

Economic Development
Strategy Renewal 2022-2032

Engagement report

September 2022

Contents

01

Introduction

02

A community centred approach

03

Engagement overview

04

Round one summary

05

Round two summary

06

Engagement spotlight

07

Next steps



Acknowledgment of Country

We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners, The Wurundjeri People as the Custodians of this land. We also pay respect to all Aboriginal community Elders, past and present, who have resided in the area and have been an integral part of the history of this region. Council also acknowledges Indigenous ways of being, knowing and doing that led to sustainable and health-giving societies thriving across Australia, for thousands of years.

Introduction

Report purpose

The purpose of this report is to summarise the engagement activities and findings for the two rounds of community and stakeholder engagement for the project to renew the Economic Development Strategy (the Strategy) 2022-32 and detail how the engagement process shaped the document.

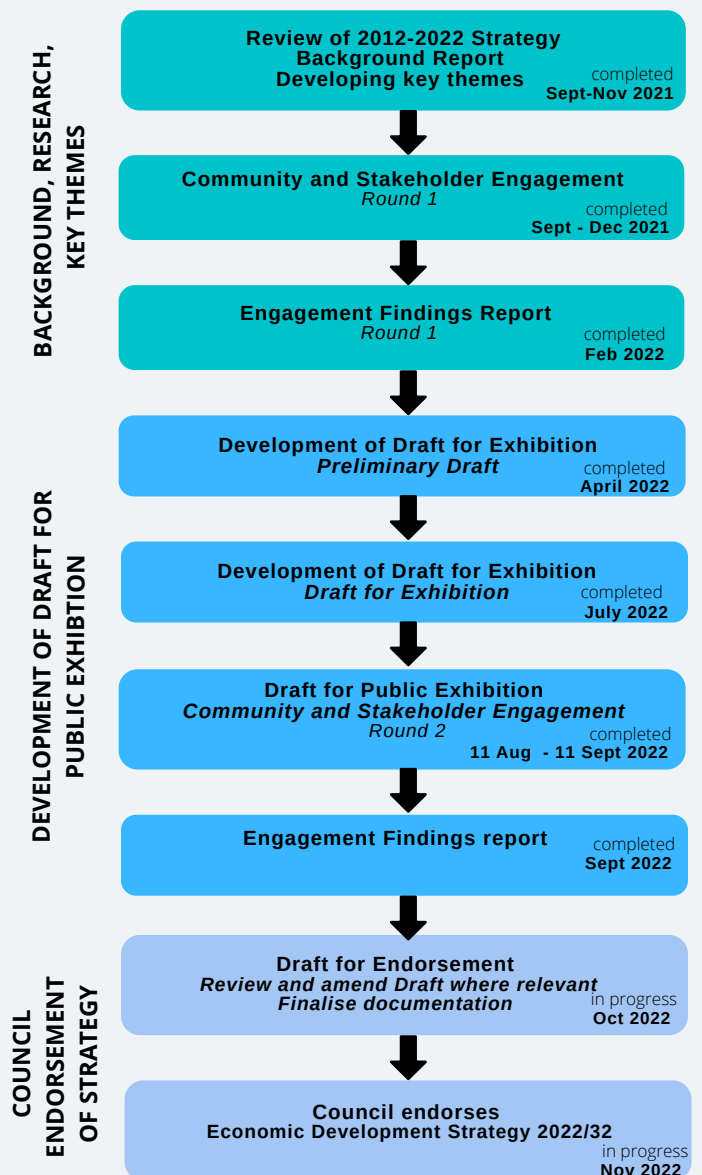
Project background

The 10-year Strategy that has guided Council's role and resources in the development of the local economy concludes at the end of 2022. Consequently, a renewal project was initiated in 2021 to develop the 2022-2032 iteration.

The development of the Strategy has been informed by a comprehensive review, a background report and extensive community and stakeholder consultation and analysis. Collectively this work has produced the Strategy 2022-32 for which delivers:

- A strong vision, grounded in the aspirations of the local community.
- Contemporary and inclusive approach to economic development steeped in regenerative values, focussed on future-proofing the economy beyond the global pandemic and extreme climate events.
- Globally competitive ideas that differentiate the Yarra Ranges from other local government areas.

