



# 2024/25 Budget Community Engagement Report

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## Summary

Each year, Council prepares an annual budget which outlines how we will deliver services and programs to our community. The budget covers things like managing waste, upgrading infrastructure, community facilities and parks, operating libraries, recreation centres, events and festivals, and services to people at all stages of life.

Monash Council recognises that the involvement of the community in making decisions and plans is fundamental to good governance. The Monash community is culturally diverse and engaged, rich with experience and expertise, whose participation is valued by Council.

Council aims to deliver a fair and financially responsible budget which responds to the needs of our community and focuses on delivering critical projects to ensure ratepayers get the best value from their investment.

Before we start to work on the budget, Council seeks ideas and feedback from the community which help us prioritise the types of projects and services they want Council to consider.

The aim of this year's community engagement was to:

- Provide the Monash community the opportunity to prioritise funding for services/projects and in particular, provide specific feedback on advocacy priorities
- Identify community priorities for limiting future expenditure or increase future revenue streams
- Use feedback from the survey to provide a degree of consensus where funding should be directed in future years.

## Methods of engagement

A dedicated online site was established to record feedback, using Council's engagement platform, *Shape Monash*. The site was launched on 1 October 2023 and closed on 19 November 2023. There are three areas the community engagement platform focussed on:

1. Giving input on the issues and projects on which we advocate on behalf of our community, this being by asking the community to prioritise the areas Council should focus on.
2. Asking the community for their feedback on where we should prioritise our spending in relation to our financial levers, these being
  - a. Revenue options (feedback and ideas to increase revenue streams)
  - b. Expenses options (feedback and ideas to limit our expenditure). (See Appendix 1: Commentary/feedback on Council's funding levers)
3. Specific community priorities and projects – primarily this is an opportunity to talk about specific projects of importance to the community.

Council invited the Monash community to participate by:

- Interacting directly with the online platform.
- Talking to officers at a 'listening post' or by reaching out to them directly. Three 'Listening Posts' were programmed over a seven (7) week period. These posts were held on different days, times and locations across the municipality giving the Monash community the opportunity to participate and engage directly with Monash staff on how they would like to shape the 2024-25 budget.
- Feedback forms were also available for those who wished to make comment or provide feedback and suggestions to Council.
- Councillors were invited to attend with officers to hear from the community and seek input into our 2024/25 budget.

A multi-tiered communication plan to promote the engagement including via:

- Articles in the September and October Council bulletins that was delivered to every household in Monash

- Information through Council's e-newsletters
- Direct promotion through our Community Services clients, Sustainability distribution list & Positive Aging distribution lists
- Emails via our service delivery channels, including our reference groups and local advisory committees
- Posters displays and/or flat screen displays across the libraries, recreation centres and noticeboards at the MAPH
- A targeted social media campaign.

### Listening posts



Three listening posts were coordinated across October and November 2023 (see map). The listening posts were an opportunity for community to discuss any matter with Council officers, with additional specific consultation around the three budget engagement topics (advocacy priorities, financial levers, and community driven specific project ideas).

Engagement feedback on the budget was entered into Shape Monash by officers or the respondents, and the results are amalgamated in the engagement findings presented in the next three sections of this report.

Date	Location	General comments and observations noted
4/10/23	Positive Aging Forum, Mulgrave Community Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forum attendees seemed to be receptive to the engagement activity.</li> <li>• Due to the nature of the forum, all participants were from the older demographic.</li> </ul>
22/10/23	Mulgrave Farmers Market and Sunday Craft Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum interaction thought to be associated to the poor weather conditions.</li> <li>• A Monash-branded marquis/tent was used providing clear indication of it being a sanctioned council event.</li> <li>• Main conversation topics related to environmental initiatives.</li> </ul>
19/11/23	Ashwood-Chadstone Family Fun Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great weather conditions and lots of attendees mainly young families</li> <li>• Attendees in general seem receptive of participation in the engagement when approached.</li> <li>• Attendees were complimentary of the free event held by Council.</li> <li>• Some comments were made to officers with regards to traffic management for the event.</li> </ul>

