

Ballarat Council Planning Community Engagement Strategic Engagement Plan



Context

The Community Vision 2021-2031 was set down four years ago by community and envisions Ballarat as Victoria's heritage city, leading the way as sustainable, innovative, and inclusive. This vision emphasises ecologically sound neighbourhoods, access to parks and gardens, community facilities, and education for all ages. It highlights the values of diversity, ensuring everyone can participate fully in life, and approaching challenges with creativity and innovation.

Council is committed to continuing to deliver on this vision and making Ballarat an even greater place to live, work and play. Our current strategies range from planning for sustainable urban growth to improving waste management, from upgrading infrastructure to fostering an inclusive community. The challenge lies in balancing limited Council resources and delivering on the services that the community wants and needs whilst maintaining and planning for future assets.

The City of Ballarat is renewing its strategic plans for the next four years. We need to understand how best to meet this challenge, so we are engaging with Council Staff, Councillors and residents through surveys, workshops, community pop up sessions and a ThinkTank with residents to gather input and ensure our plans reflect the community's priorities.



Remit

The future of Ballarat is set for significant growth, with the population projected to increase and change in age and diversity. The Community Vision sets out our aspirations for Ballarat's future, however we must ensure we are supporting the Ballarat we know today, while planning for the changing needs of our community.

What should Council do to prioritise and balance our services, infrastructure, and finances to best support our community?



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Success Objectives

Rational objectives (the outputs and tangible things)

Information about community perspectives and needs, as well as council successes and challenges.

A reviewed Community Vision that makes sure the themes and focus areas align with future needs.

Recommendations from the ThinkTank for Council's strategic plans, informed by broad community and council insights.

Scope

Negotiables



- **Identify service priorities and preferences** from the perspective of residents and community members.
- **Review the Community Vision** and make sure it aligns with current community needs and aspirations.
- **Develop recommendations to Council** to respond to Council's core challenges in preparing the next Council Plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, Asset Plan and Financial Plan (e.g., cost-effectiveness, impact on community well-being).

Non-negotiables



- Council actions that have already been endorsed and are in progress.
- The Community Vision review is a check-in on the current vision, rather than the development of a new one.
- The kinds of core services to be delivered.
- Operational parameters, e.g. staffing levels.
- Council income and funding.
- Statutory requirements and industry standards.



Level of Influence and promise

Wider Community Engagement

The highest level of engagement being sought through the wider community engagement is

CONSULT

(International Association for Public Participation Engagement Spectrum).



The City of Ballarat's promise to the wider community:

- Keep you informed.
- Listen to what you say.
- Acknowledge your concerns and priorities.
- Report back on what we have heard.
- Identify where your input influenced the deliberative process and Council planning.

ThinkTank

The highest level of engagement being sought through this ThinkTank deliberative is

INVOLVE

(International Association for Public Participation Engagement Spectrum).



The City of Ballarat's promise to the ThinkTank:

- Listen to what you say.
- Provide clear information that builds your knowledge of Council services.
- Work to understand your concerns and priorities.
- Report back on what we have heard.
- Ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the Council Plan, Asset Plan, and Financial Plan.
- Identify where your recommendations have influenced the Council's strategic documents and service decisions.
- Identify where we can't incorporate a recommendation and clearly explain why.
- Provide transparent, annual progress updates during implementation.

Experiential objectives (the engagement and experience)

Trust and Inclusion: Participants feel proud, confident, and included, with trust in the Council's genuine engagement process.

Heard and Valued: Ensure participants feel heard, understood, and valued, and their contributions are meaningful.

Community Connection: Strengthen participants' sense of place and connection to the local community, fostering a sense of partnership with the Council.

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Roadmap for engagement