Economic development strategy renewal project time line



A community centred approach

Engagement process

Council has undertaken extensive community and stakeholder engagement in the development of the draft Strategy with two distinct rounds of consultation, each informing subsequent engagement and direction into the Strategy, Refer figure below.

To ensure continued best practice and in line with Councils *Community Engagement Policy*, a *Consultation and Engagement plan* was prepared and implemented throughout the life cycle of the project, which encompassed multiple engagement activities and opportunities for the community, business and industry to be involved including:

- Shaping Yarra Ranges Economic Development Strategy project page
- Two surveys
- Online submissions
- Media releases, newspaper/eNews articles and social media campaigns
- Drop-in sessions
- Workshops and consultations
- Youth engagement linking into the Yarra Ranges Tech School and Hearing the Voices of YR Youth program and through the Youth Ambassadors.
- Suite of resources and documents, including accessible versions
- Innovative video engagement tool explaining the draft Strategy, with captions
- Tailored consultations with reference and advisory committees and other relevant groups including Business Leaders Roundtable, Yarra Ranges Tourism, Youth Advisory, Rural Advisory Group, Disability Advisory, Indigenous Advisory, Sustainability Advisory, Gender Equity.

Figure 1 - The development of the Strategy



Round one of the engagement process ran from 11th October 2021 to 27th November 2021 and was prepared and completed with assistance of Alphacrane Consultants. This round of engagement builds from key findings from the Economic Development Strategy Background Report first submitted Lucid Economics to Council in October 2021. In addition to key findings from the Background Report, other critical engagement inputs were also considered in the engagement design process including findings from the development of Council Plan, community vision, and other place and structure planning activities.

Collectively this research, feedback and key aspirations were analysed and distilled into the closely interrelated strategic framework of this draft.

The Strategy includes a set of regenerative and inclusive principles –defines four priority areas and identifies five opportunity industry sectors. From these a suite of actions, goals and targets have been identified.

Round two of the engagement process ran from 11th August 2021 to 11th September 2022 and presented the draft Strategy to the community for feedback "Did we get it right".

The feedback from this round of engagement was analysed and incorporated where relevant into the final Strategy which is due to be presented to Council for endorsement late 2022.

Economic development officers at Seeds of Life market in Upwey



Engagement overview

Oct 11 2022 - Sept 18 2022

Shaping Yarra Ranges project web page

The engagement webpage provided project information accessible to the public, including the draft Strategy, a summary document, a video outlining the key aspects of the project and expert background reports. The webpage gathered feedback via two online surveys, provided a registration form for people to attend webinars and workshops, details of in person engagement opportunities and options for other online feedback submissions.

