Our Future
Have your Say

Stage one community engagement findings

June 2017

www.geelongaustralia.com.au
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Executive summary

*Our Future* is an ambitious project that will describe a 30-year community vision for Greater Geelong.

Between August 2016 and February 2017, *Our Future* conducted a series of workshops and community events. 10,097 people told us about the aspects of Greater Geelong important to them, their vision for the future and how the region could improve.

We asked people what they **valued** most about our region, and we categorised their responses into nine themes.

- Close to city, coast and rural areas (22.9%)
- A relaxed lifestyle (16.5%)
- Outdoor recreation opportunities (14.7%)
- Access to quality education and health services (11.7%)
- The Geelong Football Club (8.1%)
- Variety of activities, entertainment and events (7.2%)
- Shopping and community facilities (7.0%)
- The natural environment (6.8%)
- A sense of community (5.3%)

In 3,098 responses, people rated Greater Geelong against the five elements of a successful global community: Prosperity, Connectivity, Designed for people, Sustainability and resilience, and Creativity. They told us that our region is already halfway along the path to success. There is a journey ahead, but we have a solid foundation to prepare for it.

People who lived, worked in or visited Greater Geelong, told us about their long-term vision for our region in 5,698 responses.

Visions were uploaded directly to the *Our Future* website giving other members of our community the opportunity to view and vote on which ones they 'liked'. The people whose lives are most closely linked with our region’s future, Greater Geelong’s children, also presented us with 195 drawings telling the story of their unique visions for our region.

The most common themes in the **visions** were:

- A connected, inclusive and healthy community (9.5%)
- Sustainable urban growth (8.7%)
- Access to fast and connected local, regional and international transport systems (8.7%)
- A great place to live, work and visit (8.2%)
- Leaders in innovation, research and education (7.9%)
A place we are proud to call home (7.6%)
Local employment, health, education and housing opportunities (7.0%)
A green Geelong (6.6%)
A world class visitor destination (6.6%)
A safe community (6.1%)
A revitalised and activated Central Business District (6.0%)
Social equity and participation (6.0%)
Good civic leadership (6.0%)
Developing outdoor community places and spaces (5.1%)

People also had the opportunity to tell us how life in Greater Geelong could be improved. Their responses resulted in 18 community-generated ideas about **ways to improve** our region.

- Increase community knowledge of the local impacts of climate change
- Encourage sustainable solutions
- Set and achieve environmental targets and preserve our natural environments
- Celebrate our local Wadawurrung culture and protect our heritage spaces
- Invest in our modern culture, creative industries and public art
- Redevelop our vacant buildings and under-utilised precincts
- World-class internet infrastructure, coverage and access for everybody
- Better connected local, regional and international transport options
- Connect residents with employment, education, retail precincts and each other
- Develop better cycling and walking routes between our suburbs
- Promote business and industry diversity
- Strengthen our identity as a tourist destination
- Education that is linked to employment opportunities
- Support the most vulnerable members of our community
- Multi-purpose community infrastructure
- Balance our built and natural environments
- Develop safe community environments
- Provide green spaces within and between urban areas

The next stage of the *Our Future* project, *Time to Decide*, involved our community choosing its priorities from the ideas it has generated.

Through listening to our community’s ideas about what is important to the future of Greater Geelong, we also explored and developed different scenarios that will consider possible futures for Greater Geelong in 30 years’ time.

The most appropriate future for the Greater Geelong region was determined by Greater Geelong community members through discussion and voting at the *Our Future* Assembly, on Saturday 6 May 2017.
1. Introduction

The purpose of Our Future is to describe a 30-year community vision for Greater Geelong. By thinking forward to develop a picture of what Greater Geelong should be in 30 years, Our Future will address our current challenges and highlight future opportunities.

The Our Future vision will be the key resource for the incoming City of Greater Geelong Council when it formulates its next four year Council Plan, and for all other stakeholders planning initiatives for our region.

Forming the vision has involved, and will continue to involve, significant community engagement to harness the collective ideas and strength of the Geelong community. During the initial engagement stage 10,097 members of our community have had their say about the aspects of Greater Geelong that are important to them and how they would like to see our region grow.

In this report we present the results of a five-month discussion with our community conducted between August 2016 and February 2017. Their feedback and ideas will be refined and prioritised through community workshops and, through a citizen and stakeholder assembly, preferred future scenarios will be determined.

Sharing information about local and global trends that could impact our region has been a crucial part of our discussions with the Greater Geelong community. Conversations involved the following five elements of successful communities:

- **Connected** - locally, regionally, nationally and internationally through paths, roads and public transport infrastructure, social networks and communication technologies
- **Prosperous** - strong and diverse businesses and employment across all community groups
- **Creative** - innovative, entertaining and vibrant
- **Sustainable and resilient** - environmentally, economically and socially
- **Designed for people** - easy and safe for all community groups to access the services, amenities and comfort they need.

Communities need to plan for shifts in technology, demographics, the economy and climate change. Together we can turn global shifts into opportunities by being connected, creative, people-oriented in design, prosperous, as well as being sustainable and resilient. To be successful over the next 30 years we will have to possess and develop all these attributes.

Collaborations between Our Future and the region’s key business, organisational stakeholders and community leaders have supplemented our community discussions, strengthened local networks across our region, and increased knowledge about Greater Geelong’s future.
Our Future is being assisted by partner organisations including:

- Committee for Geelong
- Geelong Chamber of Commerce
- Deakin University
- G21 Geelong Regional Alliance
- Tourism Greater Geelong and the Bellarine
- Give Where You Live
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
- Geelong Environment Council
- Geelong Football Club
- Regional Development Victoria
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Geelong Sustainability Group
- The Gordon
- G21 Agribusiness Forum
- National Trust of Australia
- Urban Development Institute of Australia

We would also like to acknowledge the invaluable contribution of Mr Bernie Kruger who provided assistance with the analysis of the data collected throughout this stage of the Our Future project.

