



**Act and Adapt: Sustainable
Environment Strategy 2023–2028**

Engagement Summary Report

November 2023





Acknowledgement of Country

Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of this land, the people of the Kulin Nations. We pay our respects to Elders past and present. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.

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Introduction

Project background

In 2018, Council published the first ten-year *Act and Adapt: Sustainable Environment Strategy* ('the Strategy'). This was in response to the many sustainability challenges facing our neighbourhoods and communities. Under five priority areas, the strategy set the direction for City of Port Phillip's long-term commitment to environmental sustainability both for the organisation and the wider community.

The strategy established a pathway to transition Port Phillip into a greener, cooler, more liveable city with lower carbon emissions, a water sensitive city that is adapting and resilient to climate change and with a sustained reduction in waste. In 2023, a review of the strategy was undertaken. The draft of the revised Strategy was released for public consultation.

What we set out to achieve

The purpose of the engagement process was to:

- Increase awareness of the Strategy within our stakeholders and communities.
- Collect specific feedback on the draft Strategy and proposed targets to inform the review process.

About this report

This report outlines how Council engaged with communities about the draft Strategy, and summarises the feedback collected.



Before reading this report

The following should be considered in reading this report:

- The information in this report is based on qualitative research and does not necessarily reflect the views of a statistically representative sample of the community.
- City of Port Phillip strives to include diverse voices in our engagement activities. We acknowledge, however, that some people are likely to have experienced barriers to participation in the activities that are outlined in this report – including people with disability, multicultural communities, older people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and others.
- The word '**participants**' is used to describe the total group of community members and stakeholders who contributed to this engagement process. The terms '**respondents**' is used to talk about the sub-group of total participants who responded to a specific question or engagement activity.
- The information and views presented in this report are a summary of the opinions, perceptions and feedback heard from across all the engagement activities. The feedback has not been independently validated. As such, some information may be factually incorrect, unfeasible or outside of the scope of this project.
- We acknowledge that, while efforts are taken to manage duplication, there is potential for double counting where participants have attended multiple events, and/or completed online activities via the *Have Your Say* website.
- Detailed participant demographic data was not collected or mandatory across all engagement events and activities. This may affect the weight of findings about community participation. Where appropriate, response numbers for each question are displayed or acknowledged.

What we did

Between 10 July and 10 August 2023, we collected feedback on the draft Act and Adapt Strategy.

Activities



'Have your say' website

To get the word out about the engagement process, we used Council's dedicated engagement website, 'Have your say' and included a page on this project, with information on the process, a timeline, contact details, and opportunities to engage.



Survey

This survey collected demographic details about participants, and asked for community feedback on directions within the strategy including:

- A water-sensitive city
- A greener, cooler and more liveable city
- A city with lower greenhouse gas emissions
- A city adapting and resistant to climate change
- Proposed targets to meet by 2028.



Neighbourhood pop-ups x3

A series of pop-ups around Port Phillip, designed to engage community members who may not otherwise participate. People were invited to hear about the Strategy, discuss with a staff member, and jump online and complete a survey. The pop-ups were delivered in the following locations:

- South Melbourne Market (12–2pm, 21 Jul 2023)
- Elwood Farmers Market (8am–12pm, 22 Jul 2023)
- VegOut Farmers Market (8am–12pm, 5 Aug 2023)

Participation

Participation by engagement activity

During this project, we heard from 34 participants. This included:

Activity	Number of participants	Insights / comments
Survey	30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants were more likely to complete a survey early in the weeks, with the majority of peak visit and contribution times being on Tuesday and Wednesdays.
Submissions	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submissions from three groups were received: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ PECAN ○ EcoCentre ○ CoPP Youth Advisory Group These submissions have been considered, and where appropriate, their feedback has been integrated into the following sections.

Who we heard from

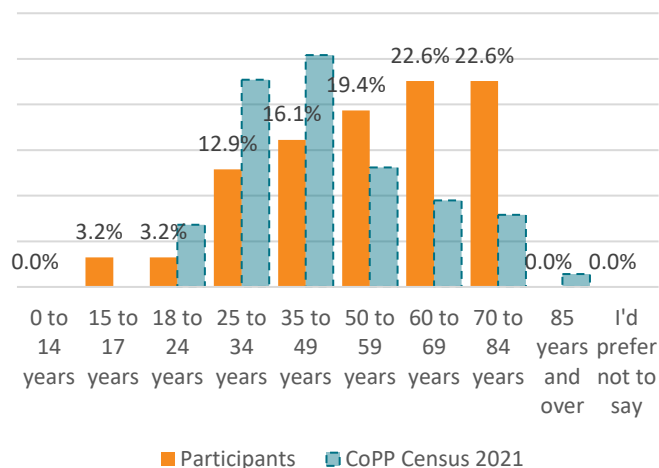
Demographics

More than 30 participants shared their feedback with us on this project. Through the online survey we collected demographic information, to help us understand who we heard from. Further details are outlined next.

