



# Community survey results



# Colac Otway 2050 Community Vision

## Survey results

### Gathering a Vision for the Future

The Colac Otway 2050 Community Vision survey was made up of 2 parts; four questions about a Community Vision by 2050, and seven questions about specific areas of Council.

The survey was available on the Colac Otway Shire website from 10 Feb to 31 March 2021, with hard copies also available. Over 600 people completed the survey. The largest percentage of responders were female, aged between 35 and 64, and lived in the Colac Otway Shire.

People were encouraged to complete the survey via social media posts with links to the survey, drop-in sessions around the Shire, online sessions, and adverts in the Colac Herald and local newsletters.

### Key Findings

The community were asked what their Top 3 priorities would be to include in a 2050 Community Vision. They were:

- Our **environment** and concerns for living sustainably
- Planning for our **future**
- Looking after our local **community**

The community was asked what they are most proud of, and 71% of responses related to Community, quoting 'community spirit, sense of community, community connections/connectedness, response to COVID, ability to come together, and friendliness'.

The community was asked what makes Colac Otway Shire unique, and 80% of responses related to our beautiful and pristine natural environment, and our great location being close to beaches, forest, big cities, farmlands and local industries.

The community was asked what we could do better to create a positive future, and the top five responses (in order of priority) related to:

- Environment – protection of the environment, reducing energy use, and support change to renewables
- Plan for sustainable population growth
- Infrastructure investment – maintain roads and footpaths, and provide transport infrastructure for walking, cycling and public transport
- Community health and wellbeing support
- Town presentation improvement

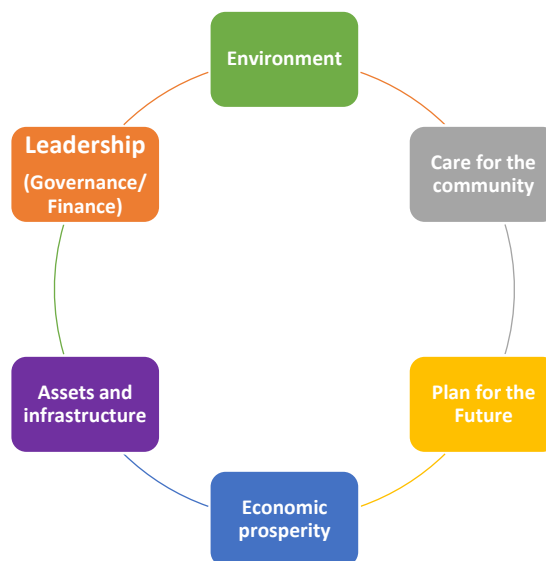
When asked what their top 3 priorities were regarding Council services, the community said:

- By 2050, to support our local economy, what would you like to see?  
*(1) Encourage people to buy local, (2) Attract new business, (3) Invest in local businesses*
- By 2050, to protect our environment and address future climate challenges, what would you like to see?  
*(1) Planning for resilience, (2) Advocate for renewables, (3) Reduce waste to landfill*
- What community facilities and assets do you think are the most important for Council to focus?  
*(1) Public open spaces: parks, playgrounds, (2) Hard infrastructure such as roads, paths, (3) Public toilets & town amenities*
- The Victorian Health and Wellbeing Plan outlines 10 priorities for our community's health and wellbeing. Of those, which three areas would you like to see Council focus on?  
*(1) Mental wellbeing, (2) Preventing violence, (3) Tackling climate change and its impact on health*
- By 2050, what are your priorities for the planning of housing and development?  
*(1) Encourage diversity in housing styles, (2) Plan for growth (Colac 2050), (3) Streamline planning controls*
- By 2050, what are your priorities for roads and transport?  
*(1) Walking & cycling paths, (2) Public transport connections, (3) Road networks*
- By 2050, what would you like to see to support creativity, arts and culture?  
*(1) More opportunities for events, (2) Support for our creative businesses/industries, (3) Celebrate diverse cultures*

Throughout the survey, other trends also emerged through the comments, including:

- Affordable housing mentioned numerous times, including housing supply and shortages, and issues with Air B&B, particularly along the coast
- Fixing the entrances to Colac and make more of Lake Colac
- Concern for young people/families and youth
- Improvements to waste services

The following six key themes emerged from both the community survey and stakeholder consultation as important to the community to consider in the community vision.





Colac Otway Community Vision



Colac Otway  
SHIRE

# SURVEY RESULTS

# Gathering a Vision for the Future



- The **Colac Otway 2050 Community Vision survey** was made up of 2 parts:
  - Four Questions about a Community Vision by 2050
  - Seven questions about specific areas of Council (economy, environment, community facilities, MHWB, housing & planning, infrastructure & the arts).
- **The survey was available on the COS website** from 10 Feb to 31 March 2021. People were encouraged to participate via:
  - A regional roadshow to visit 12 communities in the shire
  - Social media posts (Facebook & Instagram) with local community member videos
  - Regular Council advertising in Colac Herald and regional newsletters
  - OPASS mailout with hard copy surveys to 300 people
- **Over 600 people completed the survey**
  - The largest percentage of responders were female, aged between 35 and 64, and lived in the Colac Otway Shire

# Analysing a Vision for the Future



- 610 surveys were analysed
- Many questions were 'open text' boxes that required coding. Coding was broken into 8 areas:
- (1) Environment, (2) Economy, (3) Social, (4) Planning & growth, (5) Recreation & Lake, (6) Infrastructure, (7) Community facilities, (8) Governance / other
- The Top 3 priorities for Council to include in a 2050 Community Vision were:
  1. Our **environment** and concerns for living sustainably
  2. **Planning for our Future**
  3. Looking after our local **community**