Our Future workshops, event appearances, meetings and school visits have provided diverse and exciting opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to have meaningful input into the Our Future vision, by rating Greater Geelong against the five elements of successful communities and by sharing experiences and ideas.

The Greater Geelong community has told us about what it thinks our region should be like 30 years from now. The outcome is a series of ideas about how to improve Greater Geelong.

The Our Future vision will identify a clear future direction that will guide all levels of government to support future projects in the region, and provide a clearer sense of identity for Greater Geelong.
Our Future

Five elements of successful cities and the four global influences impacting Greater Geelong

- Technological Developments
- Successful Community Indicators
  - Prosperous
  - Connected
  - Creative
  - Designed for People
  - Sustainable and Resilient
- Climate Change
- Demographic Change
- Global Economic Uncertainty
2. Stage 1 – Have your Say

We have talked to people from our community in ways they are most comfortable with and within environments they are familiar with, including workshops, surveys and vox pops at a wide range of community events. These discussions were designed to provide us with insight, and ensure a good experience for all participants. In addition to the activities conducted by Our Future, we also received feedback from community groups conducting their own activities, submissions from individuals and surveys.

Discussions posed a range of questions, including:

- What do people value about our region?
- How do you rate Greater Geelong against the five indicators of a successful community?
- Based on how we are currently performing, what do we need to do to close the gaps?
- What could Greater Geelong look like in 30 years and how we might get there?
About the participants

Between August 2016 and the middle of February 2017 we spoke to a total of 10,097 members of our community including residents, businesses and visitors. This is a statistically sound sample size to inform decision-making, and there is only a very small chance (1.0 per cent) that the responses we received are not representative of the views held by our whole community.

Gender

Of those who provided information about their gender, 55.9 per cent were female, 43.8 per cent were male and 0.3 per cent identified as other than male or female.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender cohort</th>
<th>id profile (%)</th>
<th>Our Future (%)</th>
<th>Points difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>-5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compared to the gender breakdown of Greater Geelong residents from the 2011 Census of Population and Housing, the known proportion of female participants in Our Future is approximately five percentage points higher while the known proportion of male participants is approximately five percentage points lower.

The 2011 Census did not include an option for people who identify their gender as other than male or female.
Age

The age ranges of Our Future Stage 1 participants (who told us their age) is provided below:

Comparing the known ages of Our Future respondents to the age structure of residents within Greater Geelong, the following age groups had a higher representation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age cohort</th>
<th>Id profile (%)</th>
<th>Our Future (%)</th>
<th>Points higher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-49</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-84</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The age groups with lower representation or the same in Our Future include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age cohort</th>
<th>Id profile (%)</th>
<th>Our Future (%)</th>
<th>Points lower</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 and over</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Of those that told us the suburb that they resided in, the majority (93%) were residents of Greater Geelong.

City of Greater Geelong respondents represented the following 55 suburbs:

- **Highton** (9.5%)
- **Belmont** (7.3%)
- **Ocean Grove** (7.0%)
- **Geelong** (6.7%)
- **Grovedale** (6.6%)
- **Newtown** (4.9%)
- **Geelong West** (4.5%)
- **Corio** (3.7%)
- **East Geelong** (3.6%)
- **Lara** (3.5%)
- **Leopold** (3.1%)
- **Waurn Ponds** (2.9%)
- **Barwon Heads, Clifton Springs** (2.3%)

- **Drysdale, Hamlyn Heights** (2.0%)
- **Manifold Heights, Armstrong Creek** (1.7%)
- **Bell Post Hill, Herne Hill, Portarlington, St Albans Park** (1.6%)
- **Newcomb** (1.5%)
- **Bell Park, Norlane** (1.3%)
- **Curlew, Lovely Banks, St Leonards, Wandana Heights** (0.9%)
- **Batesford, Wallington, North Geelong, Whittington** (0.8%)
- **Mount Duneed, Point Lonsdale** (0.7%)
- **Rippleside, South Geelong, Fyansford** (0.6%)
- **Thomson** (0.5%)
- **Anakie, Ceres, Indented Head, Moolap** (0.4%)
- **Avalon, Drumcondra, Marshall** (0.3%)
- **Charlemont, Connewarre, Marcus Hill, Bellarine, Breakwater, Breamlea, Little River, Modewarre, North Shore** (0.1%)
Length of residency

Half of the Greater Geelong residents were long-term residents and had lived in the region for at least 20 years.

Length of residency - Our Future participants

- More than 20 years: 50%
- 6 – 10 years: 12%
- 2 – 5 years: 7%
- Up to 2 years: 6%
- Not specified: 7%
- 11 – 20 years: 18%
3. Data analysis

Data from all our sources were digitised and merged to create a master dataset using the City of Greater Geelong's 'Engage' platform.

‘R’ software was used by an independent data scientist to produce frequency counts and Topic Modelling (TM) outputs from the data collected.

Frequency counts are used to determine the number of times particular words appear and TM was used to highlight recurring patterns and group words (i.e. create a topic) that best represented the information collected.

While frequency counts were used in the Stage 1 interim report to identify commonly used words and themes for what people valued and vision statements, TM was used in the final report to connect words with similar meanings and distinguish between uses of words with multiple meanings.

Additionally, this report considered a larger data set than that of the interim report.

In preparing this report, every attempt has been made to categorise the themes logically and impartially.
4. What does our community value about Greater Geelong?

One of the questions that was posed at workshops and local community events was ‘what do people value about our region?’.