## Summary of engagement

### Response yield

**683** visits to Shape Monash with  
**3** on-site community 'listening posts'  
**137** responses



47.3%  
women



45.8%  
men



6.87%  
other



Under 35 years 18.05%  
 35 to 59 years 46.62%  
 60 years and over 35.34%

### Top advocacy priorities Council



1. Encouraging Active Lifestyles for Community and Wellbeing

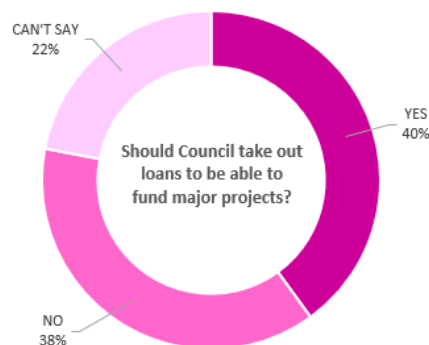
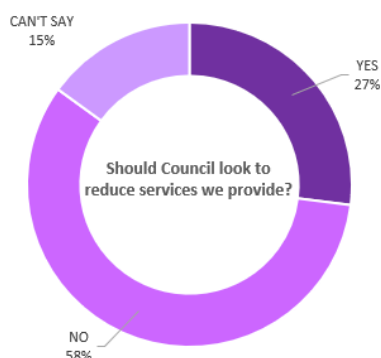
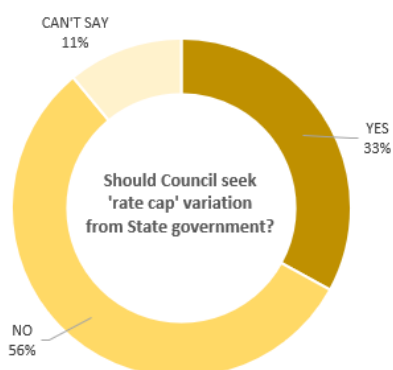
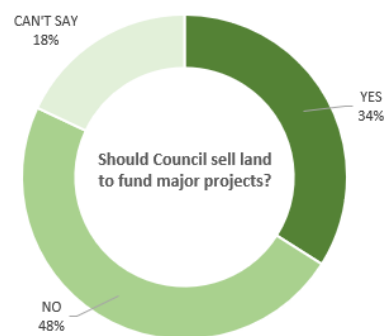
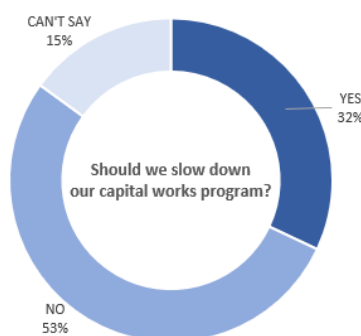
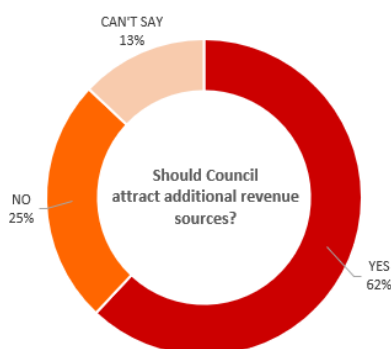


2. Promoting the Best Start in Life



3. Taking Action on Climate Change

### Feedback on funding levers



### Community project nominations:

**12** nominations -91.6% from residents of Monash  
 4 projects presented to Council  
 4 club or group nominations  
 8 individual nominations  
 58% related to sport and recreation



16.7% women



83.3% men

## 1. Prioritising advocacy issues and projects for the community

Participants were invited to consider the following advocacy priorities which were based on Council's Advocacy projects 2023 document, these are listed in Figure 1.

Participants were asked to choose three (3) from the following eight (8) project considerations. By limiting selection to just 3 votes, we were able to pinpoint the top priorities for Council to consider before reviewing the advocacy priorities for 2024.

Figure 1: Priority areas

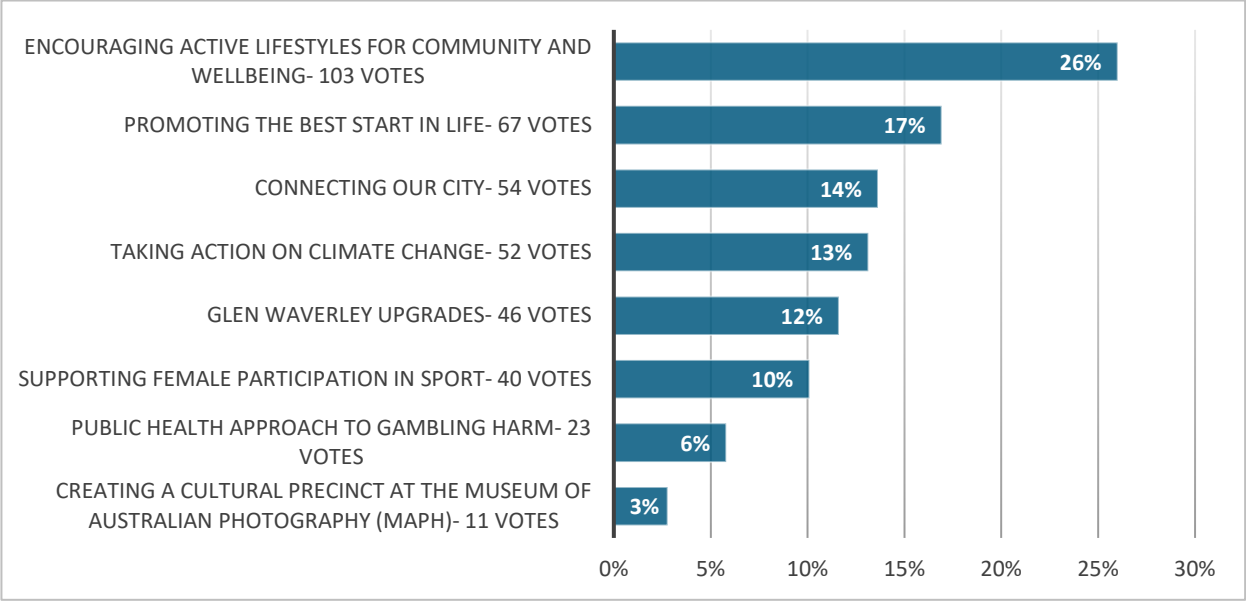
Promoting the best start in life	• Seeking funding to expand, improve and support our playground, kindergarten, and maternal and child health programs.
Supporting female participation in sport	• Seeking investment to expand, upgrade and build community sporting facilities across Monash so that we can increase the sporting and recreational opportunities for females.
Encouraging active lifestyles for community and wellbeing	• Seeking funding to upgrade, improve and better connect our local parks, reserves, trails, and paths to encourage community sport, active transport, recreation, and socialisation
Creating a cultural precinct at the Museum of Australian Photography (MAPh)	• Seeking investment to redevelop and expand the Museum of Australian Photography in Wheelers Hill to create a cultural centre of regional significance.
Taking action on climate change	• Seeking funding to support Council efforts to accelerate Monash's progress to be a net zero carbon emissions organisation.
Connecting our city	• Seeking investment for key identified transport projects across Monash such as the Oakleigh train station redevelopment and Westall Road extension.
Glen Waverley upgrades	• Seeking funding for critical projects in Glen Waverley to ensure the area is ready for the transformation from the Victorian Government's Suburban Rail Loop project.
Public health approach to gambling harm	• Seeking support for Council's proposed reforms to reduce the harm caused by gambling across our community.