Age

In total, 30 Participants provided their age through the online survey. The ages are skewed toward older community members when compared to the 2021 ABS Census data for the City of Port Phillip. **Nealy two-thirds of respondents were aged 50 and over.**

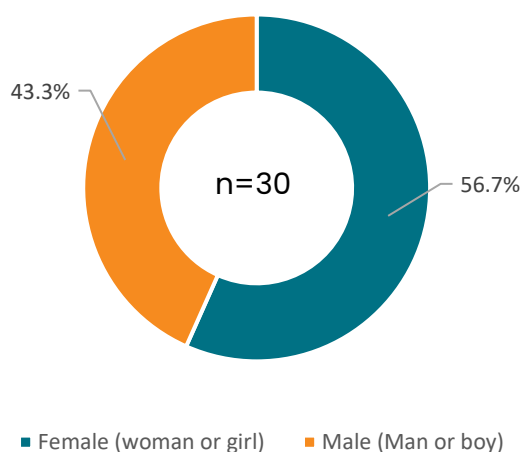
Age profiles: Participants v Census data



Gender

In total, 30 Participants provided their gender through the survey, more than half (56.7 per cent) of participants identified as female. This is slightly higher than the gender balance across the whole municipality, with 51.2 per cent

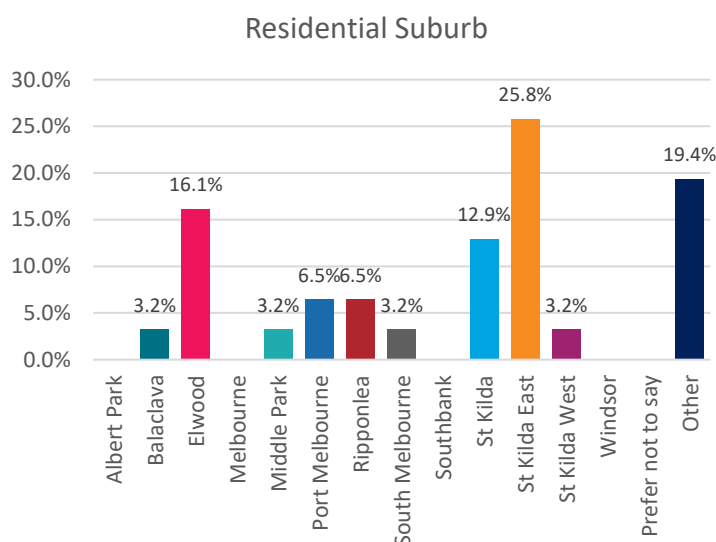
Participant Gender



of the population identifying as female.

Suburb

More than half of participants lived in St Kilda East (25 per cent), Elwood (16.1 per cent), or St Kilda (12.9 per cent).



Diversity

To help us understand the diversity of our participants, we asked if respondents identified with the following statements:

- I speak a language other than English at home (5 respondents)
- I identify as LGBTIQ+ (2 respondents)
- I consider myself financially disadvantaged (2 respondents)
- I am a person disability (1 respondent)
- I am from an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background (0 participants)

What we heard

Accelerated initiative prioritisation

Eight initiatives were identified for potential acceleration and presented to the community, who were asked to rank them in order of preference. **'Community emissions reductions' was ranked as the highest priority to the community.**

Priority rank	Initiative
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1	#23: Community emissions reduction.
2	#28: Neighbourhood batteries (Solar energy storage).
3	#16: Reducing emissions, energy use and increasing electrification in Council buildings and assets.
4	#35: Community resilience plans.
5	#30: Electric vehicle uptake.
6	#19: Accelerated transition to a lower emissions fleet.
7	#20: Energy efficient lighting upgrade.
8	#29: Library sustainability hub.

Initiative effectiveness ranking

The community were also asked to rank how effective they thought each initiative would be in achieving the outcome of the priority area. Initiatives that received the highest ranking of 'extremely effective' included:

- #22: EcoCentre redevelopment and EcoCentre programs
- #24: Industry and business emissions reductions
- #26: Sustainable solutions for apartments and low-income and rental households
- #28: Neighbourhood batteries (solar energy storage)
- #31: Sustainable transport initiatives
- #40: Emergency management planning.

Additional actions identified

Community feedback identified several additional actions. Many of the additional actions are already included in the draft Strategy as investigative pieces. These investigative pieces require further analysis and feasibility testing prior to commitment – an essential stage that cannot be skipped.