Below is a word cloud that highlights the most common words people used when describing what they most valued or saw as the strengths of Greater Geelong.
Topic Modelling was used to determine the following nine key themes:

1. Close to city, coast and rural areas (22.9%)
2. A relaxed lifestyle (16.5%)
3. Outdoor recreation opportunities (14.7%)
4. Access to quality education and health services (11.7%)
5. The Geelong Football Club (8.1%)
6. Variety of activities, entertainment and events (7.2%)
7. Shopping and community facilities (7.0%)
8. The natural environment (6.8%)
9. A sense of community (5.3%)

Things we value about or think are strengths of Greater Geelong
Close to city, coast and rural areas (22.9%)

While many people told us that they valued Greater Geelong’s proximity and accessibility to Melbourne, they also loved the ability to easily access the region’s many natural assets including our beaches, coastline and bay, bushland and country/rural settings, the Waterfront, Eastern Beach, the Bellarine Peninsula and the You Yangs. The Otways, Great Ocean Road and the Surf Coast, all outside our municipality, were also valued.

‘The fact you can go from bush to farmland to city to beach in a 20 min drive. We have everything.’
‘It’s diverse and has a mix of country and city, seaside and farm life. A bit of all worlds.’
‘The proximity to coast and Melbourne and nature.’

A relaxed lifestyle (16.5%)

Although the majority of the themes relate to lifestyle, people talked about Greater Geelong being large enough to be vibrant, but small enough to be a connected community. It retains a small town feel that’s not too crowded and congested but possesses the advantages of a larger city. References to a slower, more relaxed pace of life were also made.

‘Slower pace than Melbourne. Relaxed lifestyle.’
‘It’s a city but more of a relaxed vibe.’
‘City but small enough that it’s easily accessible.’

Outdoor recreation opportunities (14.7%)

The outdoor recreational choices available within the region were highly valued, especially walking and cycling tracks, parks and gardens, the Waterfront, Botanic Gardens, Eastern Beach and Barwon River. Also mentioned were playgrounds, skate parks and the Geelong Library and Heritage Centre.

‘Public facilities: library / parks / recreation facilities.’
‘Open space parks and recreation.’

Access to health, education, employment and housing options (11.7%)

When people spoke about education and health they told us that they valued the availability of infrastructure, local facilities and services available in Greater Geelong. Employment and job opportunities as well as relative housing affordability were also things that were highly valued.
‘Access to education schools, uni, hospitals.’

‘... Geelong CBD has everything we need (like employment, education, great university and hospitals) - Offers affordability (housing, activities) - Great education opportunity primary- secondary- Deakin.’

**Geelong Football Club (8.1%)**

As home to the Geelong Football Club, many mentioned ‘the Cats’ as something they most valued.

‘Coming to watch Geelong football club play their games.’

‘The Geelong football club, big town but not overcrowded.’

‘Our own Football club.’

**Variety of activities, entertainment and events (7.2%)**

From local festivals and markets to major events, the diverse range of community activities and entertainment options was an important aspect of life in Greater Geelong. People especially valued the ability to access ‘family-friendly’ events, including Festival of Sails, Gala Day, SKAART, Geelong After Dark, Pako Festa, Cadel Evans Road Race, Geelong Revival and Christmas activities (the Floating Christmas Tree, Carols By Candlelight).

‘Varied community entertainment.’

‘Events - cycling, day on the green, festival of sails.’

‘Friendly atmosphere. Community events like markets. Close proximity to beaches.’

‘The entertainment, beaches, shops, close to Melbourne. Weekend activities.’

**Shopping and community facilities (7.0%)**

People told us that access to shops and shopping centres, support services and community facilities and infrastructure were all valuable. Mentions of community infrastructure included libraries, sporting / leisure centres and health care / hospitals.

‘The facilities such as the library!’

‘Going into town and going shopping.’

‘I appreciate the easy access to the shopping centres.’
The natural environment (6.8%)

Many people valued Greater Geelong’s diverse and natural environment, including our clean beaches and air, nature reserves, open spaces, parks and the You Yangs, the rivers, sea, beaches and foreshore.

‘Beautiful surrounding environment.’
‘The natural environment; remnant bushland. Rivers, surf and bay side beaches.’
‘The beaches, natural spaces that we can enjoy.’

A sense of community (5.3%)

People said they valued Greater Geelong’s sense of community and identity, and told us that they connected with our region’s size, its general ‘vibe’ and community spirit, and its family-friendly lifestyle.

‘Keep the sense of community.’
‘Greater sense of community, a city centre that I can explore and have dinner in and not have to worry about parking. Affordable spaces for business to rent to encourage a diverse shopping retail experience.’
‘Events create sense of community. Offerings of various and different events.’
5. Current performance of Greater Geelong

In 3,098 individual responses, people from our community told us how Greater Geelong is performing, out of a possible of 10, against the five elements of a successful global community. This feedback was provided in a variety of formats including community workshops, postal surveys and online surveys.
Prosperity

Prosperity received a mean community rating of 4.66 from a possible 10.

People told us how they rated prosperity depended on their individual experiences and how they defined prosperity. Some people linked prosperity with equity within the region, that is the difference in circumstances between most the vulnerable members of our community and those that might be viewed as ‘better-off’. Other people associated prosperity with employment and career diversity, business opportunities and industry growth.

Connectivity

Connectivity received a mean community rating of 4.64 from a possible 10.

In the main, people rated connectivity by focusing on the transport network linking our suburbs, and Greater Geelong’s links to Melbourne. To a lesser extent, connectivity was associated with internet availability and speed, and social connections.

Designed for people

Designed for people received a mean rating of at 4.92 from a possible 10.

People often associated ‘designed for people’ with liveability, and rated it based on their personal interaction with local spaces, places and facilities. People’s ratings were also influenced by their involvement with outdoor activities, their connection with the natural environment, and the ease with which they were able to travel within and between suburbs.
Sustainability and resilience

Sustainability and resilience received a mean community rating of 4.58 from a possible 10.