### Results

The average scores are shown in Figure 2. The top three (3) advocacy priorities the community voted on were:

1. Encouraging Active Lifestyles for Community and Wellbeing
2. Promoting the Best Start in Life
3. Connecting our City

Figure 2: Community priorities



## 2. Input into Council's financial levers

Participants were invited to provide feedback on where Council should prioritise its spending for future years. A set of six funding levers available to Council in order to either improve service offering or invest in major capital works in future years were listed and participants were invited to vote "Yes/No/Can't say" for each lever, these are listed in **Table 2**. These levers were derived from Council's Long Term Financial Plan. Participants were also given the opportunity to add feedback or ideas to each lever.

Table 2: Funding Levers

Council's funding levers	
1	<b>Should we slow down our capital works program?</b> <i>Delay renewing and upgrading existing assets and slow our program of building new community facilities. Building and maintaining infrastructure assets can place a large financial constraint on Council's funding capacity.</i>
2	<b>Should Council attract additional revenue sources?</b> <i>This could include increasing council's fees and charges, seeking more external grants, and investigating options for other alternate funding sources. We welcome your ideas for these options.</i>
3	<b>Should Council sell land to fund major projects?</b> <i>Selling Council land to increase funding, particularly for major capital projects. In the past Council has sold assets to part fund specific projects like the construction of the Clayton Community Centre, Monash Aquatics &amp; Recreation Centre and Caloola Reserve.</i>
4	<b>Should Council seek 'rate cap' variation from State government?</b> <i>The Victorian Government's rate capping system limits what Councils limits the amount that councils can raise their rates each year. Monash has the lowest rates per capita of any council in Victoria, which means and given the rate cap is percentage based – this means we fall further behind on rates income every year. Council could apply to increase rate caps to above the Victorian Government annual limit to provide funding for higher levels of capital works.</i>
5	<b>Should Council look to reduce services we provide?</b> <i>Council could consider reducing or moving out of services we currently provide. If this is appealing to you, provide feedback on what services you think council could investigate reducing.</i>
6	<b>Should Council take out loans to be able to fund major projects?</b> <i>Council could borrow money to fund large capital works where the benefits are provided to future generations.</i>

## Results

Table 2: Results on levers

Council's Funding levers	Yes	No	Can't say
Should we slow down our capital works program?	32%	53%	15%
Should Council attract additional revenue sources?	61%	25%	13%
Should Council sell land to fund major projects?	34%	48%	18%
Should Council seek 'rate cap' variation from State government?	33%	56%	11%
Should Council take out loans to be able to fund major projects?	40%	38%	22%
Should Council look to reduce services we provide?	27%	58%	15%

The majority of respondents were not in favour of slowing down our capital works program, nor did they support Council selling land to fund projects nor wanted Council to seek a rate cap variation nor reducing the services we provide. However, most respondents were supportive of Council attracting additional revenue sources and taking out loans to fund major projects.

Commentary/feedback from respondents on each of the financial levers can be found in [Appendix 1](#).



### 3. Nominate a project

The ‘*Nominate a Project*’ feature provided an opportunity for the community to submit a specific budget idea or proposal for consideration on behalf of themselves or a community group or organisation.

Participants were also given the opportunity to present their idea(s) to Council on Tuesday 5 December. Of the 12 submitters, 4 projects were presented at this meeting. The presenters were also given the option to provide further detailed background information to support their submission which was collated and distributed to Councillors prior the Council meeting.

#### Results

A total of 12 submissions were received. Almost 58% of the submissions were relating to Sports and recreation or improvements to public parks and open spaces. Information on the community projects by theme are presented in Table 3. It should be noted that the detail behind all these nominations will be provided to Council as part of their deliberations, this report contains only a summary. Four submissions were presented by submitters to Council at its meeting on 5 December 2023. Figure 3 shows the proportion of submissions by theme.

Figure 3: Overview of submission by theme

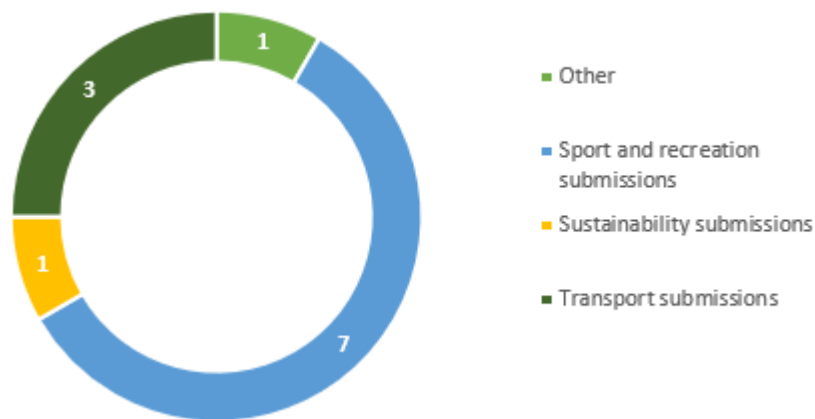


Table 3: Summary of submissions received in order of theme

ID	Description	Submitted by
Sport and recreation submissions		
17333	Provision of facilities in the Clayton Community Centre for local table tennis club	Individual
17930	Disc golf basket installation at Highview Park.	Melbourne Disc Golf Club

