

Eureka Hall Upgrade

Engagement Summary 2026

Proudly working
with and for
our community

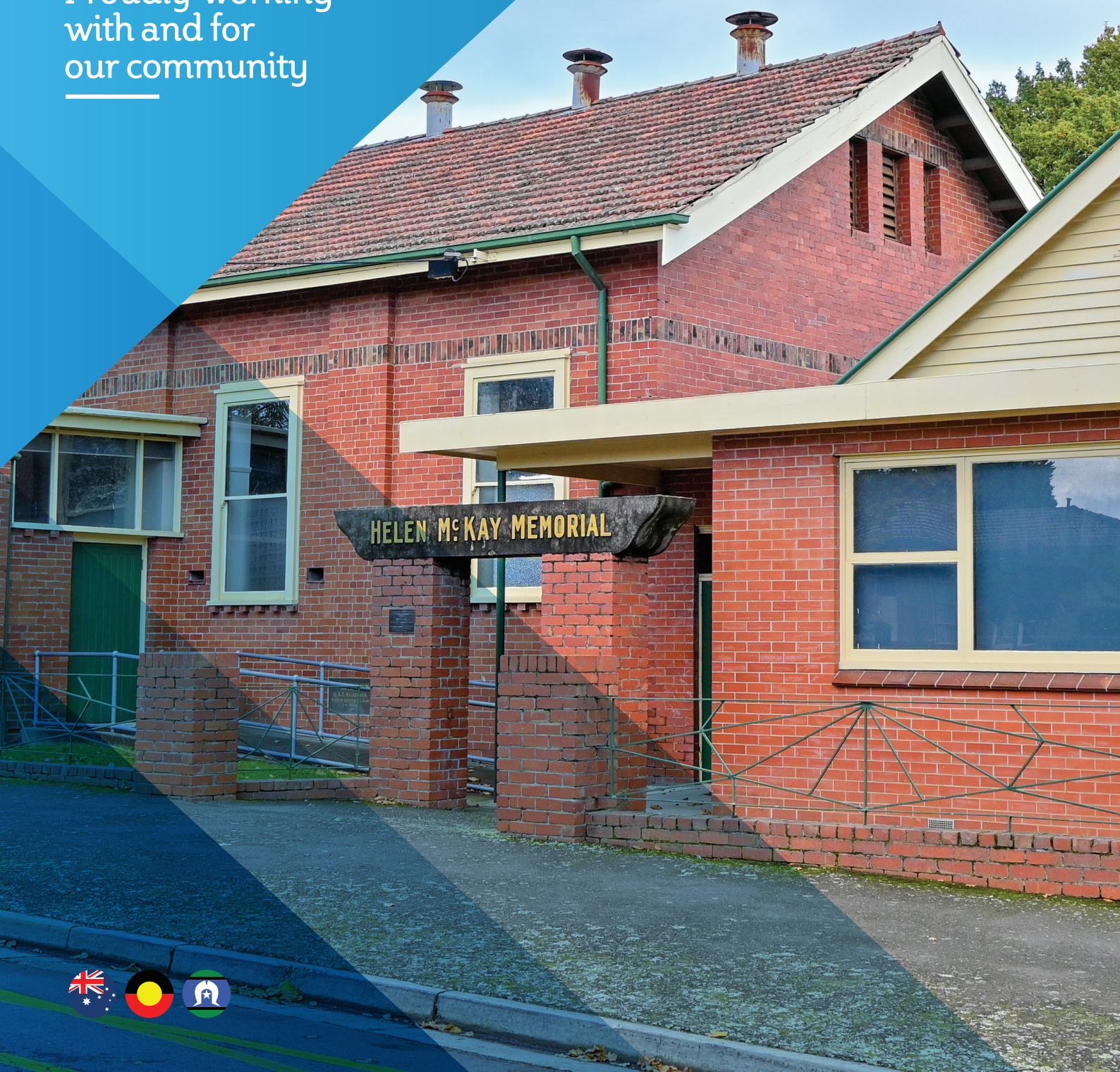


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The City of Ballarat acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land we live and work on, the Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung Peoples, and recognises their continuing connection to the land and waterways.

We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and extend this to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

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Executive Summary

The Eureka Hall upgrade project represents an opportunity to invest in and improved a well-loved community facility in a place of national, state and local heritage significance.

The City of Ballarat, in collaboration with the Eureka Stockade Memorial Park Committee, is planning upgrades to the Eureka Hall to improve accessibility, safety, comfort and functionality for community use. Draft designs have been prepared in response to building condition reports, accessibility audits and feedback from facility managers and regular users.