Engagement performance - project lifetime



3,004

web page views

1,426

visitors



152

contributions

97 x surveys
40 x online submissions
15 x email/phone/in-person submissions



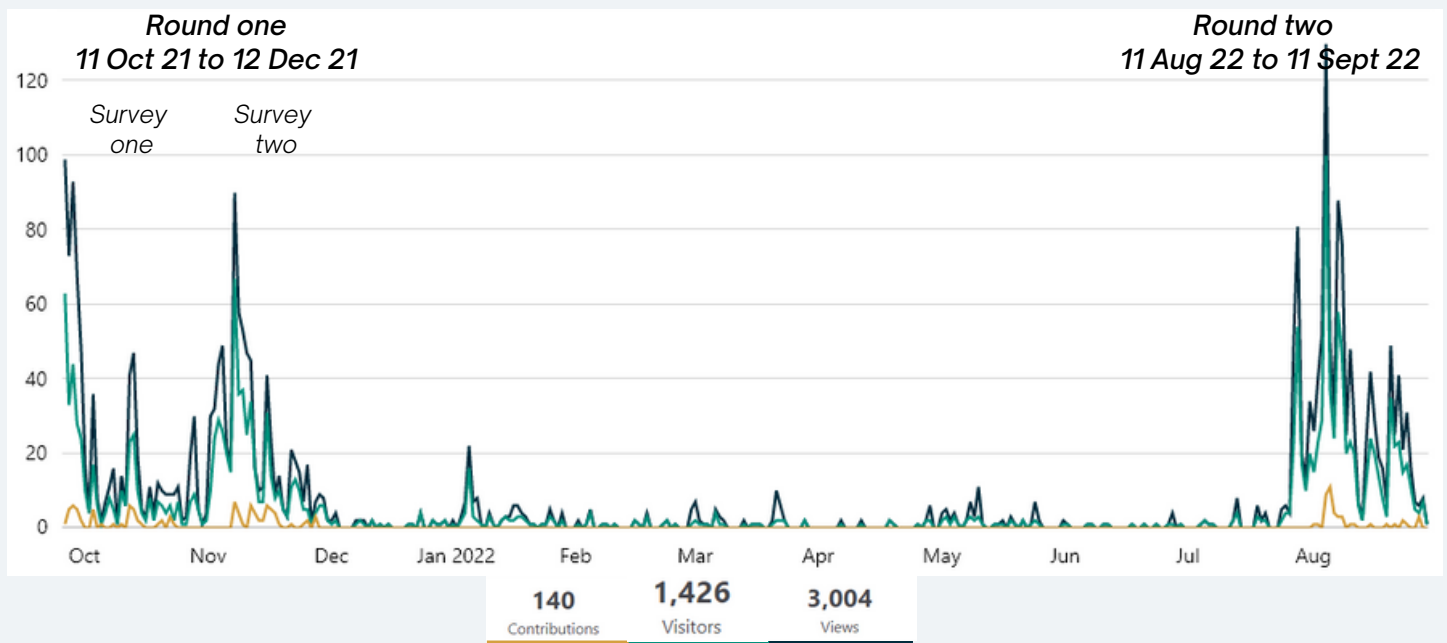
380

document resources
downloaded



96

people viewed the
engagement video



Engagement activities



23 x key business and industry consultations with a total of **61** participants



2 x surveys with a total of 97 participants



6 x drop in sessions across the region at community links and markets



3 x broader community workshops with a total of **36** participants

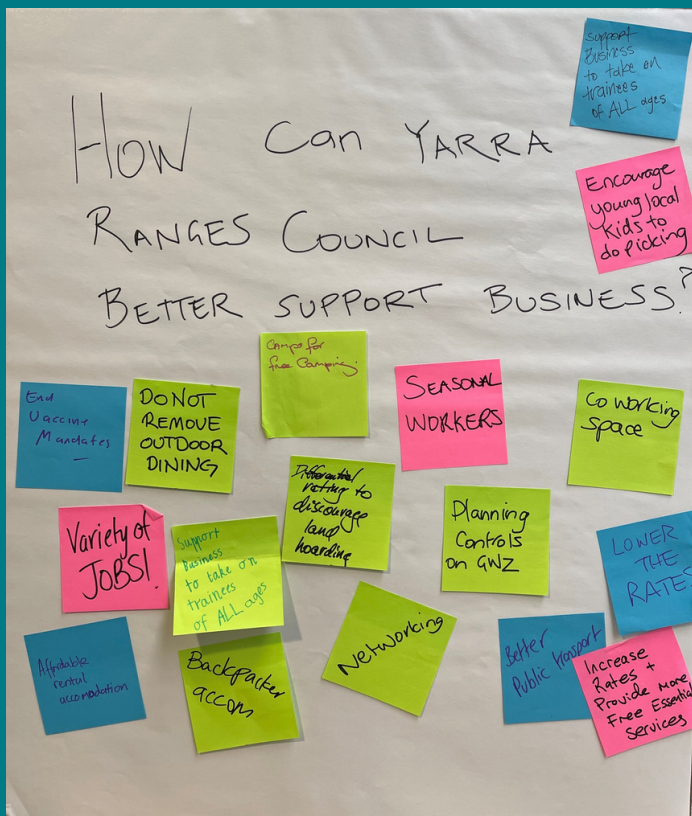


More than **40** tailored consults with industry, business and community groups, advisory committees and close engagement with Council's elected representatives

