

# A well designed city



A well designed city

A unique and  
prosperous city

A mobile  
accessible city

A social, inclusive  
and fair city

A focused and  
sustainable council

# Engagement Summary, 2019



## Overview

In 2018, the City of Launceston (Council) embarked on an 18-month program called Tomorrow Together. The program supports Council to engage with community and stakeholders on over 40 city-shaping and regionally significant projects.

Tomorrow Together is designed around six overarching themes. This report provides a summary of the conversations hosted as part of the second theme: A Well-Designed City. The engagement for this theme ran from 3 September to 31 October 2019.

Council hosted face-to-face events and used the online engagement platform Your Voice Your Launceston to explore with the community what it means for Launceston to be a Well-Designed City. This included identifying what people love about Launceston and how we can protect those values while planning for residential growth.

It also provided the opportunity for members of the community to meet Council officers and learn about the work Council is doing around building heights, heritage, residential growth, Smart City technology, and improving planning application processes.

This report provides a summary of participant comments and ideas gathered through the Well-Designed City engagement.

To learn more about the Tomorrow Together program visit [yourvoiceyourlaunceston.com.au](https://yourvoiceyourlaunceston.com.au)

Roll over this icon to reveal additional information.

Resilient city

A well designed city

A unique and prosperous city

A mobile accessible city

A social, inclusive and fair city

A focused and sustainable council

# How people participated



## Online

**219** people completed an online survey

**308** mapped comments



## Community pop-up

Two community pop-ups were delivered:

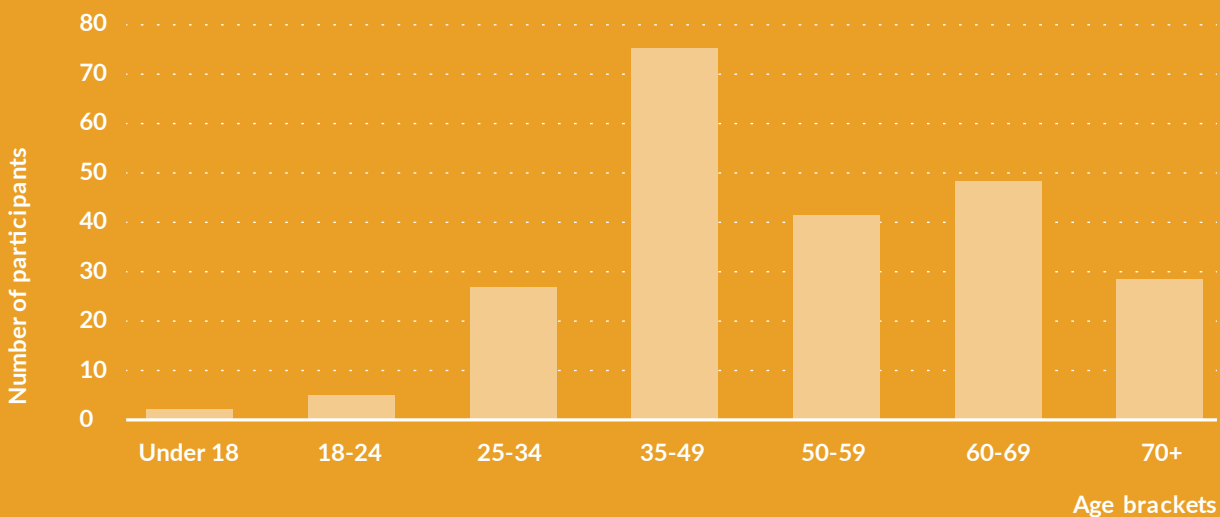
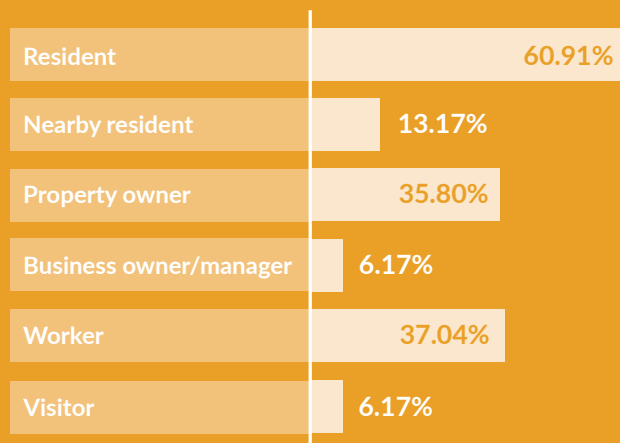
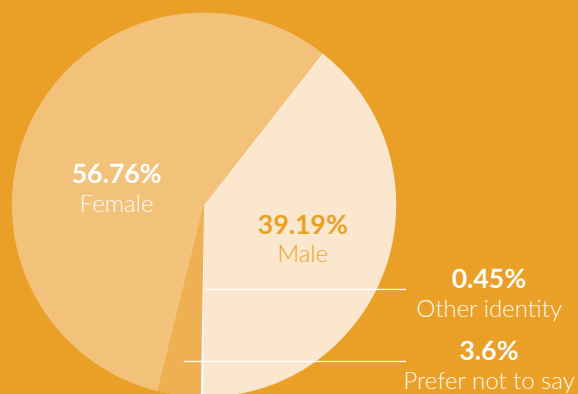
- ① Harvest Market 31 August 2019
- ② Mowbray Shopping Mall on 21 August 2019