Engagement

The purpose of the Eureka Hall engagement was to seek community and stakeholder feedback on proposed upgrades to the hall, including current experiences of the facility, priorities for improvement and feedback on the draft floor plans, so that community needs and expectations can inform the next stage of design development and future funding advocacy.

Community engagement included in-person drop-in sessions, an online survey and project information through the MySay page. In total, 10 people attended drop-in sessions, 75 people completed the online survey, and the MySay page received 852 visitors. Engagement was supported by social media, a media release, radio promotion, public noticeboard information, newsletter, postcards to residents and emails to current and former hall hirers.

Key findings from engagement

Survey responses and drop-in feedback provide useful insights into community priorities, experiences and concerns, particularly from people who use, visit or have an interest in Eureka Hall. Feedback confirmed that the hall is valued as a local community facility and event space, while also highlighting the need for improvement. The most frequently identified priorities for future upgrades were internal toilets, accessibility upgrades, improved heating and cooling, kitchen improvements, storage, safety and technology upgrades.

Overall, feedback on the draft floor plans was supportive. Of the respondents who provided comments, many expressed support for the proposed concept designs and recognised the potential for the upgrades to improve the hall's usability and provide benefits for the community. Key considerations raised when providing feedback on the floor plans included ensuring it delivered on accessibility improvements, internal toilets, maintaining the heritage character of the hall, improving connections to surrounding gardens and paths, and refining the kitchen, entry and storage arrangements. The opportunity for artwork to be included in the upgraded facility that captures the history of the hall and precinct was also identified.

Next steps

Next steps include engaging a consultant to undertake a heritage impact assessment report and continuing to advocate for external funding for detailed designs and construction. Once funding is secured detailed designs will be developed using insights from this engagement. Draft detailed designs will be shared with community for feedback followed by submission to Heritage Victoria. Once all approvals are in place and funding secured construction of the upgrades will occur.

Introduction

This report summarises community and stakeholder engagement on the proposed Eureka Hall upgrade. It outlines how engagement was promoted, who participated, the main themes raised through the survey and drop-in sessions, and how feedback will inform future design development, funding advocacy and approvals.

About the project

Eureka Hall is located within the Eureka Stockade Gardens, a place of national, state and local heritage significance.

The building includes the 1918 former Water Commission weatherboard hall, which was relocated to the site, and the purpose-built 1926 brick hall. The 1953 brick memorial gates outside the hall are also significant.

The City of Ballarat, in collaboration with the Eureka Stockade Memorial Park Committee (the volunteer group that helps oversee and manage the hall), is planning upgrades to the Eureka Hall. Draft designs have been developed in response to building condition reports, accessibility requirements, and issues identified by regular users.

What upgrades are planned?

The proposed upgrades aim to improve the accessibility, safety, comfort and overall use of the facility for the community and include:

- Improving accessibility and making the hall Disability Discrimination Act compliant.
- New internal toilets.
- Improved storage.
- Kitchen upgrades.
- Replacement of sections of the roof.
- Upgraded heating and cooling.
- New compliant external public toilets, replacing the old toilet block.

Engagement Process

The purpose of the Eureka Hall engagement was to seek community and stakeholder feedback on proposed upgrades to the hall, including current experiences of the facility, priorities for improvement and feedback on the draft floor plans, so that community needs and expectations can inform the next stage of design development and future funding advocacy.



Promotional activities

- Social media post, 2 June.
- Boosted social media post.
- Media release, 2 June.
- Radio promotion, 1 June.
- Public noticeboard information, 5 June.
- CEO newsletter, 15 June.



Mailouts

- 150 postcards distributed to local residents and businesses.
- Emails sent to current and former hall hirers.



Key stakeholders

- Eureka Stockade Memorial Park Committee and key internal stakeholders informed the development of concept designs through 2025–2026.



Engagement methods

In person drop-in sessions were held at the Eureka Hall for community members to view the draft floorplans, speak with a project team member and provide their feedback.

Three sessions were held at different times, and on different days of the week:

- Wednesday 10 June 12.30pm – 2pm
- Thursday 18 June 9am – 10.30am
- Tuesday 23 June 4pm to 5.30pm

An online survey was available on the MySay Page from 1 June to 30 June 2026 for community members to provide their feedback on draft floorplans.

