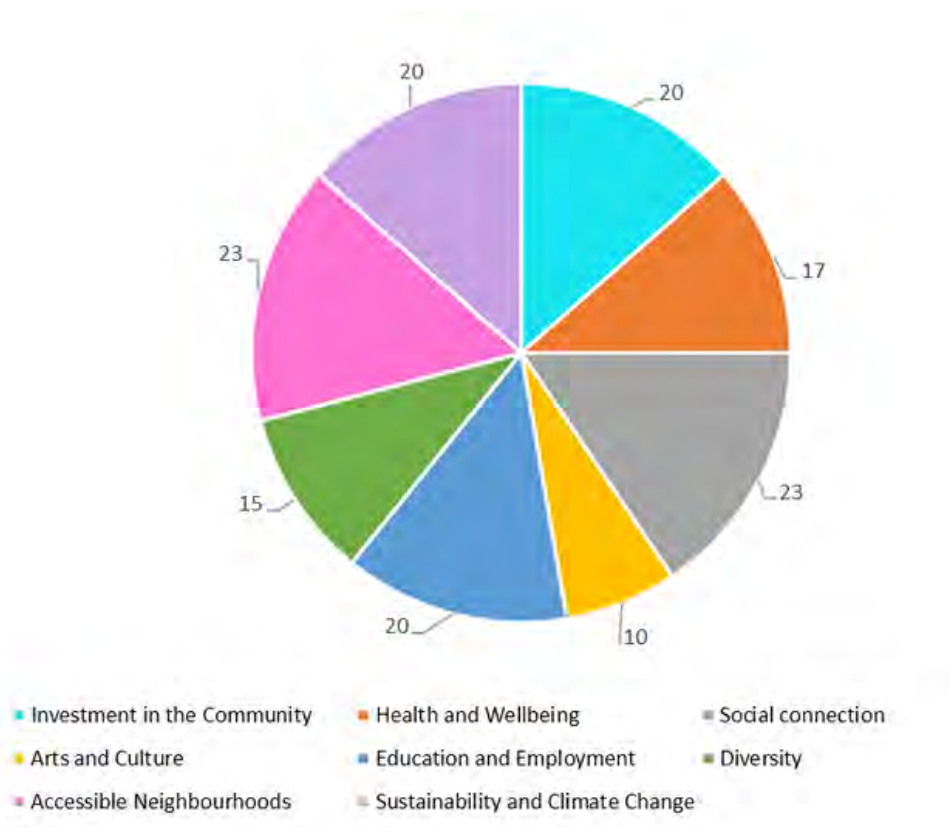
Comments were related to the following topics within each category:

- Ideas and suggestions (14) – more trees, dumped rubbish, educational programs for health and wellbeing, more disable parking, community programs for domestic violence, inclusive and accessible outdoor environments.
- Parks and Playgrounds (3) – accessible playgrounds for children with different abilities, age friendly landscapes and Barry Powell Basketball Court.
- Transport (8) – safe parking for bikes and cars, new bike paths, improving transport access to Springvale, sound barriers and transport advocacy.
- Community Facilities (5) – more playgroups and parent groups, essential safety features near primary schools, affordable child care and continued work on the Dandenong Wellbeing Centre.
- Climate Change (4) – Citizen Science projects, funding for sustainability, environment and climate change related initiatives and education, reduction in the concrete jungle.

Individual comments can be found in Attachment 1.



## PRIORITISATION ACTIVITY



The budget prioritisation activity was designed to show the community that Council often has to choose some services/activities/initiatives to fund over others and this involves prioritising what the community is in most need of along with what Council can afford.

Participants were asked to choose five key areas they would like to see Council focus on in the next budget out of a total of eight. These areas are aligned with the strategic objectives of the Council Plan 2021-25. The above pie chart shows all of the results, with the following areas being the top two priorities:

- Accessible neighbourhoods - walking and cycling paths, access to public transport and well-designed public spaces
- Social connection - support for people with a disability, services for children, young people and families; increasing participation for older residents; and community safety.

In comparison, last year's consultation listed the top three priorities as accessible neighbourhoods, investment in the community, and health and wellbeing.

