

# Shape Monash Panel – Annual Planning Process

*Participant Guide, May 2023*



## Welcome

Thank you to our Monash locals who put up their hand to gain a greater understanding of Monash Council, and our shared achievements and challenges. We are looking forward to hearing your thoughts and ideas for the 2023-24 Annual Planning Process as we finalise next year's budget.

As a Monash community panel member, you will deliberate over the challenges our community of 193,000 people are facing. Your efforts will help determine the priorities in meeting our community's changing needs, while maintaining future financial sustainability.

Please inform Council officers if you or a direct family member have been an ex-employee of Council or and ex-Councillor of the municipality. We will be asking all panel members to declare any conflicts of interest during registration.

In this guide, you will find an overview of the process, the panel's scope of discussion and what it means to be a panel member.

## Your contacts at Council

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**Language Assist** 普通话 9321 5485 Ελληνικά 9321 5482 廣東話 9321 5481 සිංහල 7005 3002 Italiano 9321 5483  
Bahasa Indonesia 7005 3001 Việt Ngữ 9321 5487 தமிழ் 7005 3003 한국어 9321 5484 हिंदी 7005 3000

## Why a panel for this project

The Monash Community Panel is a group of community representatives coming together to learn about and discuss issues in detail over a series of three sessions. The sessions will provide a space for participants to grow their understanding of the role of Council and its challenges and to work together to identify key priorities for the 2023-24 Annual Budget. This deliberative process will also provide an opportunity to further build a relationship between Council and the community.

## What you'll be working on

The panel's work will inform the Annual Planning Process, which is an essential, year-long business planning process with key deliverables that include Council's annual plan and the adopted budget.

The aim of the workshops is to engage with the community to:

1. receive feedback on Council's engagement approach thus far on the Annual Planning Process;
2. participate in the planning process to ensure that Council's Financial and Asset Plans are still relevant to community priorities; and
3. provide insight into Council's current business as usual services and what future provision of services would look like.

## What you can expect from being part of the panel

### Your role

As a panel member, you bring a unique community voice and perspective to the conversation. We ask that you respectfully listen to the viewpoints of others, fairly represent your community, and be generous in sharing your local knowledge with other panel members and Council.

### Code of conduct for panel members

- In agreeing to be a part of this process you will be required to attend and participate in all three sessions, you'll also be invited to present the panel's findings to our councillors.
- You are expected to arrive on time and remain for the duration of each session. If you are unavoidably delayed, please communicate with the contact person.
- Throughout the process you will be expected to take advantage of the information provided to learn as much as you can, and to be able to deliberate over the topics in a meaningful way.
- We ask that you assist in creating a welcoming and inspiring environment by having an open mind and being prepared to consider alternative views.
- We are all expected to treat each other in a respectful and courteous manner and allow others to express their views.
- The tasks you will undertake through this panel will have many impacting and competing factors, however we ask that you 'stay on topic' and focus on the scope of the conversation.

## Are you allowed to talk about what happens during the sessions?

Generally, yes. Talking to your family and friends about this project is encouraged, and you will be able to share and consider new information with them, to help them to understand challenges being faced by Council.

Over the course of the sessions there may be issues which are raised that should remain confidential. If this is the case, we will inform you at the time. You may be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement.

As a panel member, you are not authorised to speak to external third parties on behalf of Council about the project without written prior consent. This includes posting about the project or work on social media. If you are contacted by an external third party, such as the news or media, it is expected you will refer these contacts onto the project contact who will arrange for a formal response on behalf of Council.

## What can you expect over the sessions?

You and your fellow panel members will work together over the sessions to collaboratively develop key insights and feedback for Council to consider when finalising the Annual Budget, revising the Community Vision, relevant strategic plans (Long-Term Financial Plan and Asset Plan), future Service Planning.

The discussions to develop the key messages will be led by an independent facilitator. This will involve whole group conversation as well as small group work.

Working in a group can be really stimulating and inspiring, however you may also experience frustration. With lots of views and ideas being shared you might feel excited about the project, or at times, feel frustrated with discussions going off on tangents. They might feel disorderly, or you may feel you don't have the right information to achieve a meaningful outcome. During the sessions you are likely to experience these emotions. This is typical of working in a large group exercise.

## What will happen to the panel's outputs?

The panel will work to produce key messages to be considered in the development of the Annual 2023-24 Budget, revisions to the Financial Plan and Asset Plan, and inform Council's Service Planning. Each session will have a specific focus and goal, as outlined below. These will be strongly considered by Council and reflected, where possible, in our strategic documents.

## Overview of sessions

An overview of the panel sessions are provided below. An agenda will be presented at the beginning of each session.

Session	What to expect	Date
<b>Session 1</b> Online via Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction</li> <li>• How the Community Panel session will work</li> <li>• Introduction to Deliberative topics for input: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. receive feedback on Council's engagement approach thus far on the Annual Planning Process;</li> <li>2. Asset and financial planning – ensuring we manage our assets sustainably (renewal targets vs new projects)</li> <li>3. provide insight into Council's current business as usual services and what future provision of services would look like</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Topic 1: our engagement approach</li> </ul>	Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> May 2023  6pm – 9pm  Zoom link to be emailed
Discussion Forum Via Shape Monash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Panel member review information provided by Council</li> </ul>	In your own time in between sessions
<b>Session 2</b> Online via Zoom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation by Council on the current challenges we are facing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Long term asset and financial planning</li> <li>○ Service planning</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Panel to deliberate on whether Council's Assets and Financial plans are still relevant and Council's Service planning</li> </ul>	Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> May 2023  6pm – 9pm  Zoom link to be emailed
<b>Session 3</b> <b>In person workshop</b> <b>(3 hours)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete deliberation on topics</li> <li>• Finalise the key messages /deliberative findings under each priority area</li> </ul>	Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup> May 2023  6pm —9pm  Venue to be confirmed
<b>Presentation to Council</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Panel member to Present key findings from workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Engagement approach</li> <li>○ Long term asset and financial planning</li> <li>○ Service planning</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	TBCed - Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2023  6pm

## Level of influence

The panel will be guided through a structured process to prepare key messages under each of the priority areas for Council to consider in preparing the Annual Budget and relevant strategic plans (Long-Term Financial Plan and Asset Plan).