## Major event

**179** people attended the Well-designed City community event held on Saturday 7 September 2019 at Seaport

# Who participated



● Participants

Resilient city

A well designed city

A unique and prosperous city

A mobile accessible city

A social, inclusive and fair city

A focused and sustainable council

## Engagement findings

This section of the report contains a summary of the written responses provided during the Well-Designed City engagement. It includes information that was provided at the major event, community pop-ups and through online surveys. The summary shares overall feedback and common themes that were raised around:

- planning for a well-designed city
- what people love about Launceston
- the community's aspirations for the future of Launceston
- the planning application process
- how we manage growth
- becoming a Smart City
- the community's priorities for a well-designed city
- activation of public spaces.

“

87%

*Felt that designing a liveable city should be the top priority for Council*

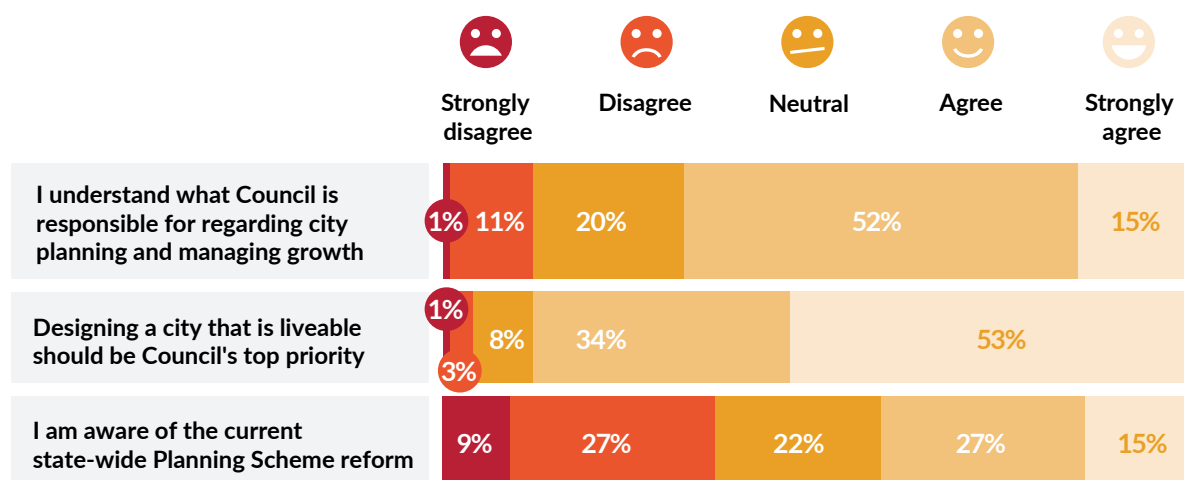
”

### Planning for a Well-Designed City

Part of Council's role in city planning is to ensure the way we design the city provides affordable housing, locates housing where they have access to necessary services, education, transport and jobs, while preserving the character of our neighbourhoods and what people love about Launceston.

Participants shared their knowledge and views on urban planning in Launceston. As shown in Figure 1, most participants felt that designing a liveable city should be the top priority for Council (87%); and many also felt they understood Council's role in city planning and growth (67%).

In July 2019, Council adjusted their planning scheme to align with Tasmania-wide reforms. This impacted 7,500 residents in Launceston. Altogether, 42% of respondents were aware of this reform.