## SURVEY

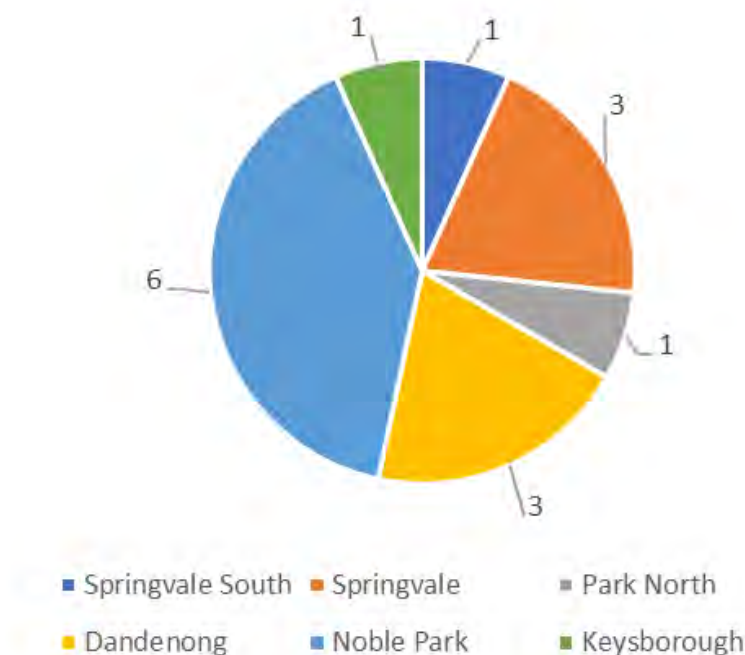
An online survey was designed to capture a variety of ideas and suggestions. This survey was also reproduced as a hard copy for anyone who could not access it online. Of the 17 survey responses only one of these was a hard copy.

The survey asked some key questions to better understand the needs of the community. These were:

1. What services are the most important to you?
2. What would you like to see more of in your area?
3. If you were a Councillor would you spend less, the same or more, and why?  
(Specific areas were highlighted)

A summary of the responses is in the below graphs.

Which suburb do you live in?



What services are the most important to you?