In some instances individuals may have perceived sustainability low and resilience high (or vice versa), resulting in an averaging effect and a rating of five. Assessing sustainability tended to be associated with the environment, recycling, energy, water, while resilience was associated with jobs, community, encourage and businesses.

Creativity

Greater Geelong’s creativity received a mean community rating of 5.13 from a possible 10.

People told us they rated Greater Geelong’s creativity by focusing on how easily they were able to interact with local art, music, heritage, and contemporary and Wadawurrung culture.

Snapshot ratings summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean ratings of successful city elements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>5.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designed for people</td>
<td>4.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prosperity</td>
<td>4.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connectivity</td>
<td>4.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability and resilience</td>
<td>4.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean rating of successful city elements shows that we are already half way along the journey to success, with ‘creativity’ rating the highest at 5.13 out of 10, and our ‘sustainability and resilience’ in the most need of improvement with a rating of 4.58.
6. Community visions

People who lived, worked in or visited Greater Geelong told us about their long term vision for our region through 5,698 responses. Below is a word cloud which highlights the most common words people used when describing their vision for Greater Geelong.
From the data, topic modelling found the most common themes expressed were:

**A connected, inclusive and healthy community (9.5%)**

Many visions emphasised the need to be a connected, inclusive, diverse, supportive and healthy community. There were also references to a healthy environment.

‘A city that is environmentally and socially responsible.’
‘Continue to support all from diverse groups.’
‘A real community that embraces diversity, creativity and inclusiveness.’
‘A connected, healthy and vibrant community.’
‘Sustainable, enjoyable, connected community.’
‘Really connected to nature, community.’
‘Healthy community, connected.’
‘A supportive and inclusive society focussed on delivering opportunity to all.’
‘A city for local people that is connected to all its people.’
‘An inclusive, socially cohesive place where everyone feels welcome and safe.’
‘Supportive creative community.’
‘A connected, creative and healthy community that puts its people first.’
‘An accepting and supportive community that genuinely cares about the welfare of all residents at all stages of their lives.’

**Sustainable urban growth (8.7%)**

People’s aspirations were associated with growth and development that emphasised the need for sustainable development, minimising urban sprawl, higher density living, protecting the environment and appropriate residential housing density and character for new developments.

‘...Greater controls on housing development in region - to ensure better design, living spaces, provision of infrastructure, and health of the community.’
‘That all inevitable development has been sustainable in terms of environmental protection to sustainable housing design.’
‘The character of coastal towns on the Bellarine Peninsula have been retained. Urban sprawl has been limited and medium density development has occurred.’
‘High density living in former industrial areas and vacant shops has enabled cost effective infrastructure use.’
‘Higher density, medium density living, not too much sprawl.’
‘Less urban sprawl- keep country spaces for future generation. Encourage higher density in inner Geelong.’
‘Careful development but keeping the amenities and environments that are irreplaceable, e.g. wetlands, significant architectural character of CBD and older suburbs, e.g. Newtown and Geelong West and East.’

‘Not too much development, i.e. no more high rise buildings etc.’


‘A focus on encouraging ethical and sustainable development.’

‘Sustainable development that has a range of populations densities catered for.’

‘More investment in sustainable development and more carefully planning of all the suburban development, setting limits.’

Access to fast and connected local, regional and international transport systems (8.7%)

Access to fast, connected transport into and across our community by road, rail, air, and sea were all important to our region’s future. Locally people’s aspirations were for improved access and connectivity of public transport systems (including buses, light rail and trams) across Geelong and the CBD. Better links to Melbourne (train and ferry) and other regional areas, improved road infrastructure, expansion of services out of Avalon Airport and easier access to Avalon Airport (links to Geelong and Melbourne) were also mentioned.

‘Effective, affordable well located public transport for ALL residents, including outlying suburbs.’

‘Improved transport links to and from CBD to outer suburbs and Melbourne.’

‘Avalon to be an international airport with a train link to it.’

‘Links from Avalon to Geelong and Melbourne.’

‘More accessible from Melbourne such as the trains and a ferry even.’

‘Better roads and associated infrastructure.’

A great place to live, work and visit (8.2%)

People told us Greater Geelong needs to include quality of life and satisfaction with where they live and work, as well as a friendly destination for visitors. Urban design will be family friendly, the city will be a safe place to raise a family with employment opportunities for those living and working in the area. A welcoming place for visitors, including those from overseas, to experience all the attributes of the region.

‘For my children and their family to be able to work, live and play in Geelong.’

‘A great place to live for all age groups and those of different walks of life.’

‘A great place to live.’
‘A great place to raise your family. A great place to spend your retirement.’
‘A great place for my family to live and work.’
‘A great place to work, play, relax and enjoy nature.’
‘Geelong is a great place to live hope it stays that way.’
‘A wonderful place to live and work with people coming from all over the world to come here and visit our region.’
‘A welcoming place to visit.’
‘A place that others want to come and visit and return again.’
‘A safe city for our future generations to work, live and play in. A place we can be proud of.’

Leaders in innovation, research and education (7.9%)

A region that supports innovation and is flexible and open to new ideas. The development of skills and expertise through education. Supported by opportunities to encourage investment in the region.

‘Improvement in infrastructure and education.’
‘Commitment and passion for innovation and growing ideas.’
‘Invite innovation and new ideas from community. Let community develop an action plan and have a say on priorities.’
‘World class education facilities.’
‘Geelong residents are living in a happy, safe and prosperous city that can look back on its history of innovation and inclusiveness.’
‘Vibrant, thriving city with employment opportunities, effective public transport, entertainment precinct and high quality and varied educational facilities.’
‘Good schools that promote importance of education.’
‘Invest in our tertiary institutions and link research and development with existing industries.’

A place we are proud to call home (7.6%)

People want Greater Geelong to be recognised for its own unique and valued identity that provides residents with a sense of pride. People described having an environment they would be happy to call home, and a community they can be proud of.