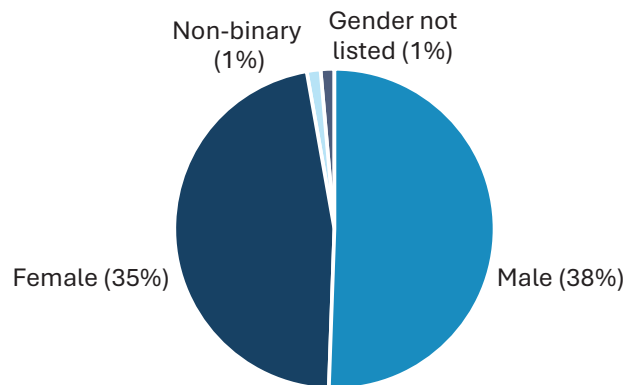
Who we heard from

Audience and reach

- 10 people attended in-person drop-in sessions.
- 75 people completed the online survey.
- 7 community members provided feedback via social media
- 852 visitors accessed the MySay page.

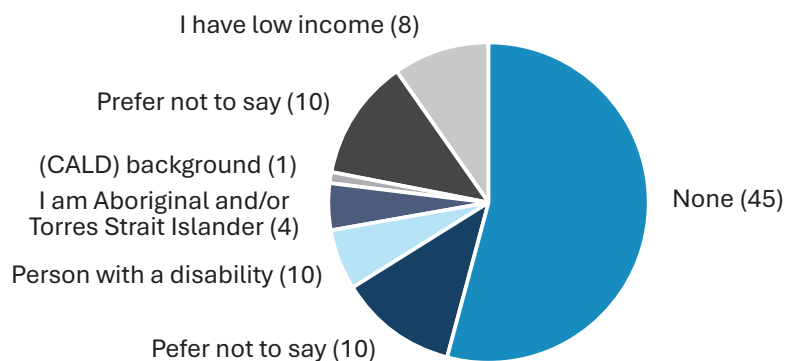
Genders

The survey attracted responses from a broad cross-section of the community: 38 male respondents, 35 female respondents, one non-binary respondent and one person who preferred not to say. The largest age group was 46–55 years, representing 29% of respondents.



Identities

Most respondents, 61%, selected “none of the above”, indicating they did not identify with any of the specific diversity characteristics listed. Among the listed diversity categories, the most common response was “I am a person with a disability”, selected by 13% of respondents, or 10 people. As accessibility upgrades are a key feature of this project, it was important to hear from people who may experience accessibility barriers.



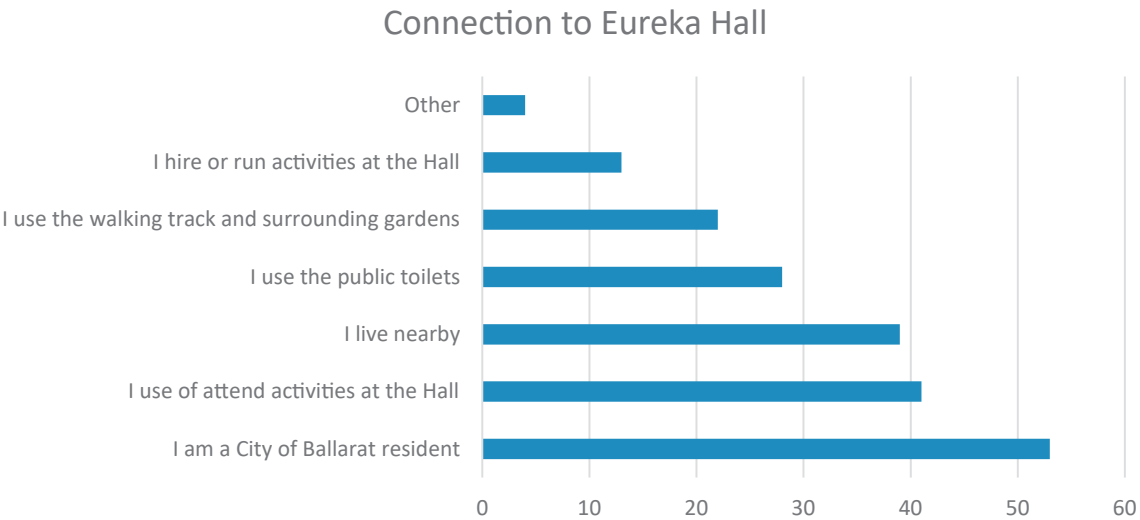
Survey outcomes

This section summarises survey responses about community connection to, and experience of, Eureka Hall. It also identifies the most important priorities for future upgrades and presents feedback on the draft floor plan.