The request from community was to edit this to stimulate faster action. Following on from the investigation/trial/feasibility phase, any potential actions identified for further implementation would be considered through future Council Plan and Budget processes.

Five of the proposed actions were not included in the draft Strategy and need to be discussed by Council prior to final document approval. Many of the survey responses were aligned with these suggestions. Proposed actions include:

- 1) Develop a **community reference group** to guide the implementation of the Climate Emergency Action Plan.
- 2) Initiate a program to **broker power purchase agreements** and similar bulk purchasing projects (micro-grids, virtual power plants, solar farms etc.) for commercial and industrial users in Port Phillip to reduce emissions.
- 3) Initiate a program to **broker power purchase agreements** and similar bulk purchasing projects (solar panels, batteries) for the community.
- 4) **Partner with aged, social and community care providers to upgrade the homes** of at least 30 vulnerable community members in the first year of the Plan, an increasing thereafter – for those experiencing energy/financial hardship, with health conditions, frailty, and additional needs – to reduce the stress of high energy costs and improve health outcomes. To include energy retrofits such as insulation, lighting, draft proofing, door and window seals, fans and blinds.
- 5) Update the **Water Sensitive City Plan** to reflect whole of Council integrated water management planning.

Detailed feedback

Feedback regarding '**Many actions address council operations, but should address community actions**' was noted for the following initiatives:

- Investigation and trials for water efficiency
- Data tool
- Electrification
- Green leases

- Stormwater harvesting
- Recycled water
- Water sensitive urban design
- Permeability
- Sustainability reporting
- Council building emissions
- Council fleet emissions
- Energy efficient lighting

Feedback regarding '**Call for stronger action and implementation; and less**

investigate, trial, support was noted for the following initiatives:

- Investigation and trials for water efficiency
- Stormwater harvesting
- Water sensitive urban design
- Council fleet emissions
- Community climate resilience
- Sea level rise

Feedback regarding **‘Utilise existing NGOs (e.g., Eco Centre) to implement action’** was noted for the following initiatives:

- Recycled water
- Community water use
- Storm water harvesting
- Water sensitive urban design
- Sustainability reporting
- Community emissions reductions
- Environmental upgrade agreements
- Community batteries
- Library sustainability programs
- Community climate resilience
- Flood awareness
- Coastal vulnerability
- Sea level rise

Feedback regarding **‘Increase community engagement’** was noted for the following initiatives:

- Community water use
- Fishermans bend – water
- Recycled water
- Sustainability for apartments
- ESD
- Community batteries
- Library sustainability programs
- Community climate resilience

- Coastal vulnerability
- Emergency management planning

Feedback regarding **‘More detail required to understand the initiatives’** was noted for the following initiatives:

- Investigation and trials for water efficiency
- Planning and developments
- Stormwater harvesting
- Community water use
- Fishermans bend – water
- Recycled water
- Water sensitive urban design
- Permeability
- Green leases
- Carbon offset policy
- Community emissions reductions
- Business emissions reductions
- Environmental upgrade agreements
- Sustainability for apartments
- Community batteries
- Sustainable transport
- Community climate resilience
- Cool spaces strategy
- Flood awareness
- Coastal vulnerability
- Sea level rise

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- Water sensitive urban design
- Permeability
- Green leases
- Carbon offset policy
- Community emissions reductions
- Business emissions reductions
- Environmental upgrade agreements
- Sustainability for apartments
- Community batteries
- Sustainable transport
- Community climate resilience
- Cool spaces strategy
- Flood awareness
- Coastal vulnerability
- Sea level rise

Feedback regarding **'Further support for most vulnerable members of community'** was noted for the following initiatives:

- Community water use
- South Melbourne Market
- Sustainability for apartments
- Community batteries
- Electric vehicle uptake
- Community climate resilience

- Flood awareness

Additional comments:

- Targets need to include a time frame
- Focus on greening and open spaces
- Focus on active transport

Editorial changes:

- Updated numbers for EcoCentre program attendance
- Updated number of initiatives within Strategy
- Grammar changes throughout
- Include 'flood' within 'A water sensitive city' introduction
- WSUD initiative description updated to reflect implementation of additional opportunities
- 'NA' included for indicators in the 'target 2028' section, as there is no target for an indicator
- Initiative 35 combined with initiative 32 due to similarities
- Drainage infrastructure renames Stormwater infrastructure
- Heatwave Sub Plans added to Emergency Management Planning

Next steps

How this report will be used

Thank you to everyone who provided their feedback. This report, and the underlying feedback will be used by the project team and the designers to inform the changes to the draft strategy.

The report will also be used to share with Council how the engagement process went, and what changes (if any) have been made as a result of the engagement process.