# Community Vision - findings



1. **First question - “What are you most proud of?”**
  - 71% of responses related to **‘Community’** (community spirit, sense of community, community connections/connectedness, response to Covid, ability to come together, friendliness)
2. **Second question - “What makes Colac Otway Shire unique?”**
  - 38% of responses related to **‘A Great Location’** (close to beaches, forest, big cities; landscape and location; different landscapes; its position and variety including farming; surrounded by good attractions)
  - 42% of responses related to **‘Natural Environment’** (pristine natural environment in the Otway Ranges & Coast; the wonderful lakes and scenery; Ocean, Otways, nature; different geographical areas)
3. **Third question – “What could we be doing better to create a positive future?”**
  - 47% - Protect the environment, reduce energy and support sustainability
  - 37% - Plan for sustainable population growth
  - 34% - Maintain infrastructure & provide walking and cycling paths
4. **Fourth question – “What three priorities should Council include in a 2050 Community Vision?”**
  - 22% of all responses related to the **Environment** (living more sustainably, clean energy, net zero emissions, plan for climate change)
  - 18% of all responses related to more **Social support/initiatives** (Support our community’s health & wellbeing, encourage young people to stay in the district, community events, better facilities for our elderly)
  - 17% of all responses related to the **Planning for the Future** (Planned growth, housing supply/shortages, town presentation, eco facilities, population growth, aged care facilities, entrances)

# Community Vision - extra



- Supplementary question – “if you have any other comments”. A total of 204 responses were received. The top 3 areas were:
  - **28% related to better Planning for the Future.** “We need better thinking And planning for the future. Climate change and how we deal with it must be at the centre of that”, “Affordable and available housing, more jobs & child care”, “Be brave and stand for something- Find that one thing to make people stop and enjoy the main hub of the shire - Colac”, “Protect what is good about Colac Otway”
  - **25% related to Governance.** “COS needs to start planning now for a rapid and steady population increase. Start lobbying govt for major infrastructure such as a second public high school, larger tafe campuses etc.”, “We need to recognise our role as a natural asset hub, and protect and enhance this for all Victorians. Think global, act local.”
  - **15% related to the Environment.** “Strive to be carbon neutral”, “Strong focus on climate”, “Councils throughout the country are now moving to act on climate change. Colac Otway Shire should not be the last shire to get on board with the opportunities for our community”

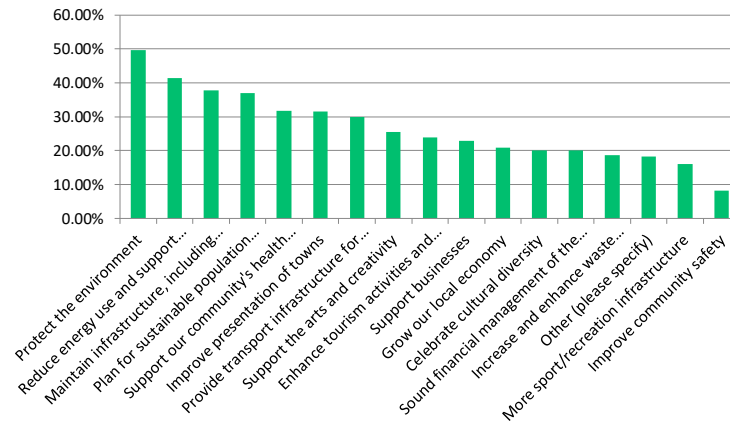


# Council services – Top 3 priorities

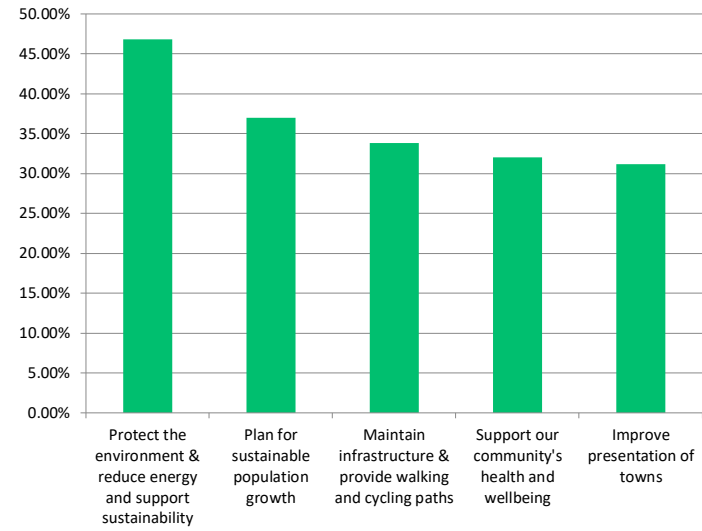


1. By 2050, to support our local economy, what would you like to see?
  - **(1) Encourage people to buy local, (2) attract new business, (3) Invest in local businesses**
2. By 2050, to protect our environment and address future climate challenges, what would you like to see?
  - **(1) Planning for resilience, (2) Advocate for renewables, (3) Reduce waste to landfill**
3. What community facilities and assets do you think are the most important for Council to focus?
  - **(1) Public open spaces: parks, playgrounds, (2) Hard infrastructure such as roads, paths, (3) Public toilets & town amenities**
4. The Victorian Health and Wellbeing Plan outlines 10 priorities for our community's health and wellbeing. Of those areas outlined below, which three areas would you like to see Council focus on?
  - **(1) Mental wellbeing, (2) preventing violence, (3) tackling climate change and its impact on health**
5. By 2050, what are your priorities for the planning of housing and development?
  - **(1) Encourage diversity in housing styles, (2) plan for growth (Colac 2050), (3) streamline planning controls**
6. By 2050, what are your priorities for roads and transport?
  - **(1) Walking & cycling, (2) public transport connections, (3) road networks**
7. By 2050, what would you like to see to support creativity, arts and culture?
  - **(1) More opportunities for events, (2) support for our creative businesses/industries, (3) celebrate diverse cultures**

What could we be doing better to create a positive future and improve life in Colac Otway Shire in 2050? Choose up to 5 priorities.