Connection to, and experience of, Eureka Hall

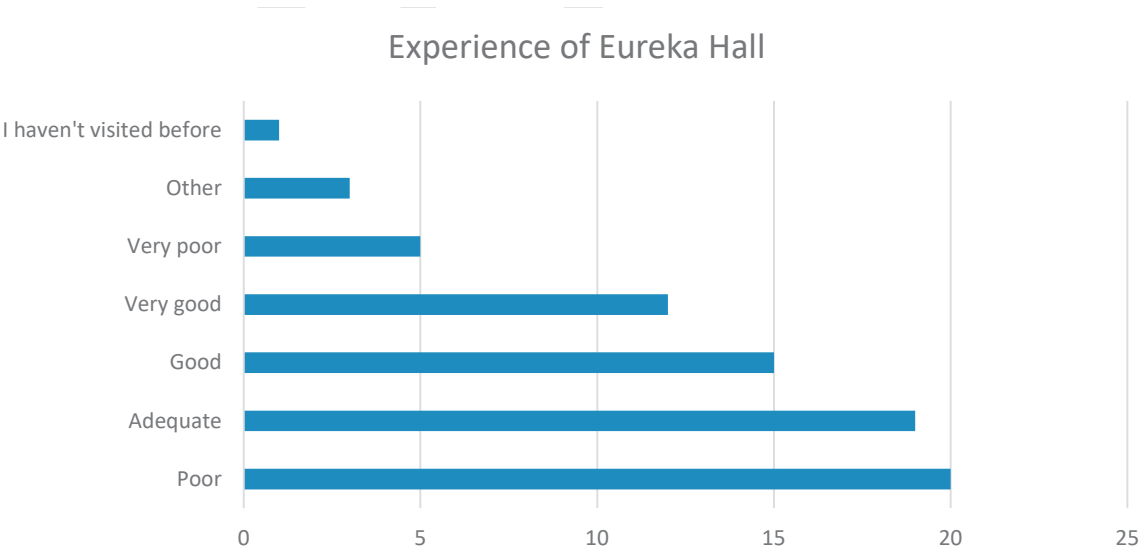
Question 1: What best describes your connection to the Eureka Hall? (select all that apply)

City of Ballarat residents (53), regular activity attendees (41) and local residents (39) form the largest groups.



Question 2: How would you rate your experience of the Eureka Hall overall?

Of the 75 respondents 25 (33%) ranked their experience with the Hall as poor or very poor, with 25% (19) describing their experience as adequate. Only 16% (12) of respondents ranked their experience as very good.



Survey outcomes

Question 3: What influenced your rating of the Eureka Hall?

This open ended question was included to gain further insights into what influenced rankings of Eureka Hall. The highest ranked response was improvements required followed by need for internal toilets, function but old and accessibility concerns.

Themes also emerged in the analysis. Respondents who ranked their experience poorly were most often influenced by the condition of the facility, while more positive responses tended to relate to events, activities and functions people had attended at the hall.

For respondents who ranked their experience as very poor or poor, the most common theme related to the state of the current facility: outdated, in need of an upgrade, run down, issues with toilets and lack of accessibility.

- ***“When I have used it, there are significant issues that make the experience unpleasant and unsafe.”***
- ***“Such a shame that nothing has been done to the hall for many years. The East is a forgotten suburb.”***
- ***“It is in desperate need of updating and has potential to be a real asset for the community.”***
- ***“Poor access and sharing of public toilets creates security issues, especially for evening/ night-time functions.”***

Respondents who ranked their experience as adequate identified opportunities for improvement.

- ***“The facilities are outdated and lack maintenance. They serve a purpose; however, they need to be brought into the 21st century.”***
- ***“It’s such an iconic location with hundreds of visitors a year. Keeping the facilities clean and modern is a no-brainer.”***

For respondents who rated the facility good or very good, the most common theme related to the functions, events or activities they attend at the hall.

- ***“Attending events at the hall.”***
- ***“It’s a nice space for gatherings.”***
- ***“We love the floor as we conduct dance classes.”***

Most important improvements for future upgrades

Question 4: What are the most important improvements for you to see as part of a future upgrade?