Communications and promotion activities

<p>Direct notification</p>	<p>Emails to announce the project, share updates, offer new opportunities to engage and direct people to the project webpage were sent to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • business, industry and community group contacts • people who had signed up to be informed about the project • State/Federal MPs • external government agencies <p>Emails were also distributed to mailing lists from other the Council departments.</p>
<p>Media Release, newsletter, eNews</p>	<p>A media release outlining the purpose of the project and encouraging participation was sent to local media which achieved a number of media mentions. Articles, updates and information were included in Council, business, industry and community newsletters. Articles, updates and information were included in Council, business, industry and community newsletters.</p>
<p>Social Media</p>	<p>Promotions were shared through the life cycle of the project on multiple social media channels including FaceBook (Council and Business pages), Instagram and LinkedIn.</p>

Post it note activity from market stalls



All engagement has been undertaken in line with Council's Community Engagement Policy, 2021.



Round one summary

Oct 11 - Nov 27 2021

How we engaged

The approach of this round of engagement was to

- collate data
- encourage participants to put forward solutions to any issues raised
- creating advocates for the project
- raise awareness and understanding of the challenges and opportunities for the Yarra Ranges economy.



Two surveys were conducted receiving 98 contributions.



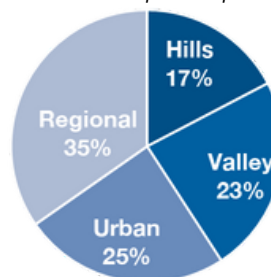
26 x Community and Stakeholder Engagement Workshops workshops
These sessions were interactive and included brain storming, polls and solutions generation

Who we spoke to

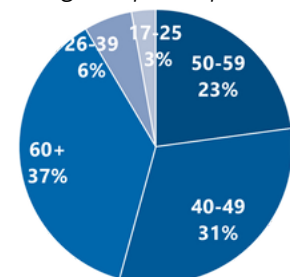


Tailored consults were undertaken with various special interest groups including Advisory Committees, Business Leaders Roundtable, State and Federal members, Local Employment and Education and Community Groups.

location of participant



age of participant



What we asked

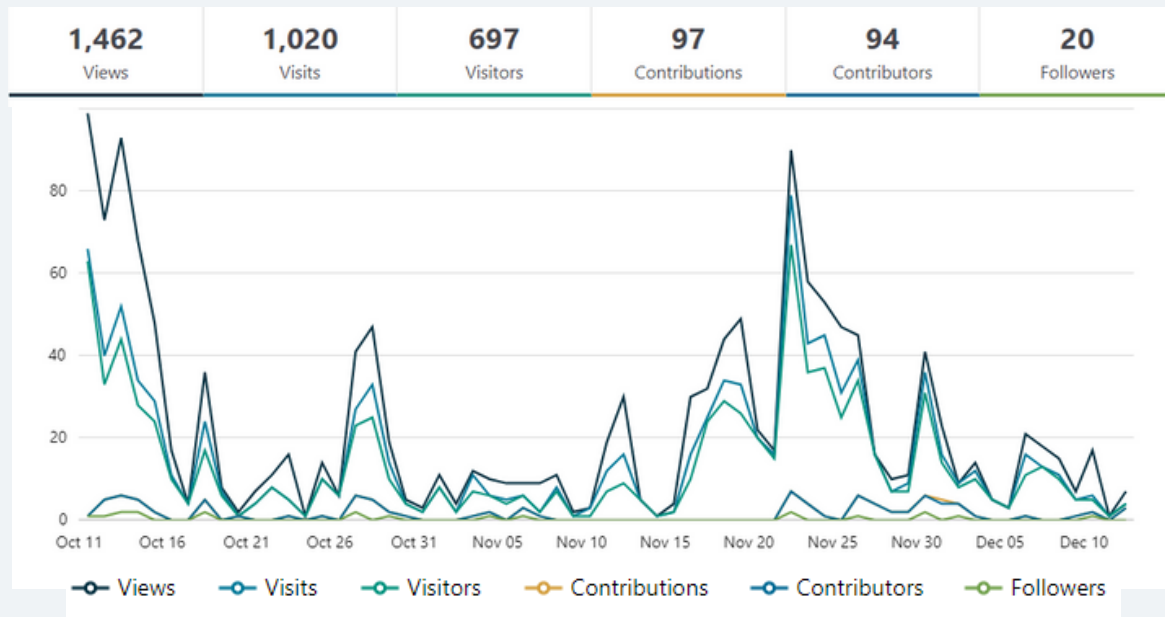
Survey questions and workshop discussions were intentionally clustered around the following nine themes