Top 5



#### SAMPLE OF COMMENTS

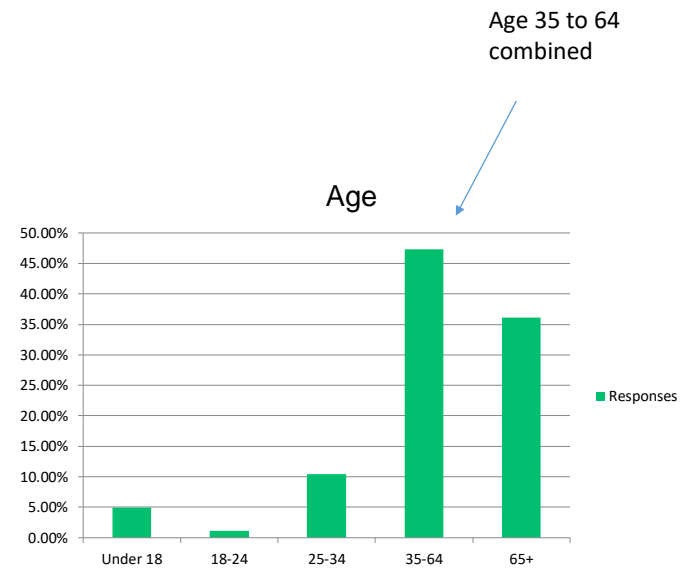
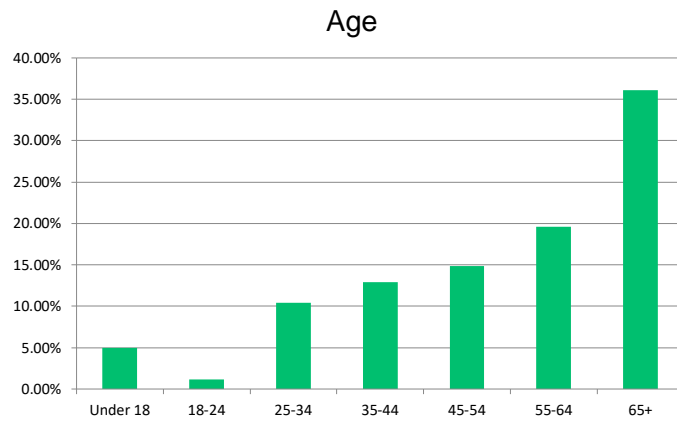
- Improvements at the lake, improvements to both highway entrances to Colac
- Address the housing shortage for local workers
- Do something about climate change
- Help the community as a whole achieve zero greenhouse gas emissions
- Grow - not just "protect" - environment work. This will be big business in the near future!

## Key Findings – other trends

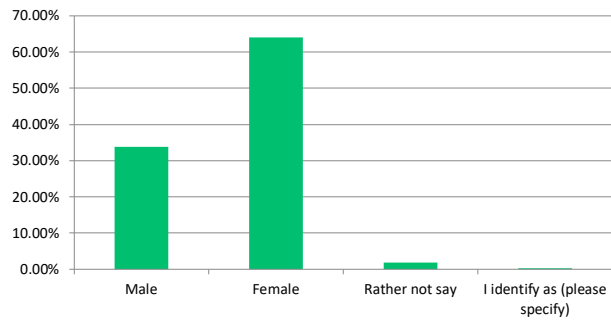


- Affordable housing mentioned 60 times. Housing supply and shortages similar comments, and issues with AirBnB.
- Improvements to Colac Entrances & Lake Colac (36 & 208 comments)
- Desire for improvements to waste services (46 comments)
- Young people/families and youth mentioned 83 times

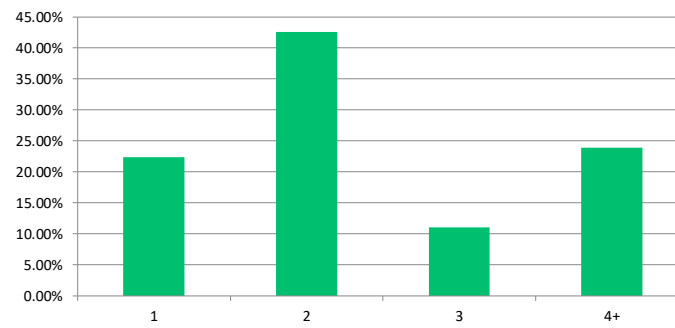
## Who completed the survey?