‘Residents of Geelong are now proud of their home.’
‘A place we can be proud of.’
‘A place where people are proud to call home.’
‘To have a safe and beautiful city that is something to be proud of!’
‘Confident and proud.’
‘To be a modern smart and vibrant region with people who are proud of their community.’
‘Somewhere my grandchildren will be proud to live, work and contribute to.’
‘I am hoping it is a place I could be proud of.’
‘Proud - happy to be a residents.’

Local employment, health, education and housing opportunities (7.0%)

Access to employment, education choices, health facilities and affordable housing all underpinned this theme.

Visions highlighted the need for employment growth and a range of employment opportunities across the region. Some people linked employment with choices for young people, including the opportunity to live locally rather than move to Melbourne for work and jobs for future generations. Others linked employment to social equity and social inclusion.

Education linked to the region’s economy through its ability provide employment-linked study opportunities and addressing the skill requirements of local business.

People also identified the need for quality affordable housing and more diversity in housing options. A few people also linked housing with environmental sustainability.

Health was related to access to and quality of available medical services, more focus on preventative health through lifestyle and community wellbeing. A few people also linked it to environmental sustainability.

‘Community that can provide for all of its residents- employment, education, housing.’
‘A vibrant, diverse regional city which is the envy of Melbourne providing a range of housing choice, employment opportunities, as well as high levels of innovative industry, health and education.’
‘A healthy equitable community with access to high quality education and health services.’
‘Community accessible to education and health services.’
‘Hopefully an education system that is able to prepare people for the jobs of the future.’
‘A place of learning with strong universities, TAFE and education.’
‘Education options are diverse, providing alternatives from current mainstream.’
‘Preventative health - services incorporated, less reliance on medical, more reliance on preventative health.’
‘Greater support of public health, hospitals and education.’
‘Affordable and sustainable housing to encourage a diverse community.’
‘Good affordable housing for the community as a whole.’

A green Geelong (6.6%)

Visions for a ‘greener’ city focused on the physical concepts of more trees, gardens, parks, green spaces and maintaining our natural environment, preserving the environment through active and public transport and sustainability through renewable energy and design.

‘More "green" in both looks and environmental impact.’
‘To make Geelong greener, more trees and parks.’
‘"Green" city - trees, trees, trees.’
‘A green city that benchmarks renewable energy and sustainable building design.’
‘A clean green city living off-the-grid.’
‘A city that is known for leading the way in environmental sustainability.’
‘Grow green spaces and connect them, everywhere you look you can see some green. Even in the city.’
‘A city that is acknowledged globally as an environmental centre of excellence, where visitors come from around the world to visit our bay, wetlands, waterways and bushland areas, and marvel in the abundance and diversity of our flora and fauna.’
‘Green engineering throughout city, skyscrapers with green and trees and gardens.’
‘A long-term plan for greening the city.’
‘Sustainability thought about as the community develops. Keep things as green as possible, recycling and green power.’
‘Homes built to be environmentally friendly, solar, recycled water.’
‘Clean energy green / wind farms / solar.’
‘A place powered and lit by green energy.’

A world class visitor destination (6.6%)

Visions for tourism focused on Greater Geelong becoming an international destination through expanding our tourism industry and attracting more visitors to our region. Aspirations included Geelong attracting visitors via an international airport at Avalon and facilitating cruise ship visits to encourage tourists from overseas. People also described Greater Geelong as a local and international tourism hub for a range of major entertainment, cultural and sporting events and festivals. Other mentions included Geelong as a vibrant gateway to other destinations within our region, especially the Bellarine Peninsula and Surf Coast.
'We should be a thriving gateway for tourism. A place where people want to stay rather than passing through to other destinations on the coast.'

'To be a world class tourism destination, not just a town you may visit on the way to somewhere else.'

'Let's put Greater Geelong on the international tourist map with our local producers and destination events.'

'I would like to see Geelong being a world class venue for tourists.'

'A vibrant regional centre able to host minor and major sporting, arts, cultural and travel events and compete not only with Melbourne but other regional centres around Australia.'

'A thriving and vibrant city as the gateway to the Bellarine, Surf Coast, Great Ocean Road and a landing platform for locals and visitors to enjoy all that our region has to offer. A place that people come to visit and then want to live.'

**A safe community (6.1%)**

People told us about their vision for a safer community, free of the social impacts of drugs and with a low crime rate.

‘SAFE: Reduce family violence, reduced drugs and crime.’

‘No crime from drug or alcohol use. Drug free.’

‘A vibrant town where crime in minimal, house breaks in and drugs and alcohol consumption, domestic violence all non-existent.’

‘End of violence on the streets and in the homes.’

‘Safer streets for our families and children.’

‘Hopefully a safer, cleaner city where my grandchildren will be able to walk the streets at night and feel safe.’

‘Much safer for all ages.’

‘More things for our youth to help eliminate the drugs. Safe thriving community for my children.’

‘Geelong should be a clean, safe and fun environment for everyone to be able to leave their house and have fun without all the trouble.’

‘I hope to see a lot more police and less crime, drugs etc.’
A revitalised and activated Central Business District (6.0%) 

Visions were linked to the need to revitalise the CBD through different activations of empty shop fronts and resolving perceived parking and traffic issues.

‘CBD. Revitalisation all around central Geelong - not competing with other shopping spaces.’

‘Re-do CBD. It's shocking. Parking and Moorabool St is an eye sore. Start filling shops. Bring the town back to life.’

‘I'd like to see our CBD more alive, with no empty shops lining the main streets.’

‘For the city centre to be more vibrant, too many empty shops.’

‘Inner city living will increase business in empty shops.’

‘Empty shops filled. More vibrant CBD. Parking addressed, prohibitive as it currently stands.’

‘A town with good transport, parking and shopping.’