The promise to the community is based on the International Association of Public Participation Spectrum. The Spectrum helps to define the community's role in an engagement process and outlines the promise to the community. See Council's [Community Engagement Policy 2020](#) and the [Community Engagement Framework 2020](#).

Overall, the panel sits at the Involve level where the promise to the participants is that 'Council will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.'

## About local government

### How councils work

Local government plays a central and indispensable role within our federal system of government. It is recognised in the Victorian Constitution as a distinct and independent tier of government. It is the level of government closest to the people. It gives people a say in matters affecting their local area. Councils are governments – they provide a vehicle for the expression of local democracy.

### What councils do

Councils provide a wide variety of services to their municipalities and enforce various federal, state and local laws for their communities. These services include public health, traffic, parking and animal management. Community infrastructure maintained by the City of Monash has an estimated value of \$1.8 billion. It includes roads, bridges, stormwater drains, pathways, civic buildings, libraries, sport and recreation facilities, parks and gardens. Councils regularly review their activities to ensure they are providing best practice for their communities.

### Council elections

Local Government elections are the largest government elections run in Victoria. Around 2,000 candidates contest more than 250 different elections across 79 councils. This section explains aspects of the local government election system in Victoria. More information on council elections can be found at the <https://www.vec.vic.gov.au/voting/types-of-elections/local-council-elections> (VEC).

### How councils make decisions

Councils are empowered by law to make decisions on many matters of importance to their local communities. Decisions may be made in formally constituted Council meetings, or under the delegated authority of the Council. Neither the Mayor nor the Councillors have legal authority to individually act or make decisions on behalf of the council.

## Finance and planning

Councils manage substantial finances to provide a wide range of public services and maintain a considerable amount of public infrastructure. To finance its activities, councils are granted certain powers to raise funds. These are raised mainly by levying municipal rates. Councils also receive grant funding from the federal and state governments and can levy fees and charges for some services.

Councils are required by law to undertake various planning and reporting functions. This ensures that they responsibly manage resources and are accountable to the public. They are required to consult with the public while exercising these functions.

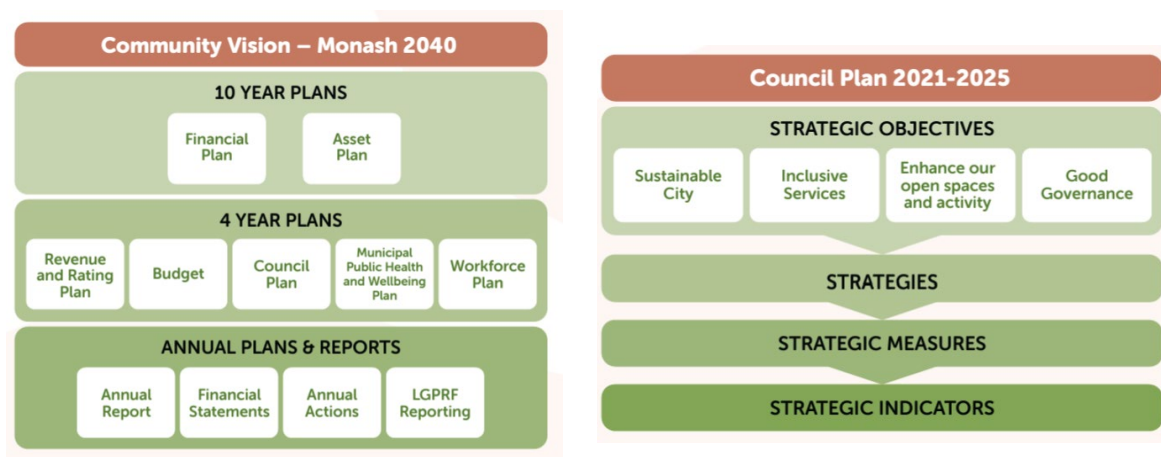
## About Monash Council

### Social and economic statistics

To explore the City of Monash community profile, social atlas, population forecast and economic profile, visit <https://www.monash.vic.gov.au/About-Us/Our-City/Monash-Profile-and-Statistics>

### Council Planning

Our Vision- **Monash is the most Liveable City in Victoria.**



<https://www.monash.vic.gov.au/About-Us/Corporate-Strategies-Plans/Integrated-Planning>

Council has identified 20 strategies for Budget funding based on our Council Plan 2021-25. The Plan is set out under four strategic objectives:

- Sustainable city
- Inclusive services
- Enhance our open spaces and activity
- Good governance

The Council Plan was developed through extensive consultation with our community.

The current Council plan is available at <https://www.monash.vic.gov.au/About-Us/Corporate-Strategies-Plans/Integrated-Planning>

## Your privacy

Transparency and openness are core components of community engagement. When you participate in person at workshops or events or in forums on Shape Monash, your contributions and identity are considered public. When you participate in surveys, questionnaires, and feedback forms, your comments may be published but your identity, if known, will remain anonymous. Please see Council's privacy statement here <https://www.monash.vic.gov.au/Privacy>