

Council's response to the Stonnington People's Panel 2025

Response to the panel's recommendations on the Community Vision and Council Plan

July 2025

Introduction

In February to March 2025, the City of Stonnington brought together a People's Panel to represent the Stonnington community as part of a deliberative engagement process to review the Stonnington Community Vision 2040 and inform the development of the Council Plan 2025-2029 and related key strategic documents.

The Stonnington People's Panel 2025 was made up of 33 individuals from a broader pool of people in the community who had been invited to participate in the panel following a random and independent selection process. This process aimed to ensure Council could hear from a cross-section of the community broadly representative of the diversity of people in Stonnington.

The engagement exercise was undertaken to meet Council's obligations under the *Local Government Act 2020*, which requires Council to apply deliberative engagement practices (as set out in Council's Engagement Policy) in the development and review of its Community Vision and Council Plan.

This report provides a summary of the outcomes from the People's Panel and how these have informed Council's development of *Stonnington Tomorrow*, which incorporates both the Stonnington's Community Vision 2040 and Council Plan 2025-2029.

People's Panel's remit

The People's Panel was tasked with providing recommendations that would inform development of several strategic Council documents, including the Community Vision, Council Plan, Financial Plan, and Asset Plan.

This report addresses the Panel's recommendations relating to the Community Vision and Council Plan only.

The People's Panel was asked to review and update the existing Community Vision 2040 (see Appendix), originally developed in 2021, including the vision statement and six supporting principles, to ensure it continued to articulate the long-term aspirations of the community to 2040.

For each supporting principle, the panel was also asked to consider what this could look like in practice over the next four years.

Council's promise

Council's promise, consistent with the 'Collaborate' level of influence on the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation, was that it would look to the Panel for their advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate the Panel's advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.

Council's response to the People's Panel's recommendations

Council's responses to the People's Panel's recommendations are listed below and have been categorised as follows:

Supported in full	Council has taken this recommendation on board with no material changes.
Partially supported	Council has partially taken this recommendation on board with some changes.
Not supported	Council has not supported this recommendation.

Note: *Stonnington Tomorrow* can be found at connectstonnington.vic.gov.au/stonnington-tomorrow

Item	People's Panel recommendation	Council's response	How this will be implemented
	Community Vision statement		
1	Update to read: Welcome to Stonnington 2040. A modern, sustainable and interconnected community that supports the good health and wellbeing of all. Our community is a safe, accessible and creative city that celebrates and embraces all cultures including First Nations peoples past and living.	Supported in full With minor changes as follows, to reflect standard phrasing: Welcome to Stonnington 2040. A modern, sustainable and interconnected community that supports the good health and wellbeing of all. Our community is a safe, accessible and creative city that celebrates and embraces all cultures including First <i>Nations peoples Peoples</i> past and <i>living present</i>.	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Community Vision for Council adoption.

Item	People's Panel recommendation	Council's response	How this will be implemented
	Community Vision principle 1		
2	Update to read: Stonnington safeguards the character, heritage, and history of its streetscapes whilst growing sustainably in the interest of the community.	Supported in full With minor changes as follows, to keep consistent sentence structure across all principles: ~~Stonnington safeguards~~ Safeguard the character, heritage, and history of ~~its~~ streetscapes whilst growing sustainably in the interest of the community.	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Community Vision for Council adoption.
	Principle 1 in practice		
3	Grow services and amenities alongside population and development growth	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> under the Council Plan strategic direction 'Liveable City' as follows: - Objective 1.1 (planning) - Focus area 1.1.1 (development / affordable housing) - Focus area 1.1.3 (services and amenities) - Focus area 1.1.4 (plan and fund infrastructure)
4	Aim to achieve greater community focus, maintain heritage where appropriate with modern uses	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic direction 'Liveable City' as follows: Objective 1.2 (heritage and sustainable development)
5	Council to be more flexible with developments that have a heritage overlay when said renovations do not impact the streetscape (domestic)	Supported in full	To continue to be implemented in accordance with Council's Heritage Policy, which provides flexibility for rear alterations and additions that are not visible from the street.

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6	Provide education on what our important heritage sites are (commercial)	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic direction 'Liveable City' as follows: - Objective 1.2 (heritage and sustainable development) - Focus area 1.2.1 (heritage protection / education)
7	Ensure multi-use of council buildings (e.g. for sport, creative uses, childcare)	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic direction 'Well-governed organisation' as follows: - Focus area 5.1.3 (asset management) - Focus area 5.1.4 (property portfolio)
	Community Vision principle 2		
8	Update to read: Take climate and environmental action, protect biodiversity and pursue eco-friendly ways of living, guided by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Community Vision for Council adoption.
	Principle 2 in practice		
9	Meet the current "zero carbon Stonnington 2030 target"	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic direction 'Sustainable Environment' as follows: - Objective 4.1 (climate positive) - Focus area 4.1.1 (Council operations) - Focus area 4.1.2 (carbon sinks) - Focus area 4.1.3 (sustainable community practices) - Focus area 4.1.4 (supply chain)