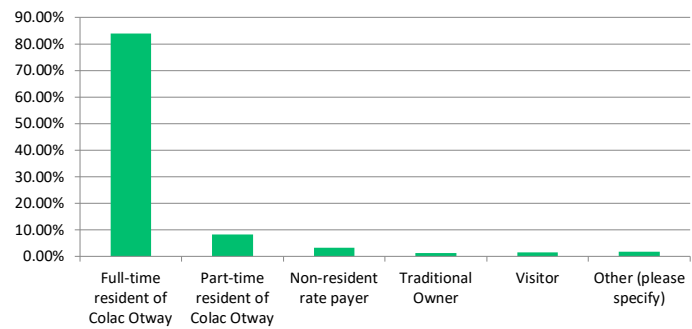
### Gender



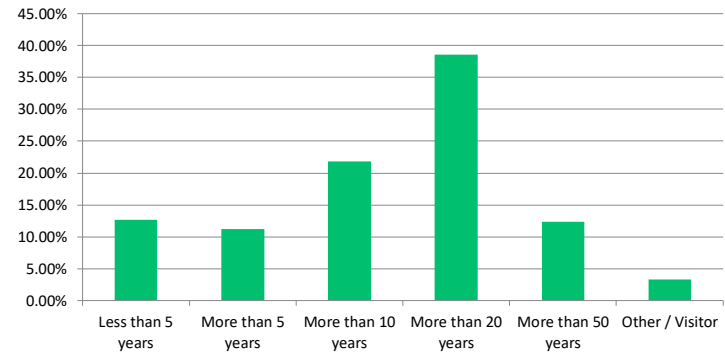
### How many people including yourself live in your household?



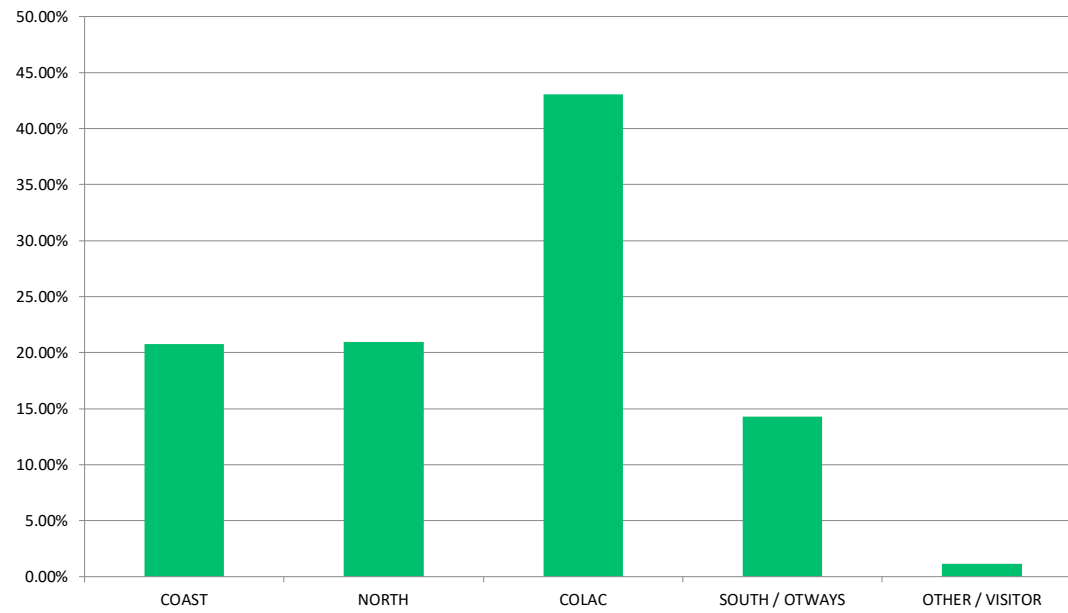
### Which of these most closely describes you?



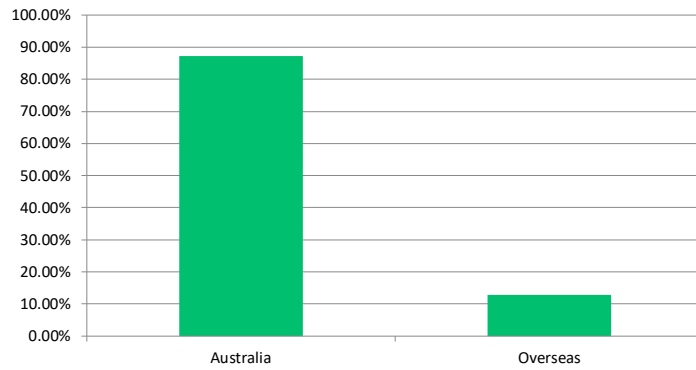
### How long have you lived in, or owned property in the Shire?



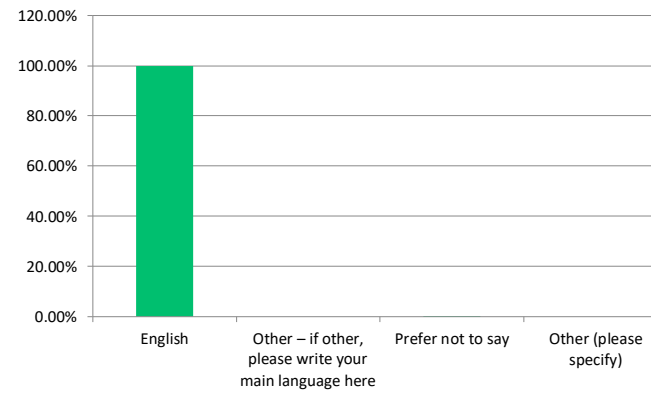
### What town/district do you have the strongest connection with?



