



Towards 2042!

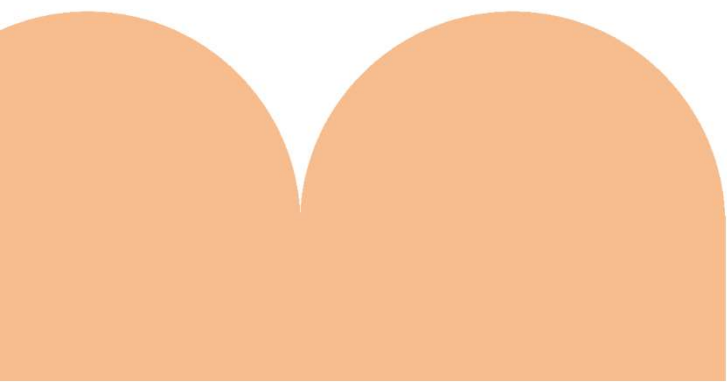
Community Engagement Report Stage 1: Broad engagement

To support the creation of the 2042 Regional Community Strategic Plan

October 2021



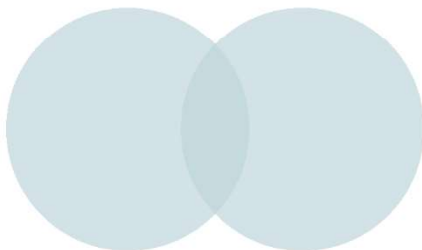
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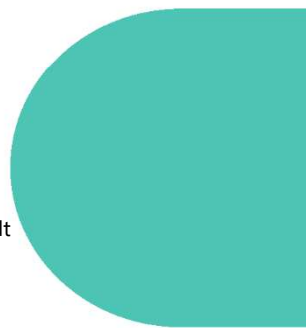
Towards 2042, Stage 1 Community Engagement Report

Prepared for Canberra Region Joint Organisation
Date October 2021
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Projectura

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Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
Introduction	7
Communications and engagement approach.....	8
How we engaged.....	9
Participation	11
Regional findings.....	13
Who did we hear from?	13
Where are we now?.....	15
Where do we want to be in ten years' time?.....	18
How will we get there?	21
Bega Valley Shire Council	23
Goulburn Mulwaree Council	43
Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council	63
Snowy Monaro Regional Council	83
Snowy Valleys Council.....	103
Upper Lachlan Shire Council	123
Yass Valley Council	143
APPENDIX 1: Engagement and communication collateral	164
APPENDIX 2: Raw data file	164
APPENDIX 3: Submission summary	164
APPENDIX 4: Coding framework.....	164