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10	Facilitate the reduction of plastic and general waste at the source	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic direction 'Sustainable Environment' as follows: - Objective 4.5 (resource management) - Focus area 4.5.1 (circular economy) - Focus area 4.5.2 (sustainable consumption)
11	Facilitate eco-friendly active public and active transport, renewable energy, water efficiency and EV charging infrastructure	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic directions 'Liveable City' and 'Sustainable Environment' as follows: - Focus area 1.4.1 (sustainable active transport) - Focus area 4.1.1 (Council operations) - Focus area 4.1.3 (sustainable community practices) - Focus area 4.3.1 (water efficiency)
12	Protect and enhance species, flora and fauna	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic direction 'Sustainable Environment' as follows: - Objective 4.4 (biodiversity) - Focus area 4.4.1 (natural habitat)
13	Engage, educate and encourage the community to facilitate this principle	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic direction 'Sustainable Environment' as follows: - Objectives 4.1 to 4.5 (all Sustainable Environment objectives) - Focus area 4.1.3 (community sustainable practices) - Focus area 4.2.1 (climate resilience)

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			- Focus area 4.4.2 (people and nature) - Focus area 4.5.1 (circular economy) - Focus area 4.5.2 (sustainable consumption)
	Community Vision principle 3		
14	Update to read: Stonnington will be a caring and compassionate city that promotes and facilitates opportunities for community connections.	Supported in full With minor changes as follows, to keep consistent sentence structure across all principles: <i>Stonnington will Be</i> a caring and compassionate city that promotes and facilitates opportunities for community connections.	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Community Vision for Council adoption.
	Principle 3 in practice		
15	Ensure accessibility for all, especially for the old and young, with opportunities to rest (i.e. benches) and adequate shelter. Maintain and upgrade footpaths for improved accessibility.	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic directions 'Thriving Community' and 'Liveable City' as follows: - Focus area 3.2.1 (accessible places) - Focus area 1.4.1 (pedestrian infrastructure) Note: Improvements to accessibility will be made as and when assets are upgraded in accordance with Council's asset renewal and upgrade program.
16	Maintain and improve childcare services that are so important for mothers without 'a village'. Maintain and upgrade of parks and playgrounds. Do not privatise current MCH services, council childcare.	Partially supported Council is committed to providing quality childcare and MCH services for children and their carers. However, Council reserves the right to consider different service delivery models as circumstances may require	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic direction 'Liveable City' as follows: - Focus area 1.1.3 (services and amenities) - Focus area 1.3.1 (parks / playgrounds / green spaces)

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		and based on the community's best interests taking all factors into account.	
17	Increase support for the homeless with proactive outreach services for those in need who wouldn't normally access them	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic direction 'Thriving Community' as follows: Focus area 3.1.2 (homelessness)
18	Encourage/assist businesses to run community events	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic direction 'Vibrant Destination' as follows: Focus area 2.3.3 (community events)
19	Promote community events on Instagram/community groups, bulletin boards in swimming pools, libraries, train stations, placards in public spaces, mailbox drops	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic direction 'Thriving Community' as follows: Focus area 3.2.2 (programs and events)
	Community Vision principle 4		
20	Update to read: Stonnington will have accountable and transparent governance with community representation in decision making through accessible and consultative communication	Supported in full With minor changes as follows, to keep consistent sentence structure across all principles: ~~Stonnington will Have~~ accountable and transparent governance with community representation in decision making through accessible and consultative communication.	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Community Vision for Council adoption.

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	Principle 4 in practice		
21	Ensure community involvement in decision making, through consultation, surveys, committees, town halls, and promote to CALD audiences and across social media, print, outdoor signage	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic direction 'Well-governed Organisation' as follows: - Objective 5.2 (transparent and accountable) - Focus area 5.2.1 (community involvement and input) - Focus area 5.2.2 (collaborative planning)
22	Improve reporting and feedback on consultations, including the 'Whys' of decision making	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic direction 'Well-governed Organisation' as follows: - Objective 5.2 (transparent and accountable) - Focus area 5.2.1 (community involvement and input) - Focus area 5.2.3 (communication)
23	Provide clear access to information, though freedom of information, complaints, and support to find answers, with KPIs for timely responses and escalation	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic direction 'Well-governed Organisation' as follows: - Objective 5.3 (customer experiences) - Focus area 5.3.2 (access to information)
24	Ensure major decisions consult with/consider all sectors of the community, with inclusive consultation as a minimum	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic direction 'Well-governed Organisation' as follows: - Objective 5.2 (transparent and accountable) - Focus area 5.2.1 (community involvement and input)
25	Establish a financial sustainability committee with reps from community business, councillors Council	Not supported	

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	employees and industry best practice leaders	Council considers financial sustainability a core responsibility of the elected Council and organisation, supported by expert advice and transparent reporting. Council is already advised by an Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) which includes three independent members. The ARC's primary purpose is to provide independent oversight and advice to Council on matters relating to financial reporting and risk management. Financial sustainability metrics are reported both through Council and the ARC on a quarterly basis and assumptions within the 10-year Financial Plan are reviewed and consulted with the community through the budget process annually.	
	Community Vision principle 5		
26	Update to read: Stonnington will provide safe and accessible public spaces for its community to gather and participate in arts, sports and recreation.	Supported in full With minor changes to keep consistent sentence structure across all principles as follows: ~~Stonnington will Provide~~ safe and accessible public spaces for <i>its the</i> community to gather and participate in arts, sports and recreation.	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Community Vision for Council adoption.