**Figure 1:**  
Online survey participants level of agreement relating to planning in Launceston

# What we love about Launceston

To understand the important values that need protecting when planning for a well-designed Launceston, Council asked participants to identify what they love about Launceston. Clear themes emerged in participant responses including accessibility, built form, the environment and the lifestyle. The overarching themes have been summarised below in order from most frequently mentioned to least frequently mentioned.

“

**39%**

*said accessibility of Launceston was part of what they love about the city*

”

We are currently drafting an Access Framework and Action Plan. [Click here to provide feedback.](#)

- **Accessibility of the city** for work, services and recreation was consistently highlighted by participants as a strong aspect of what they love about Launceston. Many participants discussed loveable places and services in Launceston, as well as surrounding parks and natural landscapes as easily accessed by car, bike or by walking.
- Participants persistently expressed how they value having **beautiful and pristine natural environments** on the doorstep of Launceston, coupled with the excellent air quality.
- Participants indicated that access to **community events and high-quality parks and open spaces** means that there is always something to see and do where recreational spaces and activities are accessible to everyone.
- **Heritage buildings and the city's historical significance** as the third oldest settlement in Australia was highly valued by participants.
- Participants frequently noted the **'small-town' lifestyle** of Launceston as a unique quality that gives the city a slower pace and a calm and relaxing atmosphere.
- A **strong sense of community** and the friendly people contribute to a sense of inclusivity and belonging for people living in Launceston. Participants indicated that they feel the city is a safe place to live for individuals and families.
- Participants frequently noted that Launceston is enhanced by the **scale and design of the built form**, such as the attractive streetscapes and low building heights, as well as the cleanliness of the city.
- Participants sometimes indicated the **affordability** of Launceston as something that encourages people to live and stay in the city.

Most frequently mentioned



Least frequently mentioned

Resilient city

A well designed city

A unique and prosperous city

A mobile accessible city

A social, inclusive and fair city

A focused and sustainable council

# What do you love about where you live?

“

*It's home! Friendly, Clean, Great facilities - we bat way above our average for a Regional City.*

”

“

*I love the beauty, the history and the community.*

”

“

*There are so many things to do here. We are so lucky to have so many amazing parks, the gorge which is free except for parking, we can attend events such as going to the AFL and Big Bash cricket.*

”

“

*The climate, pace of life, easy access to my workplace, fresh air, natural environment, the Gorge, access to facilities, great environment to bring up a family.*

”

“

*It's big enough to be interesting but small enough to feel like a real community.*

”



Resilient city

A well designed city

A unique and prosperous city

A mobile accessible city

A social, inclusive and fair city

A focused and sustainable council

## Aspirations for the future of Launceston

Council asked participants what their aspirations are for the future of Launceston. The most commonly mentioned words are captured in Figure 2 below. The words that were mentioned most are largest in size. As shown, many comments mentioned ideas about people, community, physical spaces, cleanliness and accessibility.

Participants had clear aspirations for the future of Launceston. They frequently advocated for maintaining and building on the strengths that make it the city they love already. Participants also identified new areas that could improve the city for future generations. The following provides a summary of the most commonly raised aspirations (in order of most frequently raised).



Figure 2:

Word cloud of the most commonly used words from participant responses on their aspirations for Launceston for future generations

“

*A clean, sustainable and modern city we can be proud to call home.*

”

Resilient city

A well designed city

A unique and prosperous city

A mobile accessible city

A social, inclusive and fair city

A focused and sustainable council



### **A sustainable and clean city that takes care of its green spaces:**

Participants repeatedly envisioned a sustainable Launceston for future generations. Many participants discussed opportunities to make Launceston a leader in sustainability, striving for ambitious goals such as becoming carbon neutral, achieving zero waste, and transitioning to sustainable transport options. Participants regularly highlighted that Launceston should be a clean city, and one that preserves its greenery, natural landscapes, parks and open spaces.



### **A community that is welcoming, inclusive and safe:**

Participants often envisioned a safe Launceston which retains its welcoming, 'small-town' community atmosphere. Some participants hoped to see a city that was fairer and gave equal opportunities to everyone in the community. Affordable housing was sometimes highlighted by participants, who advocated for more affordable housing options and programs for people to both combat homelessness and keep the city affordable for everyone.