- * population, lifestyle, jobs and services
- * industry, commerce and trade
- * housing
- * workforce capability
- * development and urban form
- * investment attraction
- * identity
- * targets and growth indicators
- * collaboration and partnerships

What we heard

Shaping Performance Summary

Round one engagement



The following key findings emerged

Driving economic growth

- Through attracting value-add industries, jobs and investment with a strong desire for purpose-driven growth rather than “growth for the sake of growth.”
- Along with an expectation that to achieve overall economic success for the region, Council needs take a leadership role in the economic development of the Yarra Ranges.

Capitalising on our strengths

- Our sense of identity and pride, our products and brands and quality innovation.
- A strong belief that Yarra Ranges has the potential to attract “appropriate levels of investment”, through a professional and collaborative approach to investment attraction.
- Strong aspirations around maintaining and enhancing the unique environment, character and lifestyle of the Yarra Ranges whilst also leveraging these and our proximity to Melbourne in coordinated and purposeful attraction activities.

Addressing our weaknesses

With more a differentiated identity, more responsive Council, better collaboration among business networks, building successful partnerships to deliver initiatives and improved workforce capability.

Leveraging opportunities

Including future societal and technological trends, investment, innovation and start-ups and entrepreneurs attraction.

Managing challenges

Such as regulatory controls that impact business expansion, intensification, or adaptive re-use.

What we did

Feedback, trends and key issues that emerged were analysed and distilled from the nine initial themes into four priority areas:

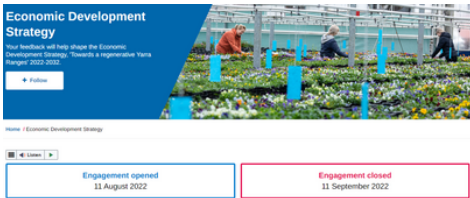
- Identity, leadership and collaboration
- Commerce, trade and workforce capability
- Investment attraction
- Innovation and entrepreneurship.

These formed the framework, direction and a suite of actions for the draft Strategy.

Initial key challenges analysed into the four priority areas	
Identity, Leadership and Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Identity-related issues (various). Lack of identity, somewhat low brand awareness outside of the region, untapped national and global potential for leveraging brand Yarra Ranges and need to protect individual township identities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Need for brand differentiation. •Reputational risk: Council's commitment to economic development, industry engagement and business responsiveness. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Need for better Council-Industry engagement. •Over consultation fatigue (Council-Community engagement).
Commerce, Trade and Workforce Capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Low brand awareness of Yarra Ranges' commerce and trade offerings - domestically and internationally - beyond our established reputation as a premium wine region. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Restrictive state and local planning controls that limit the availability of land for business expansion, intensification, or adaptive re-use. •Potential loss of productive agricultural and industrial land uses due to residential encroachment and associated complaints about pre-existing agricultural / industrial activities. •Not fully capitalising on opportunities to attract High Value Travellers, new businesses, and entrepreneurs. •Diminishing younger workforce due to perceptions of limited choices when it comes to lifestyle, jobs, career pathways, housing, and transport. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talent shortage for future industries / growth sectors.
Investment Attraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Investment disincentive: Shortage of land supply and building spaces to establish and grow businesses •Lack of supporting infrastructure to complement or service tourism, agribusiness and other industry sectors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Absence of a coordinated proactive investment attraction activity •Perception that Council is unable or unwilling to advocate with other government tiers for regulatory change required to progress regionally significant infrastructure and to increase chances of approval by investors <p>Reputational risk: Council's commitment to help resolve barriers to investment in priority industries sectors</p>
Innovation and Entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Untapped opportunity to export industry knowledge for innovation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Limited engagement between education and industry •Untapped potential of Box Hill Institute Lilydale Lakeside campus •Yarra Ranges is not in the primary consideration set of startups and entrepreneurs despite its lifestyle and proximity to Melbourne <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of innovation hubs, precincts, and co-working spaces

How we engaged

The approach for round two of the engagement was a 'check in', to ask the community "Did we get it right?" and ask for feedback or suggestions for changes and improvements to the draft Strategy.