‘A CBD which is accessible, calming, a pleasure to explore the variety of shopping facilities and ample, affordable parking.’

‘No trucks through the city centre.’

‘Vibrant city - No trucks in CBD during business hours!’

‘More parking in Geelong CBD.’

‘Better shopping and more free parking.’

‘City centre has affordable car parking.’

‘More cafes and shops in the CBD not just in Westfield or Market Square. Make a mall between Malop and Ryrie St. Trucks out of Ryrie St. More welcoming atmosphere.’

‘A CBD that is highly populated with a fine grain of business including grocers, hospitality, arts, entertainment and commerce. Public transport to reduce the reliance on cars, with the CBD being car free.’

‘Close off CBD to cars and redirect trucks away from CBD.’

Social equity and participation (6.0%) 

Social equity for the Geelong region referred to fairness and impartiality, and related to social and economic opportunity. In the case of urban planning, people told us social equity can take the form of participation in decision-making activities, especially those that involve allocating public resources. Through participation, stakeholders will have greater influence on outcomes that are in their collective interest.
‘Planning and design with community involvement in decision making processes.’
‘Community involvement in all planning.’
‘Drive community involvement in all aspects of community.’
‘Community input in decision making and planning.’
‘The vision for Geelong must be for the inclusion of all residents in the social and economic prosperity of our ever increasing region.’
‘More concentration and money spent on suburban and outer Geelong, e.g. Norlane, Corio, Newcomb, Whittington.’
‘More money for northern part of Geelong.’
‘A place where the gap between rich and poor is much reduced.’
‘A community where no one is left behind.’
‘To have an equitable population with no big gaps between rich and poor.’
‘Quelling stigma between rich and poor (e.g. between northern suburbs and other parts of Geelong).’
‘Strategic planning with community input.’
‘The inner suburbs such as Corio, Norlane etc. stigma had disappeared.’
‘Less poverty and disadvantage in lower socioeconomic suburbs of Geelong.’

**Good civic leadership (6.0%)**

Visions of good civic leadership focused on a cohesive and collaborative council that provided a high standard of services and followed sound and transparent processes. Inclusive decision-making and references to preferred governance models were also part of our community’s vision.

‘I want Geelong to be led by people who are visionary, inclusive, socially intelligent and forward thinking - both elected representatives and Council officers.’

‘An efficient, effective managed Council where the citizens and Council work cohesively together, constantly achieving benchmark results in all key functions of local government (services, planning, strategy, environment, community and performance).’

‘A Council and City Administration that works in partnership with people and business.’

‘An inclusive, diverse community and local council, that reflects the community it serves.’

‘My vision is to have a mixture of both young and old people on the council as councillors.’

‘Council transparency.’

‘Councillors communicate better and make themselves available to residents.’

‘A council that runs the city for its residents not to be like some other city.’
'A Greater Geelong with a functional council, free of bureaucrats, that knows and understands the needs of the community to enable business and homeowners to achieve their goals.'

'Geelong needs to be the community leader with a strong group of councillors that are working for the community not for themselves. They need to have a vision about how to achieve this too.'

‘Accountability at Govt level. Continue to have leaders with a vision. Do things for the good.’

‘A council that has Geelong's best interest at heart.’

‘A modern council that puts Geelong and people FIRST.’

‘A council with vision and ability to bring people with them.’

‘All areas of the City of Greater Geelong support by council not just central Geelong.’

‘Productive council with a long term vision.’

‘Shared vision- everyone has a voice.’

‘Strong leadership in bringing community together in vision and strategies.’

‘A local government with elected councillors working for the community for the right reasons.’

‘A democratically elected council electing a mayor who demonstrates common sense and leadership.’

‘Councillors for the people by the people a Mayor elected by the people for the people.’

**Developing outdoor community places and spaces (5.1%)**

Some visions focused on developing our natural assets (including the waterfront, bay and Eastern Beach and Barwon River), our open spaces and parks and the development of new outdoor recreation opportunities such as theme parks and water parks.

‘We need to play to our strengths and build on what we already have. Things like the bay and river - we need to utilise them more.’

‘Utilise the waterfront with a fun park.’

‘A blow up floating water park at Eastern Beach.’

‘Make a theme park at Eastern Beach.’

‘More theme parks.’

‘Waterfront will rule! Water sports hire on the waterfront. More waterfront restaurants.’

‘I would like to see more area used on the waterfront for bars and cafes.’

‘A beautiful green family friendly waterfront with lots of open space.’

‘More open parks and gardens with good playground equipment to encourage outside play.’
‘More natural play areas - wooded, sand, and even "safe" water areas.’

‘Water play space (e.g. Bright Water Park).’

‘Activity sites, i.e. Waterfront, Barwon River.’

‘Better use of Barwon River – responsible development!’

‘Lots of well-kept parks and areas for children and teenagers to play. A variety of entertainment places and options for everyone to go to.’

‘The city needs an image, I personally loved the thought that was presented some time ago to call it, ‘The City of Three Waters’ encompassing the Bay, Barwon River and the Ocean.’

‘More relaxed outdoor bars.’

‘More outdoor café / bars.’

‘Expansion of open parks, gardens, community outdoor spaces.’

‘Plenty of open areas to encourage outdoor family activities.’

‘Maintain parks and free play spaces to explore.’
7. Summary of children’s drawings

The people whose lives are most closely linked with our region’s future, Greater Geelong’s children, presented us with 195 drawings telling the story of their unique visions for our region. While not all drawings had a written description, all drawings were analysed across themes. The theme counts below include where the element was either mentioned in the description or included in the drawing.

**Buildings (95)**
The most common theme was buildings, often including high rise cityscapes and houses with futuristic designs.

**People (68)**
Many children drew people in their drawings, often using futuristic transport options.

**Futuristic transport (53)**
Futuristic transport was also a major theme. This included hover boards, floating transport (cars, houses, trains) as well as ‘tele-porters’, slides and trampolines.