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	Principle 5 in practice		
27	Run affordable events and programs in parks, community centers, and public spaces	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic directions 'Liveable City' and 'Thriving Community' as follows: - Focus area 1.3.2 (public green spaces) - Focus area 3.2.1 (inclusive services) - Focus area 3.2.2 (programs and events) - Focus area 3.3.1 (recreation programs)
28	Work with community organisations and private enterprises to run events in public spaces for profit	Partially supported Council will support community and private enterprise organisations to run events that are not necessarily for profit, but add economic and social value to the community. Council incentivises community groups to run events through its grants programs.	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic direction 'Vibrant Destination' as follows: Focus area 2.3.3 (community events)
29	Build adequate lighting in all public spaces	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic direction 'Thriving Community' as follows: - Objective 3.1 (safety) - Focus area 3.1.1 (safe public spaces) - Focus area 3.2.1 (accessible places) Note: lighting in public spaces will be addressed as part of implementation of Council's safety objectives via the Community Safety Plan, aligned to the Council Plan.

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30	Make park amenities (toilets, barbecues, seating, taps) accessible to all	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic direction 'Thriving Community' as follows: Focus area 3.2.1 (accessible places and spaces) Note: Council will explore opportunities to improve the accessibility of park amenities as and when these are upgraded in accordance with its asset renewal and upgrade program.
31	Plant greenery in every available space	Partially supported Note: Council can encourage but not compel greening on private property. Council will continue its long-term program of tree-planting and greening, while also encouraging property owners to enhance greening of the private realm.	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic direction 'Sustainable Environment' as follows: Focus area 4.4.1 (city greening)
Community Vision principle 6			
32	Update to read: We provide access to a variety of quality services and amenities, regardless of the appropriate person's resources or ability, within 20 minutes of where they live.	Supported in full With minor changes as follows, to keep consistent sentence structure across all principles: <i>We Provide acceptable</i> access, <i>in terms of travel options and time</i> , to a variety of quality services and amenities, regardless of <i>appropriate</i> a person's resources or ability, within 20 minutes of where they live.	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Community Vision for Council adoption.

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	Principle 6 in practice		
33	Apply a 20-minute walking principle for services, e.g. Maternal and Child Health Nurse, supermarkets and pharmacies	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic direction 'Liveable City' as follows: Focus area 1.1.3 (services and amenities)
34	Establish/maintain a connected network of bike paths and safe roads, as driving is not accessible to all	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic direction 'Liveable City' as follows: - Objective 1.4 (safe, sustainable travel options) - Focus area 1.4.1 (cycling/pedestrian infrastructure) - Focus area 1.4.3 (road safety)
35	Ensure accessibility across transport networks, e.g. roads, footpaths, bike paths	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic direction 'Liveable City' as follows: - Objective 1.4 (safe, sustainable travel options) - Focus area 1.4.1 (cycling/pedestrian infrastructure) - Focus area 1.4.3 (road safety)
36	Set planning regulations to ensure the achievement of the '20-minute access for all'	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic direction 'Liveable City' as follows: Focus area 1.1.3 (services and amenities) Note: in line with the State Government's planning priorities, the policy language has shifted from 20-minute access to well-designed, well-connected neighbourhoods close to shops, services, public transport and employment.
37	Support a better mix of amenities and local businesses	Supported in full	Incorporated into <i>Stonnington Tomorrow</i> as part of the Council Plan strategic direction 'Vibrant Destination' as follows: - Objective 2.1 (destination of choice) - Focus area 2.1.2 (activity centres)

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			• Objective 2.2 (local businesses) • Focus area 2.2.1 (business tools and resources) • Focus area 2.2.2 (Pahran Market)

Appendix: Community Vision 2040 (as first adopted by Council in 2021)

Vision statement:

Our community is a safe, inclusive and creative city that celebrates and embraces its vibrancy of cultures.

Walking the tree lined streets, we pay respect to the influence of the Nation's First Peoples past and living on a modern, sustainable and interconnected way of life that supports the good health and wellbeing of all.

Welcome to Stonnington 2040.

Supporting principles:

1. Stonnington is a modern city that maintains heritage sites and its cultural identity whilst embracing progressive development, which supports its local businesses and encourages creative initiatives.
2. Protect biodiversity, take climate action and pursue eco-friendly ways of living, guided by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.
3. Stonnington's ambition is to be a caring, compassionate and supportive city for all members of the community.
4. Stonnington will have strong governance and diverse representative leadership, which enhances open two-way communication.
5. Stonnington's public spaces will provide the ability for all members of the community to experience and enjoy the natural environment.
6. We provide access to a variety of quality services and amenities for everyone within 20 minutes.