ID	Description	Submitted by
18298	Small dog only (under 10kg) off leash fully fenced park for Mount Waverley	Individual
18572	Provision of a larger clubroom for Waverley Model Railway Club	Waverley Model Railway Club – Men’s Shed Inc
18672	Funding to assist with the essential rebuild of the Glenburn Tennis Club	Glenburn Tennis Club
Email	Provision for more toilets at parks.	Individual
18705	Pocket Parks	Individual
<b>Transport submissions</b>		
17793	Seal current gravel bike paths (1) from Shepherd Road to Dandenong Creek trail and (2) from Jells Park to Dandenong Creek Trail.	Individual
17848	Upgrade of the Golf Road shared footway	Individual
18468	Advocate to DTP to improve the connection of the Djerring trail at Oakleigh Station's east side	Individual
<b>Sustainability submissions</b>		
17364	Ongoing support for green spaces and conservation areas within City of Monash to provide for climate resilience (cooling), ecosystem services and biodiversity connections.	Friends of Damper Creek
<b>Other submissions</b>		
17211	Introduce the release of Council data through an open data portal for council assets and interests	Individual

## Appendix 1 – Engagement commentary from respondents on Council’s funding levers

This section provides the specific feedback/commentary submitters providers relating to the six financial levers presented to them, these being their thoughts on:

1. Should we slow down our capital works program?
2. Should Council attract additional revenue sources?
3. Should Council sell land to fund major projects?
4. Should Council seek 'rate cap' variation from State government?
5. Should Council take out loans to be able to fund major projects?
6. Should Council look to reduce services we provide?

### 1. Should we slow down our capital works program?

#### YES

To maintain assets.
The Council should only fund such projects in the event they are necessary, do not result in debt or impact upon the provision of basic services
Capital works require ongoing funding to maintain appropriately.
This state is in debt. Stop spending on unnecessary capital works and ancillaries and reduce my rates.
Slow down little bit but most importantly get the priorities right.
Scale down the glen Waverley precinct project
All projects except critical transport infrastructure (which is shown to have a drastic positive effect on quality of life, as well as reduction of climate emissions through provision of green options such as cycle lanes) ought to be slowed down for the purpose of financial responsibility and return on value to ratepayers.
Too much is spent on areas where too few benefit.
Prefer lower rates to keep property values high and lower cost of living.
Comes down to productivity, new tech cap works will be better in future
Maybe focus on regular maintenance of buildings and assets you already have rather than waiting until things are so bad it's better to redesign and rebuild.
If the price to get things done is cheaper rates of labour by slowing it down then yes, let the public money go further. It would be good to have the Notting Hill business park tennis court renewed in next 10 years. Free at use tennis courts are few and far between.
The new library centre at Glen Waverley could be rescheduled. However, paths alongside wetlands need improvement: Regent street to Blackburn Rd both sides need footpaths. Huntingdale wetlands needs another footpath and steps along fence where willows are rather than mud. Both sides skink link from Oakleigh golf course carpark to street needs a footpath rather than bush bash. Needs better connection after Huntingdale wetlands the next section to Huntingdale road both sides path and safer for pedestrians to get through tunnel.
Too many projects on the go create congestion and make navigating around the suburbs difficult plus putting the council at risk of going into debt that cannot be repay in the agreed time frame
If you have money to spend, try saving some money for the community. Our rates keep going up when our houses haven't improved and we can't afford to make ends meet. It's like you can't even see the strain families are under!
If we can't afford it from current revenue, don't do it
Spending \$8.2 million for Oakleigh Cannons while neglecting other soccer grounds in Monash that desperately need upgrading is a poor decision.
Stop the underground rail project as it will create transport chaos and hurt local business for a decade or more. It will also place unnecessary strain on council budgets that could be invested elsewhere in improving Monash
Yes, specifically sports pavilions

#### NO

Nope. Full Steam Ahead. We are a growing Suburb. If we slow down Capital Works then we are just creating a problem for the future.
Infrastructure really important. Population will keep growing.
Delay will cause decay and greater expense.

Only slow down projects related to car transit. Public transit needs all the help it can get!
Non core expenditure must be curbed and maintenance on roads and other infrastructure must be prioritised active transport infrastructure is an investment for generations to come, and takes a long time from a planning and construction perspective. slowing down investment in infrastructure only puts monash further behind other councils that are investing in active infrastructure.
Perhaps there are other priorities
Monash council should invest in projects that generate revenue. thus reduce the council rates which heavily burden on residents. Make sure they are more reasonable and appropriate - not spending so much on a large library and set of offices, but spend on other more practical needs
In general 'No' because they benefit ratepayers. Decisions on this should be on a 'case by case' basis.
Prioritise active transport (significantly expand dedicated bike lanes, and where feasible segregation) as a means to reduce car congestion in the area, and also contribute to reduced GHGs. Bike lane creation should keep pace with roads dedicated for motor vehicle transport.
Continue to renew but no new buildings
Monash area is growing rapidly and capital works therefore need to be fast tracked to keep up with needs.
Build for the future
Should be sustainable for council
I think Monash needs to plan for moderate increases in spending growth that ensures our assets are keeping pace with population growth
Delays mean that costs blow out and unfinished projects. Everything that council receives overwhelming consensus to develop, re-invigorate or repair should be done as quickly and as efficiently as possible.
Whilst remaining financially responsible, I would like to see a culture or sense of abundance permeating more into council facilities, especially when it comes to for public services.
Urgent capital works are required around Huntingdale Road shops to improve pavements, car parking due to the increase in food providers and also just as urgent is fixing bike connections between Oakleigh and Huntingdale stations so that cyclists don't have to use the underpass at Oakleigh or the Atkinson St bridge.
I believe new infrastructure projects to support the growing community is required and should not be slowed as delays will have lasting impacts on the community for forwards.
The cycling infrastructure within Monash is in an unacceptable state, with many bike lanes and shared paths having not been touched in decades. Council needs to increase the rate at which cycling infrastructure projects are completed if it wants to achieve its goals set out in the Walking and Cycling Strategy