**Trees, parks, gardens (41)**
Trees and parks were often featured in children’s drawings.

**Vehicles (38)**
Vehicles were in a large number of drawings. Those that represented ‘futuristic’ transport options have been counted separately (see above). Examples of vehicles include cars, trams and buses.

**Animals (28)**
A number of visions included animals and some were specifically animal focussed – e.g. Geelong Zoo.

**Playgrounds, slides, waterslides, adventure activities (23)**
Some of these were merged with elements of futuristic transport options while quite a few were simply attractions or things to do. The adventure activities included things like bungy jumping.

**Eastern Beach (16)**
Eastern Beach was mentioned multiple times and there were other examples that included water or beach elements that aren’t included in this count as they were generic in location.

**Shops (13)**
Westfield, takeaway food outlets and cafes were featured in a some of the kids' drawings.

**Robots, technology (11)**

**Sports (9)**
New sports facilities and people participating in sports were included nine times.
Fantasy (7)
Examples of fantasy drawings included ‘reverse world’ where everything is upside down.

Space (6)
Aliens and space travel appeared in six of the drawings.

Hospitals, health care (4)
A couple included quite specific mentions of wanting more hospitals.

Natural environment (2)

No change (1)
8. Community generated ideas for a brighter future

We offered our community the opportunity to tell us how life in Greater Geelong could be improved in each of the five elements of a successful community in order to realise their vision. Once again using topic modelling, a total of 47 individual themes were identified across the five elements.

Prosperous

- Revitalise the CBD 14.8%
- New employment opportunities through industry diversification 13.4%
- Attract new and support existing business 13.4%
- Support creative industries and entrepreneurs 8.2%
- Employment linked to education 7.9%
- Geelong as an international destination 7.3%
- Supporting the vulnerable members of the community 7.3%
- Strategic planning for future growth 6.9%
- Leading the way to a green Greater Geelong economy 6.6%

Creative

- Invest in places and spaces to support our local artists 18.0%
- Develop facilities that support the attraction of world-class events and entertainment 15.1%
- Support local community arts groups, creative businesses and industry 9.4%
- Encourage a diverse range of community festivals and events 8.6%
- More outdoor settings for events and better use of existing facilities 7.2%
- Activate the city centre 6.9%
- Collaborate to build capacity for creative thinking 5.7%
- Creativity in the suburbs, CBD and around natural attractions 5.5%
- Beautify the CBD and suburbs 5.1%

Connected

- Safe and accessible cycling and walking networks 18.1%
- Better local public transport services 14.6%
- Provide opportunities for people in the community to connect 10.1%
- Plan for infrastructure in growth areas 7.7%
- Better regional and international transport links 7.5%
- Improve parking options 7.1%
- Maintain footpath and road infrastructure 6.6%
- Improve the internet network 6.6%
- Manage traffic across the CBD 6.3%
Sustainable and resilient

- Increase awareness and options for reducing waste: 16.7%
- Provide jobs for the growing population and transitioning workforce: 14.4%
- Sustainable urban development to protect the natural environment: 9.9%
- Encourage participation in community life: 9.4%
- Encourage energy efficiency in homes and buildings: 8.9%
- Long term planning to ensure environmental sustainability: 7.9%
- Provide incentives for business and industry to improve energy efficiency: 7.6%
- Traffic management to improve safety: 6.7%
- Provide green spaces within and between urban areas: 5.4%

Designed for people

- Revitalise and activate the CBD: 14.3%
- Planned urban design to ensure open space and character: 12.2%
- Maintaining outdoor places and green spaces: 10.6%
- Support and encourage engagement with community groups and clubs: 7.9%
- Preserve heritage buildings and encourage creative design: 6.9%
- Provide community spaces and amenities to encourage active lifestyles: 6.8%
- Plan social services and infrastructure for a changing population: 6.3%
- All abilities access to public transport: 6.1%
- Develop safe community environments: 6.0%
- Improve cycling and pedestrian infrastructure: 5.7%
- Improve traffic management and infrastructure in outer suburbs: 5.7%

An underlying theme of all the five elements was good governance, decision-making and implementation. This included consultation policies and practices, meeting procedures, service quality protocols, councillor and officer conduct, role clarification and good working relationships.


‘I believe the negative impact of the past Council behaviours and upheaval have and will have a lasting effect on Geelong. Needs to be a period of stability and good governance, need value for our rates.’

‘Switched on council. Good Governance.’
We also asked the community to tell us how what they thought was needed to make their vision real. From this data, a further 14 key themes emerged:

- Support for small business 9.4%
- Funding and strong leadership 9.0%
- Invest in infrastructure 8.1%
- Long term thinking, vision and strategic planning 7.4%
- Improve parking options 7.2%
- Listen to the needs of the community 7.1%
- Embrace change and take risks 7.0%
- Invest in health, education and employment programs and affordable housing 6.8%
- Collaboration and partnerships for a shared vision 6.8%
- Support and invest in sustainable initiatives and practices 6.7%
- Safe community environments 6.5%
- Infrastructure planning for connection 6.1%
- Manage urban development 5.9%
- Encourage a diverse range of community festivals and events 5.8%

These themes were further distilled into 18 community generated ideas to improve Greater Geelong, which are listed below.

**Sustainability and resilience**

**Increase community knowledge of the local impacts of climate change**

Many people suggested educating the community about climate change. Some people referred to working with schools, providing information about the local impacts of climate change and providing community information about recycling practices, community gardens and other opportunities to learn about sustainability.