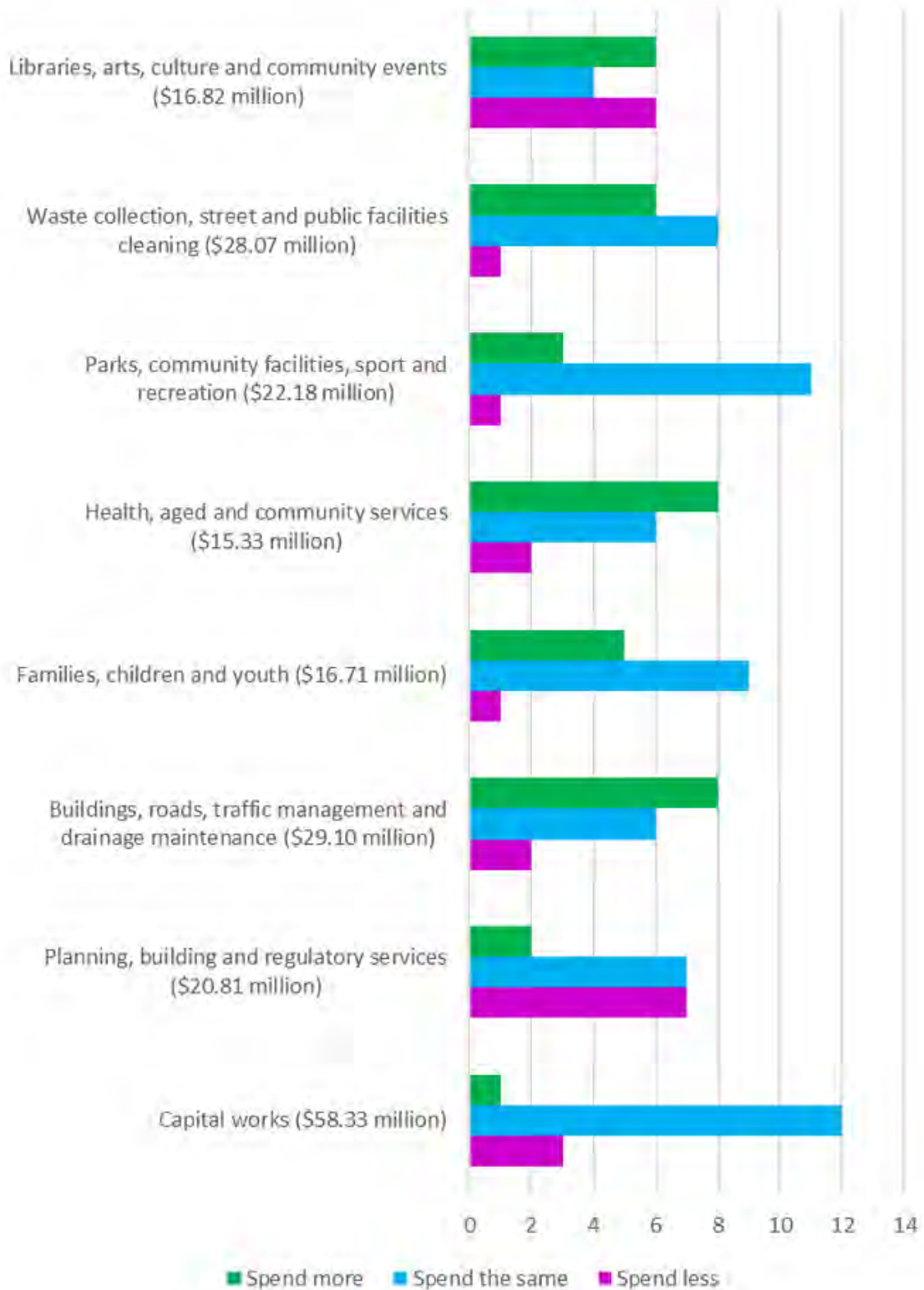
- Community centres
- Street lighting
- Festivals and events
- Maternal and child health
- Food safety
- Leisure centres
- Theatre and the arts
- Car parks
- Youth and family services
- Immunisation
- Rubbish and recycling
- Parks and gardens
- Libraries
- Roads and footpaths
- Kindergartens and playgroups
- Home maintenance
- Swimming pools

What would you like to see more of in your area?



- Public lighting
- Children, Youth and Family Services
- Affordable Housing
- Playgrounds, parks and sportsgrounds
- Arts and Cultural Exhibitions
- Health services
- Festivals and events
- Cycling and walking paths

If you were a Councillor would you spend less, the same, or more on the below areas?



## EMAIL RESPONSES

Six community members submitted their feedback via email. The key focus of five of the submissions was a need to increase the resourcing for environmental sustainability staff and initiatives.

A sixth submission was made related to a number of initiatives including:

- School and pedestrian crossings
- Footpath infrastructure
- Bus shelters and seating
- Increased tree planting
- Mental Health outreach/suicide prevention

# COMMUNITY COMMENTS

“Libraries change lives! Our libraries in greater Dandenong are awesome- they need more investment to keep providing such valuable services.”



“Attract investments from private investors in Real Estate & Business to increase jobs.”

“With an aging population, it's important to provide services for the elderly to allow them to age at-home with dignity. Additionally, waste management is crucial for keeping our streets beautiful.”

“Strategies for building a better and healthier future for all. Eg. Ways to increase greening, to build sustainable neighbourhoods, to increase green spaces ....in order to balance out the various negative impacts of expansive high density commercial locations and industrial estates.”



“A budget priority should be the environment, both ongoing staffing and project funding.”



# NEXT STEPS

The results of the consultation have been shared with the Executive Management Team and Councillors for consideration during the development of Council's Budget for 2024-25.

The feedback will also be considered as part of the review of the Council Plan and development of the Annual Plan 2024-25.

Council's Budget 2024-25 and Annual Plan 2024-25 process will be conducted in early 2024 and the final plans endorsed by Council in June.