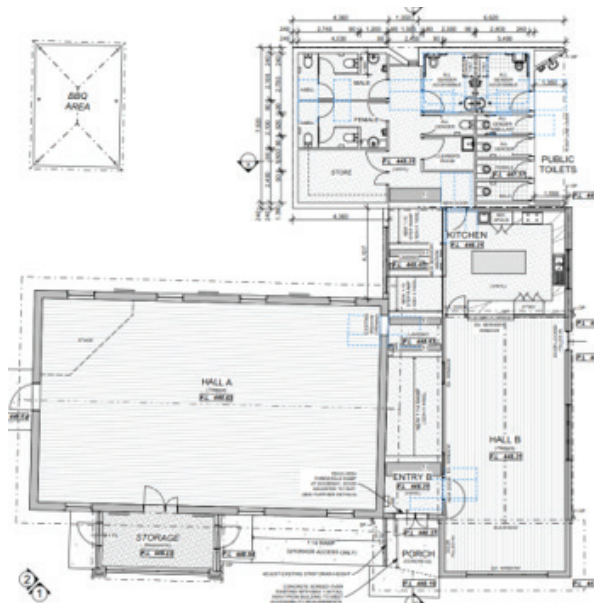
This was a short answer question. The most important improvements identified were internal toilets (48 responses) and accessibility upgrades (29 responses). Responses validate the project scope, as all key inclusions in the upgrade were identified by the community as important priorities for future upgrades.

- ***“Toilets are a must.”***
- ***“I love the idea of having toilets within the premises, especially during evening functions. Having children use the public toilets has been a concern.”***

One respondent identified that no upgrades were necessary.

Survey outcomes

Feedback on draft floor plans



Question 5: Draft floor plans have been developed for the Eureka Hall upgrade. Do you have any comments or suggestions?

This was a short answer question which 49 people responded to, 48 responses were supportive of the current concept designs. 1 respondent identified the works as not necessary.

Feedback received

Feedback that included suggestions for improvement identified;

- Connections to gardens and consideration of the path network as part of the upgrade
- Changes to kitchen layout and increase in size
- Entry improvements
- Larger expansion, the hall is not large enough and there are not enough community use rooms.
- Mural for Eureka
- Level flooring
- Connection to park and wider precinct.

Additionally, conversations with community members at the drop-in sessions also identified the following areas for consideration as part of the upgrade;

- The opportunity for artworks to be included in the new facility. The Eureka Stockade Memorial Park Committee have a number of old photographs and artwork. Considering how to display these in an upgraded facility was identified as an opportunity.
- Connections to outdoor BBQ areas, consideration of increasing size of outdoor shelters.

Survey outcomes

Feedback received on items that are already included in scope

Fourteen respondents provided feedback on items that are included in the proposed upgrades

- Indoor toilets for the Hall
- Accessibility improvements, ramps to and throughout the building
- Keep the heritage features
- Retention of wooden floors within the existing hall A
- Hall A exit door needs to remain double door
- Improvements to heating and cooling – hard to tell from a floorplan
- Keep stage in current location
- Additional storage

Feedback demonstrating support for the project

23 respondents included affirmations of support for the design, with no suggestions for changes.

- ***“Massive improvement and impact on the community.”***
- ***“Greatly improves the space overall.”***
- ***“This is a must-do upgrade needed at a venue that is so close to our Ballarat heritage and hearts. The history in this area is what we are; it should become the Mecca. It already has great features and is looked after well. By upgrading this iconic building, it will bring more people.”***

Feedback that is out of scope

Three respondents identified the need to keep the facility affordable once works are complete.

- ***“Concern that overinvestment could necessitate an increase in fees.”***

Feedback for improvements to technology and internet connection were also received from a number of respondents. Whilst both these items are out of scope of this project this feedback will be shared with the management committee.

How feedback will be used

Responses have been compared to the project scope and provide affirmation that the project scope is a reflection of community needs.

Items that were raised that were not included in the draft floorplan or project scope will be considered in the next stage of design development, once budget is secured for this element of the project.

Feedback on items out of scope of this upgrade will be shared with the Eureka Stockade Memorial Park Committee.

Next steps

1. Progress planning work, including engaging a consultant to complete a heritage impact assessment.
2. Continue to advocate for funding for this project.
3. Once funding received develop detailed designs for the upgrade. The insights gathered from this engagement will inform the development of draft designs.
4. Provide community and key stakeholders the opportunity to provide feedback on detailed designs. This stage will also demonstrate how community feedback has informed the development of designs.
5. Undertake planning and heritage approval processes
6. Construction (subject to securing funding).



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All information correct at time of publication.
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