### Where were you born?

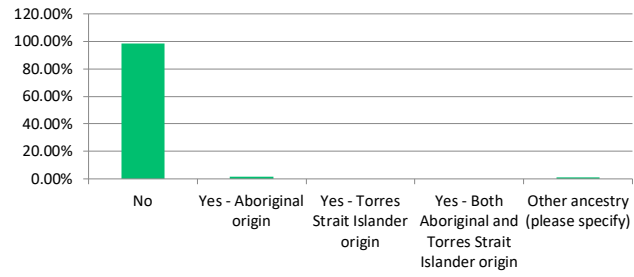


### What is the main language spoken at home?

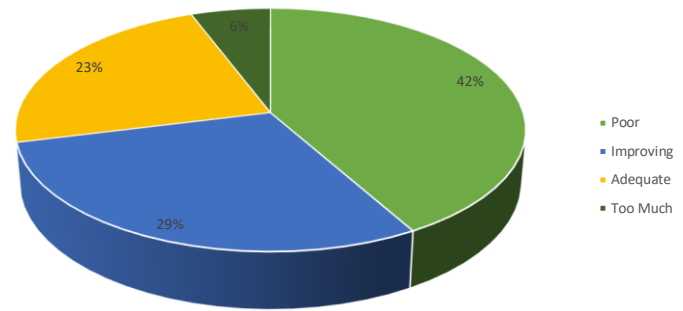




### Do you identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?

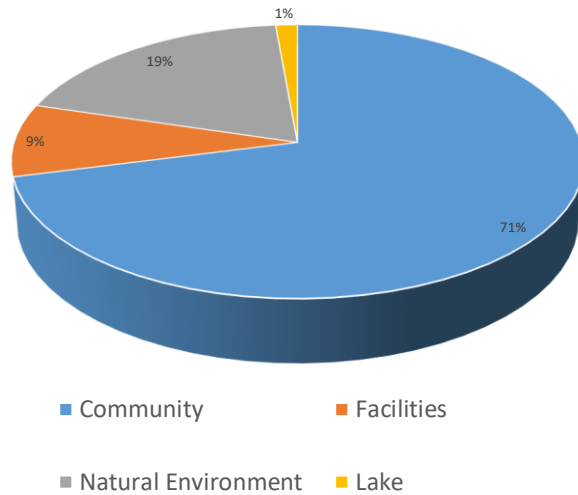


### What are your thoughts on the level of recognition of Traditional Owners?



449 responses out of 606 surveys

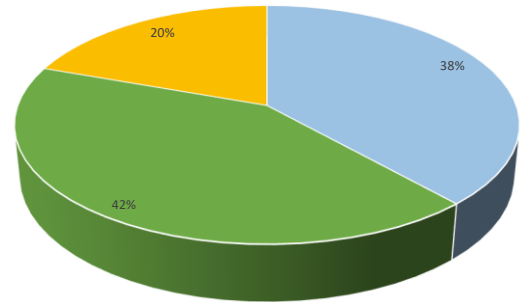
### What are you most proud of in your community?



### SAMPLE OF COMMENTS

- Community Spirit - mentioned 59 times
- Covid response - mentioned 39 times
  
- Community spirit at the local level
- The way people come together as a whole when an issue/emergency/pandemic is involved
- Friendliness
- Community spirit. Beautiful, natural environment
- Resilient community, fun, cruisy, sustainable thinking, great school, community groups
- The unspoilt, pristine, natural environment
- It is extremely pretty, and our beach is somewhere we walk with our dogs most days
- Beautiful natural surroundings
- The city and all its amenities and services are close and available yet I can still live remotely and in peace.
- Library
- Our Schools
- The successful sporting groups

### What makes Colac Otway Shire unique?

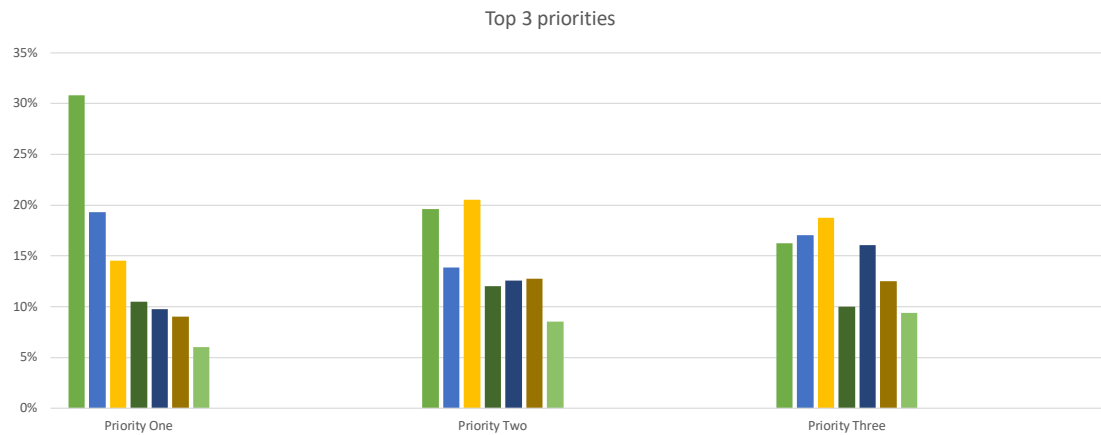


■ Location ■ Natural Environment ■ Community

### SAMPLE OF COMMENTS

- Everything is within an hour and half drive, towns, coast attractions
- The location. We are close to beaches, city and the otway ranges
- Country living. Light traffic, the largest freshwater lake in Victoria , our botanic gardens. The surrounding volcanos and being near the end of that chain that stretches across half our state., being about 50 mins from beautiful beaches and near what is left of the Otway's forests.
- The diversity of agriculture and manufacturing in such a naturally abundant environment and how this extends to opportunities for job security
- The beauty of the region, the productivity of the zone and its potential
- Diversity of environments from the coast to plains
- Close proximity of ocean beach and forest
- Open plains, mountain forests and world renowned coast in a single shire
- The stunning Otways and surf coast/shipwreck coast beaches, the volcanic plains, hay bale dotted farmland, strong volunteer/help thy neighbour culture, hospitality
- Otways and the ocean
- Its diverse geography and peoples
- It's willingness to remain stuck in the 1950s