**Encourage sustainable solutions**

Many ideas focused on making it easier for business and the wider community to take up sustainable practices. Ideas included making it easier for people to recycle and the possibility of residential hard waste collection. Business incentives, household energy efficiency, renewable energy and natural resource management; attracting new industries and creating sustainable jobs; and cycling, walking and public transport were also prominent themes.
Set and achieve environmental targets and preserve our natural environments

Many people suggested measures to protect and improve the natural environment and the need to monitor environmental targets. The preservation and expansion of green spaces and other natural assets were constant themes. Many suggestions focused on urban planning, housing density, sustainable population growth, building design and regulation and the redevelopment of disused sites. Other ideas focused on emissions, recycling targets and environmental initiatives.

Creativity

Celebrate our local Wadawurrung culture and protect our heritage spaces

Ideas included promoting Wadawurrung culture through more public signage, art-based activities and exhibitions of public art. People also mentioned maintaining, protecting and preserving our places of heritage value and acknowledging local history.

Invest in our modern culture, creative industries and public art

Many people mentioned the idea of having places and spaces to support and celebrate our local artists and the need for more public art. Support for local community arts groups, creative businesses and industry was also cited. Many people identified the opportunity to develop facilities to support the attraction of world class events and entertainment including a convention centre, Geelong Performing Arts Centre and the Geelong Art Gallery.

Redevelop our vacant buildings and under-utilised precincts

Many described the creative use of our vacant buildings and under-utilised precincts. This included ideas such as having local art on display in empty store fronts, allowing cheaper revolving tenancies of empty CBD buildings for use of local artists, companies and start-ups and repurposing our empty factories and industrial places.

Connectivity

World-class internet infrastructure, coverage and access for everybody

Many people mentioned the need for access to the National Broadband Network (NBN). Getting access to reliable, high speed internet was also cited.

Better connected local, regional and international transport options

Improved transport links into and across our community was a key theme. Locally across Geelong and the CBD, provision of service, frequency and connectivity of public transport systems were mentioned including buses, light rail and ferry. Expansion of services out of Avalon and easier access to Avalon Airport (via rail and bus links) was also mentioned.
Connect residents with employment, education, retail precincts and each other

Employment and education were key themes, and there was interest in connecting these to retail precincts. Many people mentioned the development of the commercial / business precinct, the town centre, as well as education to support new employment.

Develop better cycling and walking routes between our suburbs

Cycling and walking as a means of transport was a key theme with many citing the need for safe, connected and accessible cycling and walking networks for leisure, to improve health and reduce car reliance and traffic congestion.

Prosperity

Promote business and industry diversity

Many people identified the need to create new employment opportunities to address recent business closures and job losses by attracting new industries to the region. Suggestions included centres of excellence (insurance, government), advanced manufacturing, renewable energy, information and communication technology (ICT), health, education, tech and creative industries. People also mentioned improving small business support and incentives for new start-ups and entrepreneurs.

Strengthen our identity as a tourist destination

Many talked about the opportunity for Greater Geelong to be an international tourist destination. The expansion of Avalon Airport to include international flights, a pier to facilitate cruise ship visits and building a convention centre were all mentioned as ways to boost tourism.

Education that is linked to employment opportunities

Linking education and training to future employment opportunities was mentioned by many people. This included strengthening links and partnerships between education providers and industry to retain students in education and offer clear pathways into local industry.

Support the most vulnerable members of our community

Many described the need to support the most vulnerable members of our community. This included the need to strengthen schools, healthcare services, infrastructure and employment opportunities in our less advantaged communities.
Designed for people

Multi-purpose community infrastructure

People described better planned and maintained community spaces and amenities to accommodate and support community services, programs, activities and encourage social connections, active and healthy lifestyles and greater use of facilities.

Balance our built and natural environments

Planning was seen by many as important for effectively managing the rapid changes facing Greater Geelong and retaining a balance between our built and natural environments. These changes should contribute to the wellbeing of individuals and communities and the environments on which we rely.

Develop safe community environments

Many people mentioned safety, health and wellness. These are influenced by the places in which people live, learn, work, and play. The need to improve these will make for healthy and safe community environments including feeling safe, affordable and secure housing, and sustainable neighbourhoods.

Provide green spaces within and between urban areas

Many mentioned the need for green spaces in urban areas to provide formal and informal sport and recreation, preservation of natural environments, provision of green space and even urban storm water management.
9. Next steps

Time to Decide was the next phase of the Our Future project and involved our community choosing its priorities from the ideas it has generated. The priorities established during Time to Decide phase of engagement will be used to help the incoming City of Greater Geelong Council determine priorities for its next Council Plan and for all other stakeholders, including all levels of government, for planning initiatives for our region.

Based on the community’s input during Time to Decide, alternative scenarios were developed and debated at the Our Future Assembly, on Saturday 6 May 2017.

The Our Future Assembly was a unique experience where, through guided discussion, participants determined the most appropriate vision for Greater Geelong to be included in the final Our Future vision and strategy document.

A draft Our Future vision document will be posted to the GeelongAustralia website in mid-July prior to the consideration of Administrators at the 25 July Council meeting.

The final document, to be launched in August, will provide a key resource for the incoming Council to be elected in late October 2017.

At the completion of the projects, the Our Future vision will be monitored and regular reports will be provided to the City of Greater Geelong, Our Future partners and the Greater Geelong community. Conversations with the Greater Geelong community will be ongoing.
Appendix 1: Listing of *Our Future* face-to-face engagement

Between August 2016 and February 2017, *Our Future* talked to people from our community in many different ways including hosting and attending workshops and conducting interactive pop up activities at a wide range of community events and locations. The following is a list of these activities.

In addition to the workshops and activities listed here there were other community groups that also held workshops and sent in their responses, which were included in the analysis.

**Interactive pop up activities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Surveys</th>
<th>Ideas</th>
<th>Photos / drawing</th>
<th>Total engaged</th>
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# Our Future

## Have your Say report (June 2017)

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<th>Surveys</th>
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## Workshops

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## Our Future - Stage 1, Have your Say report (June 2017)

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