The Shaping web page included two options to submit feedback (a short 'post it' note or longer 'more to say' option), access to project resources including a informative video, draft Strategy, a Summary Strategy document, Background Report and Engagement Findings Report.



In person 'drop in' sessions at community links and markets



Tailored consults, presentations and emails

Who we spoke to

- Broader community
- Participants of round one engagement
- Business groups
- Advisory groups

We reached new people!
75% of the participants submissions received on the Shaping Yarra Ranges page had not been previously engaged.

Mayor introducing the information video

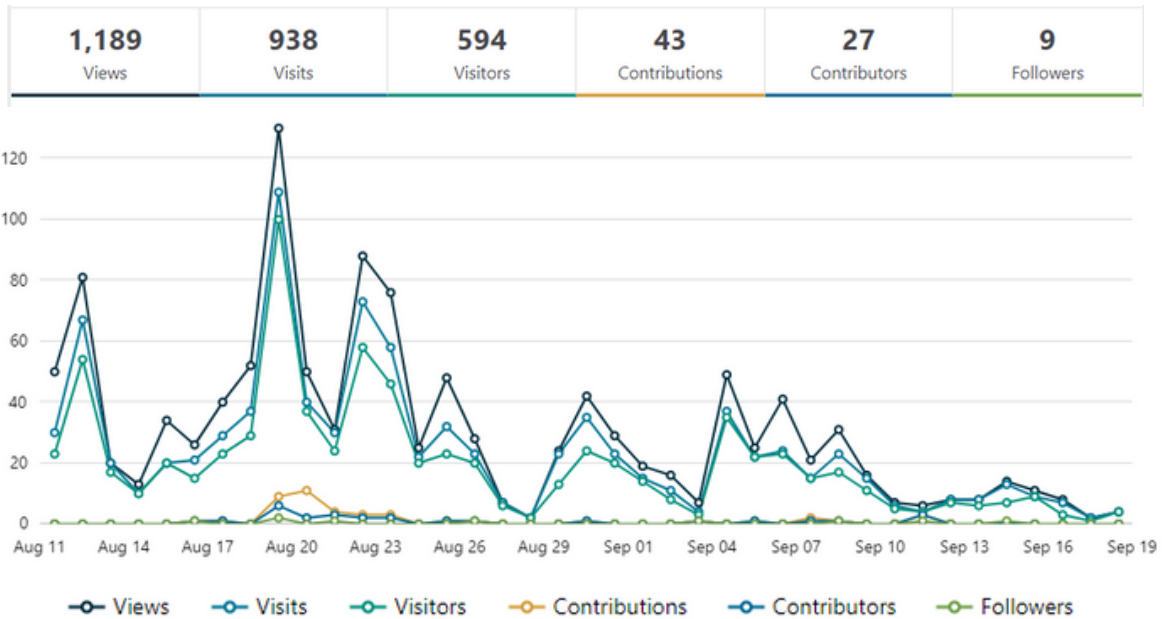


Community engagement market stall set-up



What we heard

Shaping Performance Summary



Submissions and interactions summary

There were excellent levels of interaction, submissions and interest in the resources available for the community on the Shaping website.



377

document resources
downloaded



55

community
submissions



96

people viewed the
engagement video

Number of times resources were downloaded	
Draft Strategy	117
Accessibel draft	45
Summary Strategy	157
Background report	23
Engagment findings report	19
Engagement overview	16

Post it notes from Shaping web page

The post-it notes contain the following feedback:

- 19 August, 2022**
yueyang says:
"Strongly supporting this strategy and looking forward to implementing concrete policies as soon as possible in development of agriculture"
- 19 August, 2022**
Mary says:
"Strongly supporting this strategy and looking forward to implementing concrete policies as soon as possible in development of agriculture"
- 19 August, 2022**
Silvan family says:
"What about Silvan?? Your glossy Strategy brochure does not even give it a place on your design. As a local resident I see very little done."
- 17 August, 2022**
Chrissy says:
"What an insightful video - documentation, a part time resident of the Yarra Rangers I look forward to seeing these actions come to fruition."