### **A thriving, prosperous and affordable place to work and live:**

Participants often imagined a city that encourages opportunities to develop, grow and progress, with new investments into jobs, high-quality and modern infrastructure and emphasis on improving essential services. Some participants cited a revitalised CBD as important for the future of the city. Participants understood that this requires a balanced approach, where heritage is celebrated and protected. Still, there is the flexibility to modernise and to continue to grow into a vibrant, prosperous and culturally active urban hub.



### **A unique city that has preserved and celebrates its heritage:**

Participants frequently highlighted the importance of heritage to the future of Launceston. They envisioned a city that provides an interesting built environment which embraces its historical past and preserves it for future generations to benefit from the unique and important legacy of the city.



### **Improved transport and community services:**

Participants often acknowledged the importance of the quality and accessibility of essential community services such as schools and healthcare services. They said this is integral to Launceston's future success. Participants regularly highlighted the need for improved transport infrastructure and services, such as cycling and walking paths, suggesting this would help Launceston be a more sustainable and accessible city.



### **Development was a topic of debate:**

Participants were divided on what they thought the role development will play in the future of Launceston. Some participants asserted that encouraging development for the city, particularly the CBD, would bring more people to the city centre. Such development was perceived to create opportunities for a more vibrant city through increased activity, cultural experiences, and new job opportunities.

Other participants hoped Launceston would continue to embrace its small-town lifestyle, suggesting that the city should work to preserve this through a modest approach to development. Some participants argued for the retention of low height limits for any new developments and limited increases to residential density.

“

*I want to leave a clean city, a city that is aware of its footprint and a city where everyone feels responsible for its future.*

”

“

*A bright, fun, lively city. A city that values art and music. A city that feels safe, and inclusive, where diversity is celebrated, and people have access to essential services. A city where people are happy and feel comfortable and love.*

”

“

*A safe city which is responsible and looks after all citizens from all walks of life and abilities. Has something for everyone to connect with. Looks after our environment - especially things like recycling. Keeps our lovely architecture and scenery, but still allows for development.*

”



# The planning application process

Participants were asked if they had ever been involved in a development or building application and were invited to discuss what had helped and/or hindered this process for them. From 217 responses, 86 participants indicated that they had been involved in one of these processes. Participants described different experiences navigating these processes. Participants described both positive and negative experiences across a broad range of topics, including receiving advice, wait times, community involvement, cost and accessibility of information. The following summarises participant responses, organised by what helped and hindered their involvement in development or building application processes.

## What helped:



- Ease of accessing advice from technical and planning staff around development applications during all stages of the process communicated in an accessible way
- accessibility of planning and building requirements online
- opportunity for community to have input into the strategic planning process develops knowledge and creates a sense of ownership over projects
- focus on safety in the development process.

## What hindered:



- Lack of advice and support from Council to make amendments to applications to earn approval
- Difficulty in navigating bureaucracy and excessive permit requirements
- Lengthy application wait times, high fees and the perception of too much 'red tape' associated with simple developments
- Limited time for community to provide input and feedback on development applications, and perceptions that community objections are circumvented by developers highly experienced in the applications process.

# How we manage growth

42%

of online survey participants were concerned about traffic and congestion

When discussing growth, participants often discussed the challenges and concerns around managing growth in a way that is appropriate for Launceston. A broad range of topics was raised, including the need for strategic planning, managing impacts on the environment, housing demand, protecting heritage and public infrastructure provision. The positive outcomes of growth were identified as the potential for more economic investment, job opportunities and increased vibrancy in activity centres.

The following summarises comments given about how growth might impact Launceston (in order of most frequently to least frequently raised).

Many participants suggested that **strategic planning and improvements to transport infrastructure** are essential to managing growth well. Participants regularly identified increased traffic and road congestion as a concern associated with growth.

The kanamaluka/Tamar River was identified as an important **environmental asset** that should be protected from further pollution that may occur as a result of growth. Proactive management of pollution was identified as critical to managing growth, including improved management of waste, car and truck pollutants and polluted water runoff.

**Housing** and how housing growth is managed was a key topic of discussion. Many participants were concerned about the effect growth would have on the demand for housing. Some participants were calling for affordable housing to be an area of focus when planning for future growth of Launceston.

Some participants discussed the **location of future residential growth**. There was some concern raised around the loss of environmental assets and biodiversity as a result of new greenfield developments. Some participants discussed the need for higher density development within existing urban areas to limit the spread of urban development, while also reducing reliance on cars. There was some contention around increasing density in existing urban areas. **Heritage** is highly valued by the Launceston community, and there was concern expressed around losing heritage as a result of increased development. Some participants discussed placing strong emphasis on creating satellite towns around Launceston to reduce development pressure on the city centre.