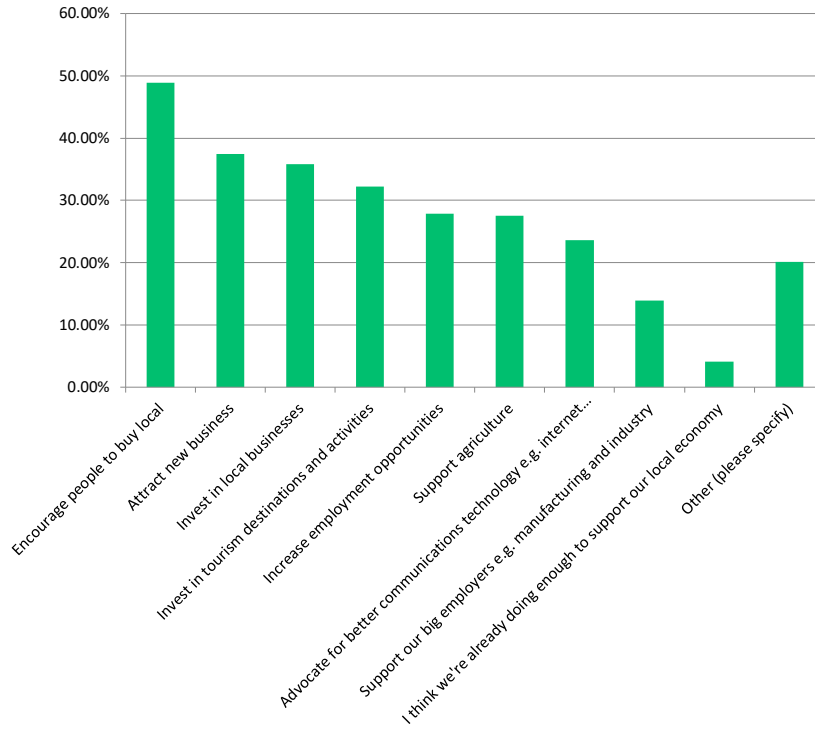
## What do you believe are three priorities that the Council should include in a 2050 Community Vision?



### SAMPLE OF COMMENTS

- A focus on renewables and sustainable energy
- Action on climate change
- Protect the liveability of local towns/communities
- Housing for workers
- Sustainable development
- Community connection
- Boosting recreational activities for children and youth
- Beautification to attract new residents

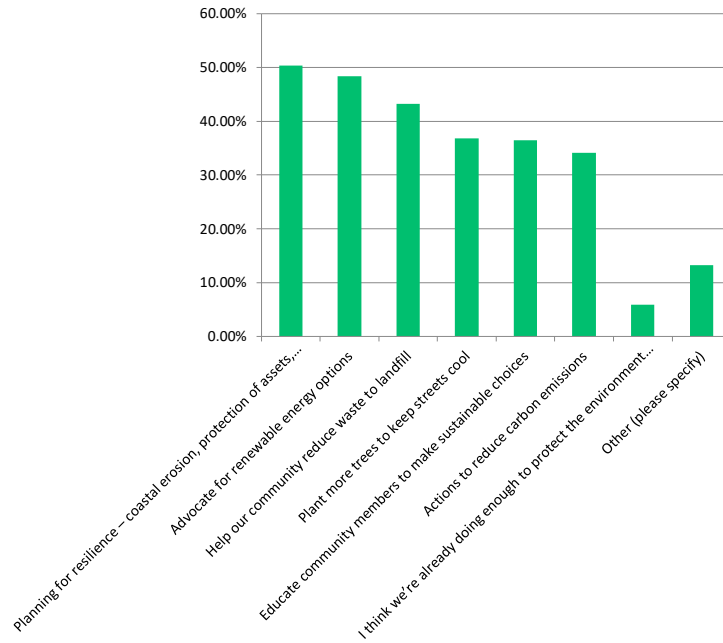
# 1. By 2050, to support our local economy, what would you like to see?



## SAMPLE OF COMMENTS

- Enhance opportunities for more environmentally sustainable businesses and employment options.
- Support sustainable and regenerative agriculture. Attract new clean energy and clean technology businesses.
- Support investment in sustainable and renewable technology industry
- More affordable housing for workers
- Develop creative housing solutions for working people

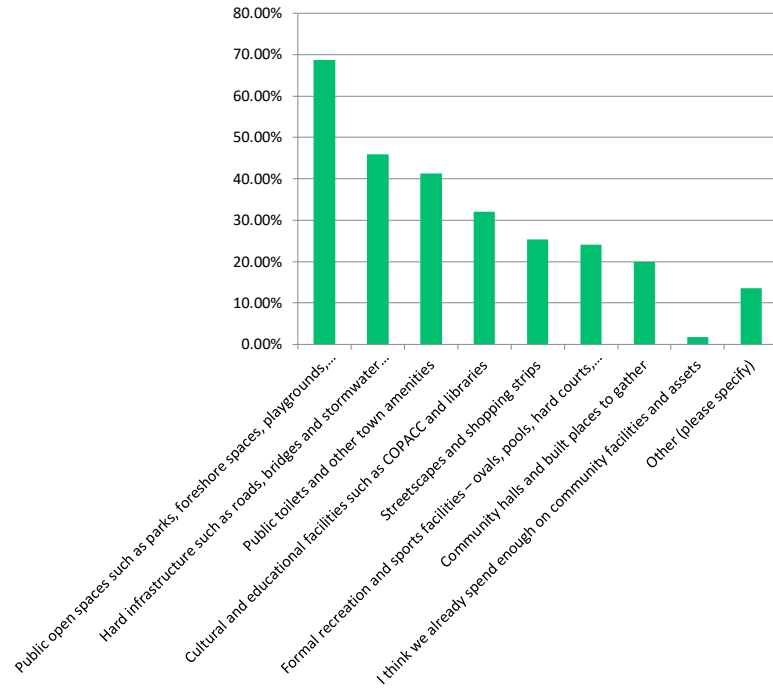
## 2. By 2050, to protect our environment and address future climate challenges, what would you like to see?