## CAN'T SAY

Would need to know what capital works are proposed for this year and their urgency.
Focus on the vulnerable not able-bodied persons - the disabled esp children and young people who complete their schooling and then have limited options for post school pathways, where all the work and development using their communication skills and devices, their therapist goals etc come to a grinding halt as there is a lack of supported programs/ academic options for them and the burden is placed on burnt out families.
If we have the budget to increase. If no money don't increase

## 2. Should Council attract additional revenue sources?

### YES

Yes. There is unprecedented amounts of money flowing into property in Monash and we should absolutely be tapping into this. Some kind of McMansion tax would be great. There are lots of people living in their 60 and 70's homes who have not come into great wealth but anyone buying a 2 million plot of land and spending 2 million on a McMansion has money to contribute. As these McMansions remove all greenery, including large canopy trees they add to the urban heat island effect in Monash. This should be accounted for.
Maybe look at current cost recovery for services
People are struggling. Event fees are valid. Grants are a good idea. No parking fees.
Review of rates as we are the lowest in Melbourne. Charge more to businesses.
More user pays for non essential services.
See comments under rates
Good facilities and services cost money and costs are always increasing.
Need ongoing revenue. Monash should not focus on having the lowest rates but on providing appropriate quality services get more from big developments and also properties that are above \$1.5 million. These people clearly have lot of money.
Not from residents - no paid parking or undue increase in user fees
introduce paid parking within activity centres.
Whilst we have low council rates, we do ourselves a disservice and the consequences are reduced services. Increase our council rates and provide more services.
Council can increase fees and charges for those using the services. Keep rates low.
Council should make sporting clubs more accountable for covering/ recouping costs
I don't believe rate payers should be responsible for club specific asset costs - ground maintenance etc, as we are now becoming prohibited from using facilities more and more
Don't increase council rates and rates to do this.
However it has to much better system than other municipalities
Learn from other councils
Fair system
If it is of benefit to the community
I would look into grants and other means first before increasing fees or charges that residents have to pay.
Yes, other councils charge for beach parking for non-residents, we should have our own revenue streams unique to our area.
If this can be achieved without a material increase in rates, then absolutely proceed and seek to expand Monash Council's commercial revenue base/sources. For example, can the council consider/investigate setting up an investment fund with 5%-10% of projected revenues injected into the fund yearly. In 3-5 years, a percentage of returns can begin being allocated annually to capital works projects.
This is a great exercise to conduct as if you can expand the commercial revenue base/sourced without a material increase in rates, you've created a significantly healthier organisation which is better aligned to serving and delivering for the community.
Climate change should have some grants to it.
Businesses could co-partner initiatives.
Parking Charges
External grants not increasing rates. Families are struggling with high interest rate, utilities bills and essential expenses. Increasing rates would create strain in families. Seek grants from big corporations and big 4 banks
No to increase to council fees
Seeking external grants rather than increasing rates and fees. There are so many families and households struggling right now with increased cost of living and financial pressures. Increasing rates etc should be avoided!
Only if it means securing revenue from outside sources eg: federal government; would not be happy with increasing rates
Grants
If it can. Ask for more money from state
Revenue should be increased but should be means tested
Grants
Grants increase.
What responsible and prudent council isn't seeking additional, external revenue funding options.
Rate increases is the lazy option of an ineffective local government

I personally would be comfortable with paying higher council rates if it improves the quality of services and infrastructure in Monash
More external grants
Council should always explore additional revenue sources, including use pay systems for services above and beyond basic necessities.
Via grants
Funding could be sought from Governments, Vic Track as improvements to bike tracks benefit all who use them and Huntingdale food places attract patrons from beyond Monash LGA
Increasing rates and fees should always be justified through clear and transparent communication as to why such rates and fees needs to increase. I am all for increase rates if I see that if the money is being allocated to projects or operational works that will benefit the Monash community. Also look at hosting fundraising activities such as a lottery, golf/sports days, family and kids events, etc.
apply private/govt grants
There are many grants available, however, Council should not rely on them to achieve its goals. If a project is going to be beneficial to the community, don't ignore it just because it won't get a grant.
I would support an increase in rates to better achieve council's goals
I am in favour of introducing payment for parking in the middle of shopping centres

## NO

The Council should seek to reduce their own costs before increasing fees and charges
This state is in debt. Stop spending on unnecessary capital works and ancillaries and reduce my rates.
Council must spend within its means and MUST focus funds on core activities-
suggest not to seek those revenue source that will aggravate the residents even more, Such as parking fines, etc
Monash regularly claims on annual rates notices that the rates are lower than other councils. Maybe rates need to go up a little to meet (not exceed) surrounding councils. Some councils you can tell they pay higher rates because they look nicer and have better facilities. For example, I prefer to travel further and use libraries in Glen Eira (Carnegie and Bentleigh), Stonnington (Phoenix Park), Kingston (Westall), and Dandenong libraries.
Better manage and priorities current revenue streams, don't waste money of unnecessary projects.
Not if you want more fees and charges from the community. Cost of living is outrageous, passing cost onto us to increase your revenue is illogical. People can't afford to live let alone help you make more money.
In general everyone is struggling with rising costs / Interest rates. Council fees and charges are already at the same level as other councils.
Tax us more
The council should live within its current budget and not raise council fees and charges.
Given the current cost of living crisis, Council shouldn't impose extra charges in the community

## CAN'T SAY

Yes without increasing council fees
Of course council should be seeking as many grants as possible - no brainer. Prefer to keep rates, fees and charges as low as possible.
Investigate alternate funding on a project by project basis - private investment etc.