Submissions overview

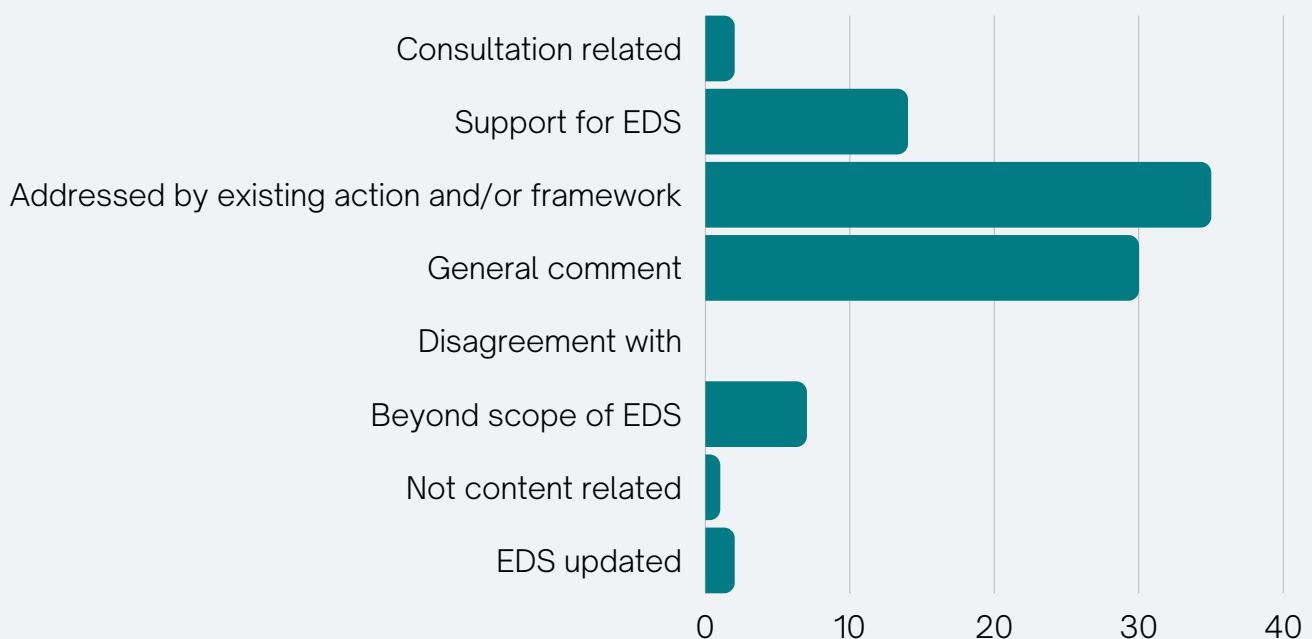
Type of submission

There was a total of 55 submissions from community members, the 'post-it note' was the most popular with 26 followed by the 14 longer submissions.



Comments summary

Analysis of the submissions produced a consistent theme of positive comments and support for the Strategy. Further evaluation indicated that many of the comments were addressed by existing actions or the framework of the Strategy. The table on the following page indicates the changes that were made as a result of the feedback received.



What we did

From the feedback we received the following amendments were made to the final Strategy

What we heard	What we did
Missing Silvan in the Strategy	Added Silvan into the snapshot on Pag 16
Include older people	We have updated the EDS to include the addition of career transition as an included target cohort under Actions 2.3 and 2.4. In addition add career transition is included in the glossary.
Incorporating this Strategy with other Council strategies	Include notation that the Strategy is part of a suite. "This Strategy while focusing on the economic future for the Yarra Ranges works in conjunction with other key Council strategic documents."
Social Enterprises are missing	Added 'social enterprises to Action 1.3
Missing references to other beverages	Change from 'wine' to 'beverage' in key locations of the Strategy
Mayor's message seems to lack community approach	Mayor's message reworded to strengthen community-led approach

Spotlight - Case Study

Why?

In round one engagement it was identified that only 3% of the participants were aged under 25yrs old.