### SAMPLE OF COMMENTS

- Foster a culture of innovation regarding renewable energy, waste management and land management.
- Engage genuinely with Traditional Owners to conduct land management, especially cultural burns to manage flora, fauna and fire risk.
- Sustainable home design.
- Public transport as a full fledged alternative to a private car transport.
- We could be producing our own power, growing our own food, processing our own waste.

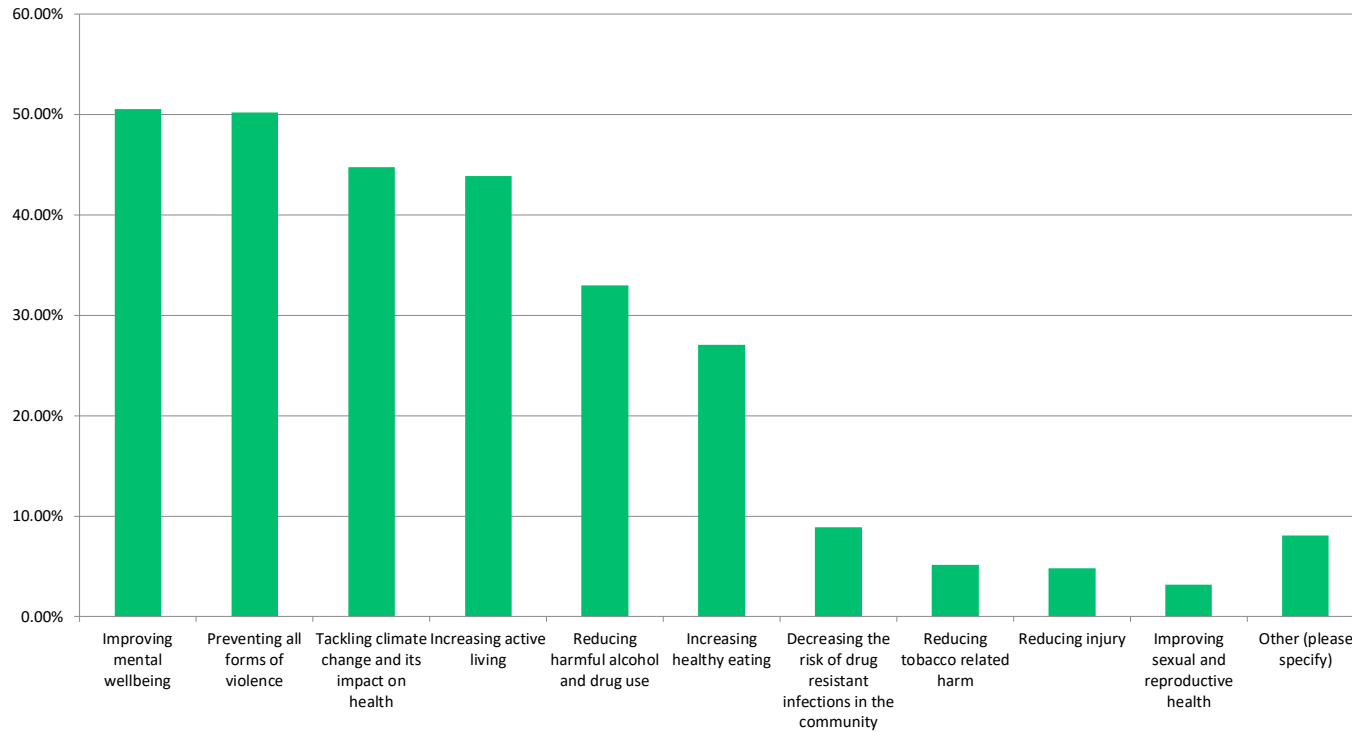
### 3. What community facilities and assets do you think are the most important for Council to focus its resources and investment on?