# ATTACHMENT

## Ideas Wall Responses

Type	Comment	Votes For	Votes Against
Climate Change	How about limiting the amount of concrete people can have on their property. My area is becoming a concrete jungle with all front yards concrete . Adds to warming and problems with rain runoff etc.	4	1
Climate Change	Pump funding into Sustainability, Environment and Climate Change related initiatives and education. Everything else hangs below these categories. There is no economy without healthy ecology.	2	2
Climate Change	A pedestrian crossing on Allan street dandenong where the new bridge is	2	0
Climate Change	Set up Citizen Science projects. Increase local knowledge and involvement , collect information, arrange field events. Eg. Birdlife counts	0	0
Community Facilities	Continue to work on development of the Dandenong Wellbeing Centre.	2	0
Community Facilities	Funding for essential safety features on roads near our new local primary schools. E.g. more pedestrian crossing assistants for school crossings, install crossing on busy intersections of Homeleigh Rd and Tyres Lane. By doing this children could safely walk to school without the need for parents to drive - reducing carbon emissions... A safer community!!	2	0
Community Facilities	Invest more in kindergartens and affordable child care	0	1
Community Facilities	More playgroups and parent groups	0	0
Community Facilities	More free parking for the Dandenong library. There's no point of having an amazing library when no one can access it.	0	0
Ideas and Suggestions	We need to get the people begging on the streets the support they need so that they are not causing trouble in the community.	1	0
Ideas and Suggestions	More available Disabled parking spaces. Think this is big priority.	3	0
Ideas and Suggestions	I love the Child Friendly Cities work	0	0
Ideas and Suggestions	Plant more perennial trees to help keep our streetscape greener throughout the year - especially in Springvale! And mandate that new developments must have a minimum number of trees in them, along with the enforcement of nature strip lawn mowing to keep it looking attractive and clean.	3	0
Ideas and Suggestions	Make people mow their lawns and nature strips. Their seeds/weeds end up in our property. Clamp down on any rubbish dumped. Include reminders with what is acceptable with every rate notice.  Maintain the roads - too many potholes.  Any council run seminar for staff or councillors to be held in Dandenong area.. Plenty of hotels etc here. No need to head off to somewhere else at rate payers expense.	0	0
Ideas and Suggestions	Climate change and benefits of low rise high density. Achieve urban sustainability in City of Greater Dandenong  Urban planners know that understanding the whole carbon life of a building as well as balancing the impact of urban density and height are needed to accommodate expanding populations. Cut carbon at the design stage.  Refer - World Green Building Council. 2050 emissions targets. Passive House Design.  Regulate for low rise and to drive down the cost of energy.	0	0
Ideas and Suggestions	Health and well being.  Standard of living has reduced by 10 percent in the last few years. In Australia Inflation expected to reduce to 3 percent only in 2025.  Financial security and relationships are known to be linked to WellBeing.  Unexpected financial negative income or expense shocks impact lower income households the most. Build resilience.  Develop educational programs, workshops, resource materials, to assist people. Encourage employers to enable education and support	0	0