### 3. Should Council sell land to fund major projects?

#### YES

To community benefit only
But not foreign investors
As long as it's a community consulted idea.
However, green space is essential. We are poorly served in the Oakleigh/Oakleigh South area for green space. Sale of any land should be the last option. Higher density living requires more quality public green space.
Sell land but maybe to other government bodies (maybe SRL) or someone who will work towards doing something for the community in return. Not greedy developers.
Only if it's not park land
Support sale of land if the developer of Nightingale project is used- in Brunswick new model of building community friendly transparency in construction in development Nightingalehousing.org
Nature of the use.
If this doesn't create issues like council losing space for future development of parks, parking, neighbourhood centres or libraries.
Project or facility dependent.
Some places really built up already so plan well
If it is vacant and of no use
Depends on where
Depends on where
Were relevant and ample room. Too congested in certain areas
50% response
Depending on where it is. Not in the middle of lots of houses
To better the community
Yes if it car park but no to open spaces
Great idea; lights and ground upgrades are desperately needed at Caloola Reserve.
As long as the projects benefit the Monash area
I would be happy to support the sale of council land to fund major projects if such a sale does not allow the land to negatively impact the community. For example if the land is sold to a developer that will build a high rise apartment block and the existing local infrastructure and services would not be able to support an increase in tenants living in the area, then I would not support the sale of the land.
Bogong reserve playground need to be revamped so badly!

#### NO

Nope. Council should be buying more land and bringing it back to community where it's needed.
Only if the projects will deliver an alternative income or investment opportunity.
There should be no excuse for selling public property. The Council is there to maintain and service public property and ensure it is put to its best use.
This state is in debt. Stop spending on unnecessary capital works and ancillaries and reduce my rates.
Once sold it's gone!! Selling land must be a last resort!
council owned land is in short suppl and selling will inhibit future options to create community spaces, especially around activity centres. council owned land should be rented out but not sold.
It's easy to sell land for a short-term benefit but future generations will suffer when that land is tenfold more expensive to buy back.
Once land is sold it is gone for good. Keep it for the public.
The land being sold is mainly used for student accommodation which has greatly damaged the environment within the Monash council. The land within this council is already bare and is starting to become more of a concrete jungle thus contributing to a hotter climate.
the population is growing and once assets, like sports clubs and facilities are lost, they will never be replaced - because the space won't exist
Council should not sell land so as to patch up shortfall or mismanaged budget. The land is for public and not for council to use it for unjustifiable purpose.

Selling land for revenue never looks good in the long run.
Why not have a long term lease like a 50-100 year lease if you need money (bit like port of Melbourne), not selling land that won't be in public hands again. We are custodians for future generations needs too.
Not existing recreation areas or nature. We need the green space and canopy cover. Council does need to review existing usage of its buildings and already constructed areas eg. carparks, depots.
Land is a finite and thus very valuable commodity. Council should build affordable housing on land it is considering selling. Having said that, selling land would again very much be a 'case by case' basis. An overall 'yes' or 'no' is a poor survey response request. For example, selling land to fund valuable projects is a good idea; selling land to fund half-baked projects is a bad idea. Again, use land to build affordable housing!
As density increases - council assets will be important assets for community- keep them where you can
Selling land can be permanent. Council should not sell land unless it has comprehensively analysed the long term consequences of the loss of the land.
Land is valuable and increases in value over time. Selling does not make economic sense

## CAN'T SAY

If there is excess/under-utilised land that is not needed even in the long term then yes, consider selling.
Depends what kind of land, if it is of low use for public or local business (small), perhaps it is possible
Would need to know which assets are proposed to be sold and for what benefit.
In my view, this idea needs to be assessed on a project by project basis.
Depends on who the assets are sold to.
Selling SOME land might be needed. However what I love about living in Wheelers Hill/Glen Waverley is that there are little green blocks dotted around among different streets and these add a sense of calm and space and openness and I'd hate for these to all be sold off.
Up to council
Depends on the existing land-use, but generally against selling council land.
I'm not privy to what council land sales look like or how much land council has banked but I think council should enter into joint ventures with the private or non profit sector to develop or innovate.
A standard sale of any council land seems short sighted. Developments where a win-win-win are engineered should be what councils should aspire to.



#### 4. Should Council seek 'rate cap' variation from State government?

##### YES

I am happy to see rates increase, especially if they are applied fairly with the most wealthy doing the heavy lifting. A rate increase based on the square meters of the property.
Good services and facilities require funding. Have the lowest rates in the state doesn't make me proud. I want to see greater beauty in the area I live - parks and gardens, and good reduce reuse, recycle habits - this all costs money, although less than the cost, both in dollar and environmental terms, of sending everything to landfill.
Rates cap is limiting all councils providing appropriate services
rate capping is pretty dumb idea and only entrenches councils into their financial position, good or bad. rich councils get richer and poor ones poorer.
and use the money to better fund community organisations
Conflict with everyone paying same % but people in hardship can apply for exemption
The council should manage within budget, not to increase the rates other than normal inflation.
If we have the lowest rates in the state, that might equate to the lowest council services in the state. We should look at being at the median of rates; ie not too high, too low.
Yes, if the outcome is similar rates to neighbouring outer suburbs.
Agree. I am surprised our rates are lowest per-capita! Given average ratepayers' income relative to other LGAs, I think there is reasonable scope for council to raise higher rates if it improves the quality of services and infrastructure in Monash.
Yes, as long as sufficient justification, transparency (which I applaud council for) were provided and where benefits could be experienced very visually on all local neighbourhood levels. I think increasing rate caps, particularly perhaps for industrial areas and allowing the public to more readily see or vote on where this money goes would be a justifiable strategy.
As I mentioned before, I am willing to support an increase in rates that ultimately lead to a better outcome for the Monash community.
The lack of investment into capital works is evident around the city. Any increase in investment will improve the city in the long term.
Monash has relatively low rates and a range of spending priorities