Close **management of essential infrastructure** (such as water, drainage and sewage) as Launceston grows was discussed by some participants. Comments discussed the need for regular upgrades and increased capacities of infrastructure as required to support growth.

“ There is the risk of losing our character and our natural environments. This needs to be protected. ”

“ Hopefully positively if the growth is controlled and well planned. Growth is important providing we can maintain the elements of Launceston that make it a good city. ”

Resilient city

A well designed city

A unique and prosperous city

A mobile accessible city

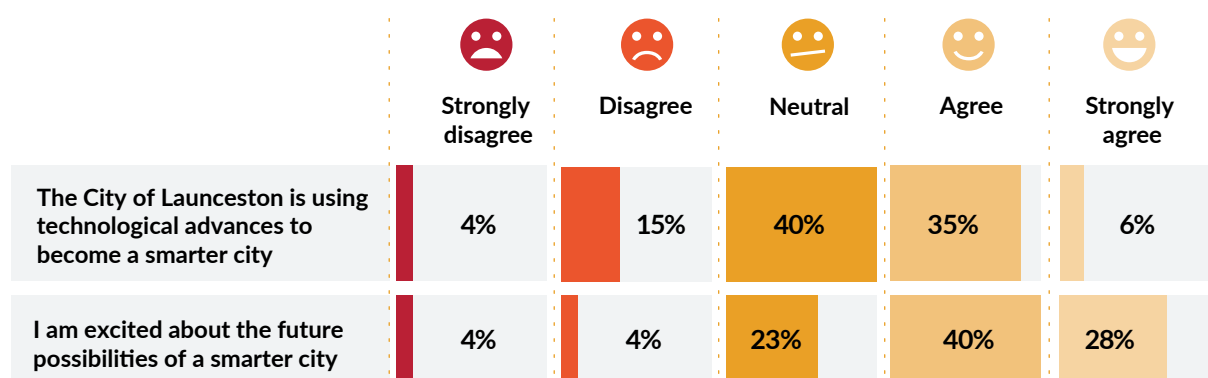
A social, inclusive and fair city

A focused and sustainable council

## A 'Smart City'

**68%** of participants were excited about the future possibilities of a Smarter City

Part of this theme was educating the community on some of the ways Council is working to become a Smart City using new and innovative technologies. Participants were asked to provide their observations on how Council is using technological advances to become a smarter city. It was observed through the face-to-face events that for many community members the 'smart city' concept is still a relatively new concept. People were interested to learn about what Council has been working on but prior to the engagement were not necessarily aware of what Council has been working on. Majority of participants indicated that they were excited about the future possibilities of a smarter city.



**Figure 4:**  
Participants level of agreement relating to Launceston as a smart city (n=235)

We asked participants what a smart city meant to them. Participants described broad smart city concepts, including:

- enhancing efficiency and safety
- transitioning to a sustainable future
- improving service delivery and infrastructure
- gathering information to inform better decision making
- building on the capacity of essential service providers to better respond to challenges in the future.

Other participants reflected on what they thought a smart city could do to improve performance across key areas (such as planning, sustainability, service provision and innovation) and leverage technology to improve people's daily lives.

- The following points provide a summary of the opportunities and challenges identified through the engagement.

## Opportunities

---

- ✓ Improved efficiency in resource usage, such as water and electricity
- ✓ More efficient and effective despatch of emergency services and improved response times
- ✓ Improved capacity to work towards the goal of a more sustainable and greener Launceston, using technologies to reduce reliance on fossil fuels
- ✓ Use of technology to improve traffic management and create greater efficiencies when moving around the city, such as programmed traffic lights
- ✓ General comments about improved lifestyle for residents and visitors