The YRC Community Engagement policy states “Community engagement will seek to connect with a diverse range of community members and stakeholders to create a balanced and inclusive engagement process, ensuring those impacted by council decisions are given the opportunity to be heard”. Given that the EDS and its outcomes will considerably impact young people in Yarra Ranges, both now and in the future, it’s imperative we hear their voice in the development of this key Tier 1 strategy

What?

Hearing the voices of Yarra Ranges youth.

Collaborating with the Yarra Ranges Tech School on a pilot term-long educational program that was directly linked to the Economic Development Strategy and asked students to think about what a sustainable future for the Yarra Ranges could look like.

Council officers from across the organisation collaborated over the programs five sessions and acted as subject matter experts to assist the young people in their projects. Economic Development and Investment, Environment & Infrastructure, Communications & Engagement, Planning Design & Development and the Youth Development Team.

The students returned to Yarra Ranges Tech School presenting their final projects to Council at a showcase in August.

Outcomes

The showcase - a culmination of the program

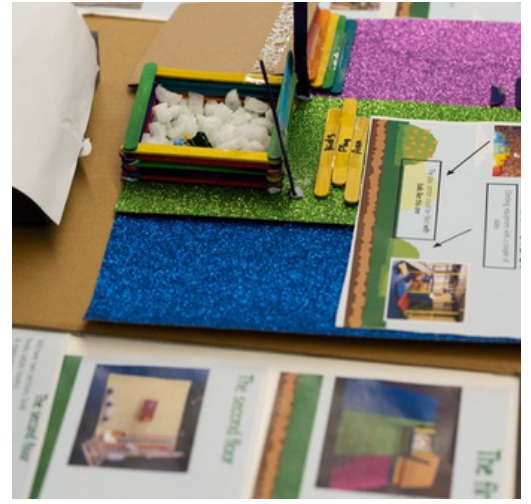
Students from Wowara Aboriginal College and Upper Yarra Secondary College presented their projects developed for the program at a showcase.

The students decided to collaborate on a project to revitalise the Warburton Sanitarium factory. Over five sessions they designed a project, utilising the facilities of the Yarra Ranges Tech School to build a prototype to present to Council. The students used laser-cutting, 3D printers, green screens and Lego models to build their prototypes.

The Wowara students designed a series of light projections telling the story of the Kulin Nation to be projected onto the silos of the factory. One group from Upper Yarra envisioned the grounds being home to a community garden, prioritising biodiversity and community wellbeing, while another group from Upper Yarra got creative with the interior of the building, including a community library, and even a temporary ice-skating rink.

Mayor Jim Child opened the showcase and said he felt very proud of the student’s achievements.

“The projects were simply amazing, Worawa's silo projection project of the story telling of the Kulin Nation combined with Upper Yarra's redesigning of Warburton's Sanitarium factory all showed potential worthy of further investigation,” he said.



Images of Showcase Day



Next steps

Implementation

This Strategy encompasses the collective aspirations of the community for the economic prosperity of our current and future generations.

Therefore, implementation will require the collective effort of local businesses across all industries, Council, government (State and Federal) and the broader community. Council is committed to taking a leadership and coordination role of the overall strategy. This is to ensure implementation, monitoring, evaluation and review is progressed in a timely and efficient manner.

Monitoring and measurement

The Strategy will be monitored bi-annually by Council, with advice and input from the Economic Leadership Taskforce comprising industry stakeholders and chaired by the CEO. The annual monitoring process will track progress against the goals and targets and against other proxy indicators of success where quantitative or qualitative data is available.

Evaluation and Review

Mid-term evaluations of the Economic Development Strategy will be undertaken by Council at the end of Years four and eight.

This will determine:

- The extent to which the Strategy has contributed towards achieving the identified goals.
- The degree of improvement in our four priority initiative areas.
- The level of success achieved in implementing the action plan and any future modifications to reflect the situation.
- The effectiveness of Council's internal and external coordinating mechanisms in relation to implementation of the Economic Development Strategy.

Following each evaluation, a review of the Strategy will be undertaken to ensure relevance and responsiveness to Council plans, community vision, industry needs and shifts in the local and global economic environment.

Yarra Ranges Council
PO Box 105
Lilydale VIC 3140
1300 368 333
mail@yarraranges.vic.gov.au

<http://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au>