##### NO

Council should look to find operational efficiencies and cut non core or non essential services.
Council can develop proposal to state government, advocating total revamp of rate assessments, to replace land value with land environmental footprint (e.g. as per multispectral satellite imaging - thermal, water/runoff, veg cover, biomarkers, emissions etc). Multiple *simultaneous* benefits:
- can devise charging formula to simultaneously increase rates income, while actually reducing rates for majority of ratepayers (by appropriate weighting to target the most extravagant residents)
- rate charges would actually reflect overall positive/negative impact (& cost) of residents on their neighbourhood
- encourage responsible land/asset management
- support low income legacy residents & properties
- target wasteful consumers & redevelopers
- achieve genuine change in community attitudes & behaviours via hip pocket incentives; make profligacy a source of embarrassment rather than pride
- popular change, individuals would be reluctant to oppose for fear of exposing dubious values
- back "green" rhetoric with action, e.g. council's stated "leadership" aspirations in environmental sustainability strategy
The Council should make do with current funding and not look to increase rates particularly in these inflationary times .
This state is in debt. Stop spending on unnecessary capital works and ancillaries and reduce my rates.
We have already had our rates rise when I understood there was to be a freeze on rate rises.
Cost pressures on households are already high enough. Spend within your means and without reducing essential services.
Cost of living pressures are incredibly high, and the council will receive windfall funding thanks to SRL. Increasing rates will only serve to push out lower-income families and marginalised communities.
People are already suffering with high cost of living expenses, struggling to have a meal and shelter.
Keep rates low is the biggest benefit you can offer.
Heading into a recession please cut costs like everyone else is.
No. Why not leverage this position and strive for cost effective capital works, partner with the Victorian Government in Sustainability Victoria's procurement programs and bring home the need for the cost of running government to drive innovation and reduce costs.
Manage your funds better, stop wasting funds on projects such as reviewing and changing the waste management system, ie. Introducing more bins etc

Not right now as so many people are really struggling with the high costs of living at the moment!
No way. You don't need more rates, you need to manage your money. So many staff, so many perks, so many fancy new buildings, so many Christmas parties. No, no more taking from us. Manage what you have better. Your salaries have gone up while ours haven't. We can't afford to make ends meet and you want to get blood out of a stone!!!!
Rates already too high
Keep the rates low and live within your budget.
Monash has a great reputation on supplying services with the lowest council rates

#### CAN'T SAY

This would depend on the types of infrastructure works or projects the council wants to deliver/undertake. They would really need to be large scale/game changer type ideas. Currently as a resident, I feel the council is providing a strong community service at current rate levels.
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## 5. Should Council look to reduce services we provide?

### YES

Based on demand. Might be some wastage
Service reviews are hopefully occurring to determine whether the services are of genuine need and not just having evolved from a request form a councillor at some point in time. Council should only deliver services where there is a gap or there is an essential need in the community.
The Council should focus on the provision of essential services and not stray into activities that are the domain of State and Federal government.
Slow down spending on everything you can. I do not use any of the facilities and I only fund those people that do. I used the Oakleigh pool twice and paid for it anyway. This state is in debt. Stop spending on unnecessary capital works and ancillaries and reduce my rates. Especially do not spend on political or left agendas. Nothing environmental, lgb etc Just collect my bins, keep the library running, keep the playgrounds free of needles and put the rest of your effort into reducing rates to assist your residents with the cost of living crisis.
Everything cent that you spend on 'diversity and inclusion' is a waste of ratepayers' money. All the LGTB etc. groups add up to less than 6% of society (by Monash's own figures). They do not deserve nor warrant funding and council really needs the money at this incredibly tough time in peoples' lives.
Spending should be properly evaluated and subject to cost/benefit analysis. Are other levels of government better placed to make a difference?
'Community Strengthening' ought to be cut significantly. It's output cannot be empirically measured via any metric other than highly subjective ones, whereas infrastructure and maintenance for example provided tangible, real-term benefits to the community. The council cannot operate status quo in the current financial environment and needs to reduce or eliminate non-critical roles such as 'Gender Equity and Diversity.'
where the cost of compliance is great and where there is not sufficient critical mass to justify dedicated council services, these things should be outsourced. I am not sure of how each of the current services operate, but suspect there are opportunities to review and/or perhaps work with other councils to centralise back-end operations to serve a greater population
It would be interesting to actually map out how many please use these services vs rate payers.
Keeping rates low and attracting small business is the best thing you can do for ratepayers.
Community raising funds to continue services provision
People who use the service should raise funds and council helps support
Community Strengthening is a waste of money.
the council should reduce services that only benefit a small group of people, those services don't pass the cost/benefit review, those services shrink due to less requirement.
Why not partner with community groups to have people volunteer their time maintaining parks rather than paying contractors to mow etc. Community buy-in helps delivery stronger local government outcomes. South Australia moved to a whole of state library card. Why are we still creating redundant unique systems and not leveraging the power of multiple councils combined.
Review existing services for waste or under utilisation.
Events MAPH HACC Health Promotion
Less events and silly crap if you need to save money. Stop making life hard like with the stupid bins and cost of rates to save money and increase revenue.
Consider Children, Youth and Families service, Communication and customer experience, Engineering services
Certain services cannot be reduced - ie cleaning, aged care, meals on wheels.
Ensure that you keep out of issues that are not the responsibility of local government.
If there is no negative impact to the Monash community, then council should look at ways to reduce services to save money. I have a feeling that extra services may be required given the changing demographics of Monash. So reducing services might not be possible. Perhaps working with other councils to consolidate services might be more cost effective for the larger community.
Many of the inclusive services could be provided by volunteers. Council should consider where this is possible to decrease the costs associated with these services. I don't believe that these services should be removed outright if they cannot be replaced in some way.
Council should close the Oakleigh Golf Course.