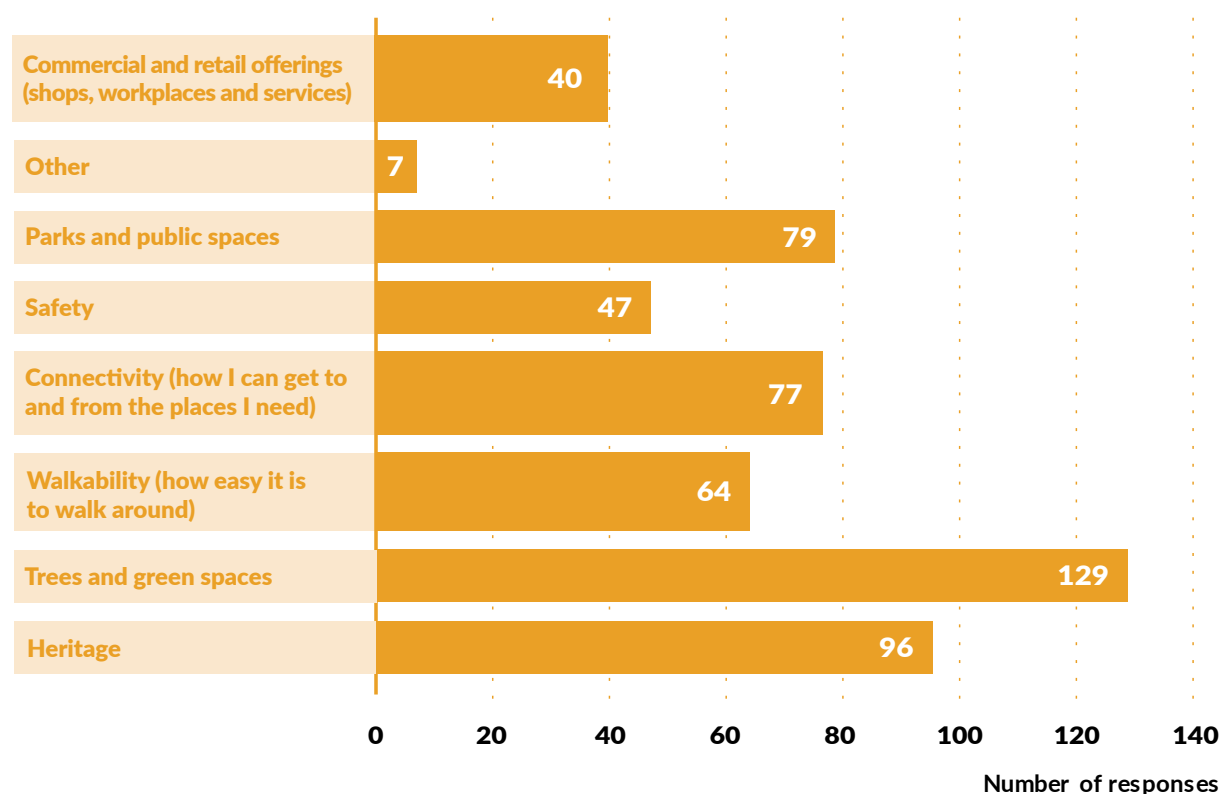
## Challenges

---

- ✗ Some participants were apprehensive about the implications of increased public surveillance, suggesting that Launceston's use of a smart city approach should be informed by shared goals and aspirations for how to improve the city, not merely to keep tabs on citizens
- ✗ Some participants indicated that they did not fully understand the concept of a smart city enough to comment or were unsure of how a smart city approach could improve Launceston.

# The community's priorities for a well-designed city

Participants were presented with seven essential elements of a well-designed city and asked to identify what they felt were the top two priorities. Trees and green space, and heritage were identified as the two highest priorities (see Figure 5). Each option attracted varying levels of support, but all were acknowledged as important and many of these elements were further reflected on by participants when describing what they love about Launceston and would like to see in the future.



**Figure 5:**  
Combined online and face-to-face participants' priorities for a well-designed city (529 responses)

Resilient city

A well designed city

A unique and prosperous city

A mobile accessible city

A social, inclusive and fair city

A focused and sustainable council

## Activating our public spaces

Recognising that public spaces are critical to the success of a well-designed city, participants were asked to provide ideas for activating public spaces in Launceston. The following ideas were shared.

- Public sculptures
- Sporting facilities, such as basketball and soccer facilities
- Recognition of Aboriginal culture through Aboriginal public art and cultural installations
- Dog parks
- Bike lanes and footpaths
- Fewer empty shops in the CBD to increase activity and vibrancy
- Public water guns
- Urban greening, such as urban farms, laneway greening and rooftop gardens
- Food vans.

Resilient city

A well designed city

A unique and  
prosperous city

A mobile  
accessible city

A social, inclusive  
and fair city

A focused and  
sustainable council