# HELP SHAPE YARRA’S FUTURE

# Community engagement summary

The Yarra community was been engaged at regular intervals to develop several key strategic documents including:

* Council Plan 2017–21
* Annual Budget 2017/18
* Long Term Financial Strategy (LTFS), and
* Proposed Waste Service Charge

The formal public exhibition of these draft documents took place between Thursday 6 April and Thursday 11 May 2017.

## CONNECTING WITH THE COMMUNITY

* We received 1,006 written submissions.
* 60% of submissions were received via yoursayyarra.com.au
* 35% of submissions were received via email
* 5% of submissions were received via traditional post
* 58 people spoke in support of their submissions at the Special Council Meeting on 17 May.

## PROJECT REACH

* More than 2,400 people visited our project pages at yoursayyarra.com.au and yarracity.vic.gov.au
* 720 visitors downloaded resources from our project pages to learn more about our proposals.
* 50 people attended our community information sessions in Collingwood, Fitzroy and Richmond.

We received submissions from people who live, work, study or own a property in Alphington, Abbotsford, Burnley, Carlton North, Clifton Hill, Collingwood, Cremorne, Fairfield, Fitzroy, Fitzroy North, Princes Hill and Richmond.

## WHAT DID WE HEAR?

### Proposed Waste Service Charge

More than 70% of the submissions that we received related to the proposed charge. Of these, more than 90% opposed its introduction.

Some of the most commonly expressed views included:

* Waste collection has always been a core function of local government and as such should continue to be funded from general rates.
* Introduction of a separate charge cannot be justified unless there is an equivalent reduction in general rates.
* If Council requires additional funds it should look to identify savings elsewhere before introducing a new charge.
* The proposed flat charge would disproportionately affect ratepayers on lower incomes as it doesn’t take income (or property value) into account.
* Council should adhere to the spirit of the State Government’s 2% rate cap.

We also received a smaller number of submissions in favour of the waste charge.

As a Council committed to listening to and learning from our diverse community, we are grateful for all of the views we received on the Proposed Waste Service Charge. .

We are now committed to exploring other ways to improve the financial sustainability of Council, and we will discuss this with our community in the coming months.

### Annual Budget and Council Plan

Just under 30% of the submission related to the Annual Budget more generally and/or the Council Plan.

Some of the most commonly expressed views included:

* Council should fund traffic management improvements throughout Yarra (the majority of submissions related to the Princes Hill and Scotchmer precincts).
* Council should fund redevelopment of the Peterson Oval cricket pitches.
* Council should fund creation of a community garden at the Carlton Bocce Court site.
* Council should join the Leadership Group of Councils with the Alliance for Gambling Reform.
* Council should provide funding and support for neighbourhood houses (the majority of submissions related to the Holden Street Neighbourhood House).
* Council should abandon plans for a new path in Rushall Reserve.
* Council should increase funding and support for sustainable transport alternatives.
* Council should fund continued support for public housing advocacy.
* Council should reduce its expenditure.

## FACT CHECKING

We received a diverse range of feedback during our consultation process, and also allowed us to respond to some common misunderstandings in submissions. A Frequently Asked Questions resource was produced, updated and shared (online and hard copy).

## NEXT STEPS

On Tuesday 6 June, in considering the breadth of submissions, Council endorsed an alternate Draft Annual Budget for public exhibition – one that does not include a waste service charge. Consultation will take place from 9 June to Tuesday 11 July 2017.

**Further information is available at** [**www.yoursayyarra.com.au**](http://www.yoursayyarra.com.au)

**Final adoption**

Council is expected to adopt the Draft Annual Budget 2017-18, Long Term Financial Strategy and Council Plan 2017 – 2021 at an Ordinary Council Meeting at 7pm on Tuesday 1 August at Richmond Town Hall.