### NO

Absolutely not. We should be increasing funding in line with our increasing population.
Maternal child health has been a great initiative for me. Definitely not that.

No, but I'd love to see more sensible approach the planting of street trees - they should all be natives and planting under powerlines should be limited to bushes and shrubs with trees in the other side where there are no powerlines. This will remove the need to mangle the centre of trees once they do grow
Council provide services no other bodies provide especially libraries
Identify areas in each portfolio that are not specifically aimed at core services and eliminate. Any funding put aside to support causes that are state or federal responsibility Must be eliminated! No overseas travel, no wasted effort on duster cities, no council funds applied to "popular" leftist causes!!! No funding leaked to support ANY political party/agenda.
All of these are very valuable!!
We use a number of these services - and enjoy the benefits!
I think reducing services never benefits the community and that the community should not be penalised for raising money for projects.
I live in Oakleigh and can say it doesn't look or feel like you spend money on most of these services here. If you reduce what you claim to do already, what's left for residents here?
I'm generally not a fan of reducing services. On the surface, engineering appears like it could be outsourced but it will come down to if it's a large gain economically to do so & if the outsourced service received can match or surpass the current levels of service/output.
I looked at all the services but found it too hard to get rid of any of them! Good luck with this as it is NOT easy.
I would not be happy for library services to be cut in any way, especially Storytimes for kids.
Council should be better organised with spending
Very much against reducing services.

## CAN'T SAY

Council should monitor each areas use.
Extremely important to retain council managed kindergarten facilities. Cannot overstate the benefit to community of having these accessible, quality programs available for early childhood education.
However, Monash could definitely look at reducing active Monash centres and selling these facilities, given they are no more accessible to the community than privately run facilities. MAPH is a similar situation.
Again, a case by case basis depending on the service, the cost, and whether it can be done BETTER (not just cheaper) by outside contractors.
I use aged care support services, libraries and arts but the others don't apply to me. However, i see how they are important to other residents.

## 6. Should Council take out loans to be able to fund major projects?

### YES

Absolutely yes. We desperately need to transform Monash into a Climate Change Resilient Suburb of the future and that work needs to start NOW.
Must have a budget a limit. Case by case
But only where there is the opportunity to generate revenue or investment so the project can pay for itself over time.
Within reason, this is sensible (say with maximum 10-year term).
Only where the repayment of such loans can be done without increase to council rates or charges! In other words - if we can't pay for it outright do not do it
Not too much but only if the capital works offer major benefits to the future generation. Sustainability should be one of the top priorities.
also utilise special charge schemes where possible.
Taking care with locked in rates etc....not scared of loans for large capital works
Depends on the cost of money.
This is definitely an option however, it needs to be assessed project by project. I would like the council to only have loans against capital projects that are generating self-sustainable revenue streams and the maximum debt should be capped as a relatively small percentage of projected annual revenues, ie no more than 5%-10%
See if State or Fed can provide low interest loans so that payback of project would offset it.
If there is a risk management plan in place, then why not?
Provided you are able to repay without making the residence pay for the repayments
Why not. It's only going to get more expensive
If it's important and urgent then yes
Upgrade Glen Waverley
Short term
Yes if sensible and project is needed and of value
But discussed more at council meetings
If required to benefit community
Rules need to be set stringently. A solid financial case must be made for large projects - with scenarios to cover all future contingencies
There are likely many projects that still have a positive net present value after taking out a loan. One example of often undervalued projects are the projects creating new, safe, cycling infrastructure. There are benefits provided in long-term decreased load on the health system, as well as shorter-term decreases in road accidents. There is also the value of less traffic on the roads which cause a slower degradation and therefore hold a smaller cost to maintain. A well-connected cycling network could provide these benefits; however, the benefits will likely only come from a city wide network that is connected, rather than from any single project itself. Council should consider taking loans to fund the rapid development of a safe cycling network
Only in exceptional circumstances. Not for sports pavilions. [Manually entered from 28Sep submission on previous version. DB]

### NO

Not if it's the expense of ratepayers.
They would be charging residents additional fees.
Community will suffer as a result
The state of Victoria has the highest debt in the country with no real plans for reducing such. Why would the Council wish to add to this burden
This state is in debt. Stop spending on unnecessary capital works and ancillaries and reduce my rates.
It is the worst possible time to be taking out loans
Short-term thinking a la the state government which now finds itself in enormous debt and has been forced to cancel key and overdue flagship projects such as airport rail.
Don't take out loans - live within your means.
Take out loan needs to pay back, no free lunch. At the end, rate payers pay for it. we don't want to have another rate increase. if we can't afford it, don't build it.
Another move that never looks good in the long term.

Unless there was a targeted revenue stream to respond to the loan.
Loans should only be taken out to prop up derelict infrastructure if needed
Definitely no more borrowing that imposes more strain council budgets and flow in cost to residents
[Manually entered from 30Sep submission to earlier version. DB]

## CAN'T SAY

More information needed
It depends on the project and costs.
again - don't have enough information to comment on this.
This would need to be an exceptional project and have community support for funding source.
In general Yes - depends on interest rates etc.
This is an irresponsible question to ask without also making the council's full financial reports available and considered financial advice.
Situation-dependent; the project should have a convincing prospect of generating additional income through increased values/rates.
I do not know any examples of which councils have taken what loans to fund what projects but I do not think it is a good idea in principal, particularly when I have the perception that Monash is classically not a municipality that is struggling with funds.
Perhaps taking a loan might be the last resort after rate increases, fundraising, etc. A loan means the cost of a project will eventually be worth more than what has been specified. Try to avoid taking out a loan to fund major projects by better negotiation with developers/contractors to work out an affordable payment structure over time.