#### SAMPLE OF COMMENTS

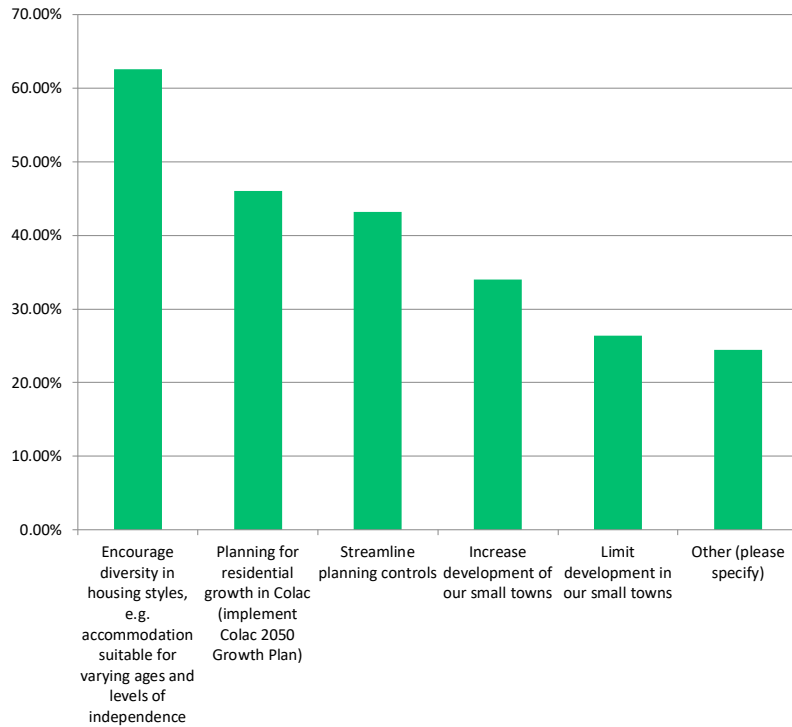
- oh dear, hello Colac-centred Council, there is a beach and an Ocean Road in the Shire!
- Bike and footpaths.
- Council can install PVCs on Council facilities, and community buildings
- Encourage and support community initiatives to reduce climate change, such as planting, electric vehicle share hubs, microgrids using renewable energy sources.
- Provision of a permanent large multipurpose Art Space which includes studio space

4. The Victorian Health and Wellbeing Plan outlines 10 priorities for our community's health and wellbeing. Of those areas outlined below, which three areas would you like to see Council focus on?





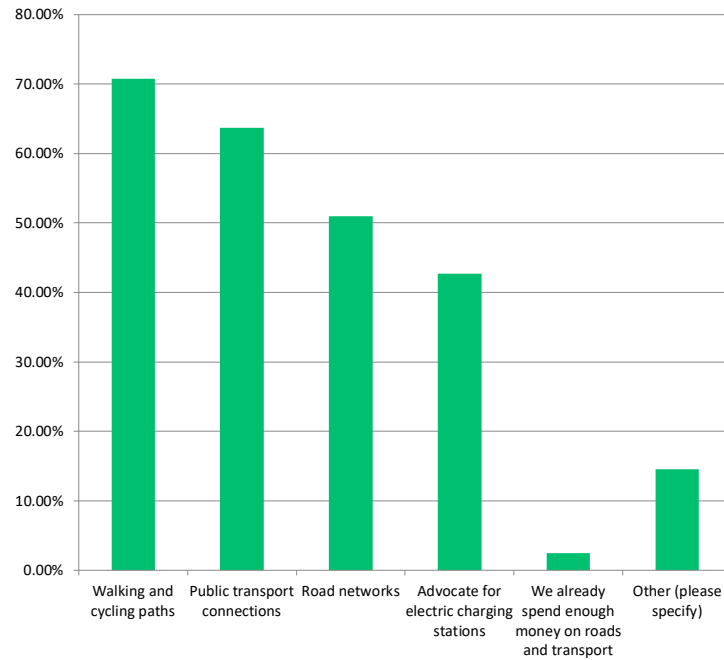
### 5. By 2050, what are your priorities for the planning of housing and development?



#### SAMPLE OF COMMENTS

- Encourage better quality, sustainable development and social housing options
- Accommodation for seasonal workers
- Sustainable and controlled growth that does not impact the overall landscape. E.g no high rises on coastal towns
- charge airbnbs business rates like hotels - and reduce rates for permanent rentals
- Keep your mass housing developments in Colac
- Consider affordable and livable housing that addresses climate change. Particularly in small towns where holiday rentals have pushed prices beyond local affordability.

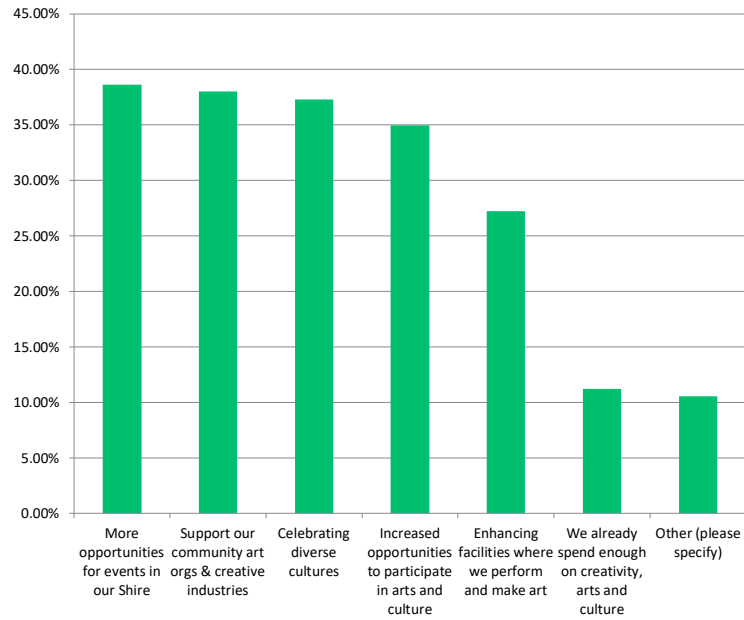
## 6. By 2050, what are your priorities for roads and transport?



### SAMPLE OF COMMENTS

- Promote the uptake of electric vehicles starting with council fleet.
- I understand roads are important but they are a bottomless pit when it comes to resources.
- Make a decision about the Colac town bypass
- Footpaths, running routes, cycle tracks linking key places for commuting.
- Train services to Geelong for workers.

### 7. By 2050, what would you like to see to support creativity, arts and culture?



#### SAMPLE OF COMMENTS

- we need a dedicated art gallery
- Provide an exhibition space for artists on the coast
- Celebrate the lake and build a culture around this area
- More support for indigenous culture