Type	Comment	Votes For	Votes Against
Ideas and Suggestions	<p>Industrial estates create health and safety risks for residents. Air quality. Noise. Heat.</p> <p>Green roofs and walls on industrial estates can provide many benefits. Green roofs can improve the thermal performance of a building by providing thermal mass, insulation and shading. Green walls and roofs also provide benefits such as reducing stormwater runoff, increasing biodiversity, decreasing heat island effects.</p> <p>Require green roofs and walls on all new large buildings. Regulate.</p>	0	0
Ideas and Suggestions	Develop a joint statement, in partnership with Casey City Council, to the Victorian State Government to rebuild Dandenong South Station (a.k.a 'General Motors Station') and provide accessible bus routes to the rebuilt station.	1	0
Ideas and Suggestions	Sealing the footpath along dandenong creek from hammond road to Allan street	4	0
Ideas and Suggestions	<p>Please consider investing in community programs to create awareness in domestic violence &amp; substance abuse.</p> <p>Community dynamics are seriously affected by the increase in substance abuse across the board and this is directly connected to violence, not only domestic but also in other environments like schools, community centres, work places. Etc.</p>	0	0
Ideas and Suggestions	<p>Climate Change. Built Form. Get clear on how the City will look in the future.</p> <p>Regularly conduct Evaluation studies. Research different ways to improve the City's approach and assessment of Urban Development.</p> <p>Be proactive. Set design parameters that guide future development. Keep up to date with the most recent learning ( eg Covid-19 pandemic design issues) as well as best practice in urban design and development.</p> <p>For example Stonnington Built Form Guidelines Review Ethos Urban was engaged</p>	0	0
Ideas and Suggestions	<p>Create inclusive and accessible outdoor environments.</p> <p>Promote healthy ageing. Provide opportunities for older adults.</p> <p>The National Ageing Research Institute in partnership with several local governments, government bodies and stakeholders have been working together to create age-friendly outdoor spaces for older people to engage in physical and social activities for healthier and liveable cities and communities in Victoria.</p> <p>The design of outdoor public spaces, including parks, leisure spaces</p>	0	0
Ideas and Suggestions	<p>Best Ten Tidy Streets, Best Tidy Ward. Annual Competition.</p> <p>Youth Leadership. Ask for secondary school students ideas for a guideline.</p> <p>Set up this kind of locally led competition to generate the City's entries in Victorian and Australian competitions.</p>	0	0
Parks and Playgrounds	When is the Barry Powell basketball court coming? There are none around our part of noble.paek north and wve waiting a long time.	0	0
Parks and Playgrounds	More accessible playgrounds for children with different abilities. Fenced specifically so children can play freely and safely. This is so important for people with children with disabilities who don't understand road safety or safety in general.	2	0
Parks and Playgrounds	<p>Age friendly landscapes , open spaces, parks and gardens.</p> <p>Steps, uneven surfaces, gravel paths, slippery surfaces become obstacles that prevent a visit.</p> <p>Improve enjoyment by adding more.seats, shade, reduce slopes, and add small sections of flat concrete paths.</p> <p>Provide sensory experiences. Colourful plants.</p> <p>Provide good access,easy drop offs, good signs.</p> <p>Indoor and outdoor spaces, that provide protection from extreme weather.</p>	0	0
Transport	being able to safely park my bike around the community is important to me, so more bike racks	4	0

Type	Comment	Votes For	Votes Against
Transport	Bike bath through Springvale cemetery from bakers road side to connect to police road and dandenong road. Kids and families could then ride away from traffic especially to school at Wellington.	3	0
Transport	I want parking overnight at train stations to be safer with installations of more CCTV cameras and lightings. My plates have been stolen twice from parking at yarraman and noble park stations overnight.	5	0
Transport	i've noticed that there's a lot of people parking their bikes informally around Springvale, especially on the weekends, by locking the bikes to parking sign poles or on fencing. more bike rack is definitely required.	0	0
Transport	Improving active transport access to springvale is a must, the whole area is locked up on weekends with cars endlessly circling for a parking space. it is hard to cross from the djerring trail to the shops.  Pedestrian priority crossings across queens ave at buckingham ave, and across lightwood road at warwick ave would go a long way to improving access from the djerring trail. something simple like a pedestrian island to allow crossing each lane individually would be a big improvement.	4	0
Transport	Reinstate the pram ramp at the noble park railway parade service road car park. There used to be a pram ramp here but it was removed as part of the recent works to improve the railway parade noble park streetscape upgrade. this pram ramp was used by cyclist riding along railway parade to get back on to the djerring trail. it would also be beneficial for prams/wheelchairs/mobility devices.	3	0
Transport	Construct a contra-flow bike lane on the southern princes highway service road between potter street and the traffic lights. this will improve access to the traffic lights for bikes to safely princes highway and access key destinations, such as dandenong hospital.	2	0
Transport	replace the first few panels of sound barrier at the corner of oakwood ave and heyington cres with a transparent barrier to reduce the blind corner on the eastlink trail path.	3	0
Transport	Work on and advocacy with State Government for improved footpaths and bus stop facilities along Railway parade (particularly around Yarraman station) - have seen a man on a wheel chair unable to access footpath at the bus stop.	0	0