List of tables

Table 1.	Questions by method.....	10	Table 41.	SM – Participation summary	86
Table 2.	Demographic details captured by method.....	10	Table 42.	SM – Participation summary by method	86
Table 3.	CRJO region - Total participation.....	11	Table 43.	SM – Respondent profile	88
Table 4.	CRJO region - Participation by method and council ...	12	Table 44.	SM – Considerations to improve Vision	91
Table 5.	CRJO region – Respondent profile	13	Table 45.	SM - Missing from the CSP.....	93
Table 6.	CRJO region - Strength attributes by region & LGA	16	Table 46.	SM - Strength attributes by method.....	95
Table 7.	CRJO region - Challenge attributes by region & LGA..	17	Table 47.	SM - Challenge attributes by method.....	96
Table 8.	CRJO region - Suggestions by region & LGA	19	Table 48.	SM - Suggestions from other areas by method.....	98
Table 9.	CRJO region - Priorities by region & LGA.....	20	Table 49.	SM – Priorities by method	99
Table 10.	CRJO region - Services & projects by region & LGA...	22	Table 50.	SM – Services & projects by method	101
Table 11.	BV – Participation summary.....	26	Table 51.	SV – Participation summary	106
Table 12.	BV – Participation summary by method	26	Table 52.	SV – Participation summary by method.....	106
Table 13.	BV - Respondent profile	28	Table 53.	SV – Respondent profile.....	108
Table 14.	BV – Considerations to improve Vision	31	Table 54.	SV – Considerations to improve Vision	111
Table 15.	BV - Missing from the CSP.....	33	Table 55.	SV - Missing from the CSP	113
Table 16.	BV - Strength attributes by method.....	36	Table 56.	SV - Strength attributes by method.....	115
Table 17.	BV - Challenge attributes by method	37	Table 57.	SV - Challenge attributes by method.....	116
Table 18.	BV - Suggestions from other areas by method.....	39	Table 58.	SV - Suggestions from other areas by method.....	118
Table 19.	BV – Priorities by method	40	Table 59.	SV – Priorities by method	119
Table 20.	BV – Services & projects by method.....	42	Table 60.	SV – Services & projects by method	121
Table 21.	GM – Participation summary.....	46	Table 61.	UL – Participation summary	126
Table 22.	GM – Participation summary by method.....	46	Table 62.	UL – Participation summary by method.....	126
Table 23.	GM – Respondent profile.....	48	Table 63.	UL – Respondent profile.....	128
Table 24.	GM – Considerations to improve Vision.....	51	Table 64.	UL – Considerations to improve Vision	131
Table 25.	GM - Missing from the CSP.....	53	Table 65.	UL - Missing from the CSP.....	133
Table 26.	GM - Strength attributes by method.....	56	Table 66.	UL - Strength attributes by method.....	135
Table 27.	GM - Challenge attributes by method	57	Table 67.	UL - Challenge attributes by method.....	136
Table 28.	GM - Suggestions from other areas by method.....	59	Table 68.	UL - Suggestions from other areas by method	138
Table 29.	GM – Priorities by method	60	Table 69.	UL – Priorities by method	139
Table 30.	GM – Services & projects by method	62	Table 70.	UL – Services & projects by method	141
Table 31.	QP – Participation summary.....	66	Table 71.	YV – Participation summary.....	146
Table 32.	QP – Participation summary by method.....	66	Table 72.	YV – Participation summary by method.....	146
Table 33.	QP – Respondent profile	68	Table 73.	YV – Respondent profile.....	148
Table 34.	QP – Considerations to improve Vision.....	71	Table 74.	Yass Valley – Considerations to improve Vision.....	151
Table 35.	QP - Missing from the CSP	73	Table 75.	YV - Missing from the CSP.....	153
Table 36.	QP - Strength attributes by method	76	Table 76.	YV - Strength attributes by method.....	156
Table 37.	QP - Challenge attributes by method	77	Table 77.	YV - Challenge attributes by method	157
Table 38.	QP - Suggestions from other areas by method.....	79	Table 78.	YV - Suggestions from other areas by method	159
Table 39.	QP – Priorities by method	80	Table 79.	YV – Priorities by method.....	160
Table 40.	QP – Services & projects by method.....	82	Table 80.	YV – Services & projects by method	162

List of figures

Figure 1.	CRJO region - Strength attributes.....	15	Figure 39.	SM – Theme support	92
Figure 2.	CRJO region - Challenge attributes	17	Figure 40.	SM – On track with themes.....	93
Figure 3.	CRJO region - Suggestions from other areas	18	Figure 41.	SM – Strength attributes	94
Figure 4.	CRJO region – Priorities.....	20	Figure 42.	SM – Challenge attributes.....	96
Figure 5.	CRJO region - Services & projects	21	Figure 43.	SM - Major suggestions from other areas.....	97
Figure 6.	BV – Respondent location	28	Figure 44.	SM - Priorities	99
Figure 7.	BV – Satisfaction with vision.....	30	Figure 45.	SM – Services & projects	100
Figure 8.	BV – Read CSP	31	Figure 46.	SV – Respondent location	108
Figure 9.	BV – Strategic objective support	32	Figure 47.	SV – Satisfaction with vision.....	110
Figure 10.	BV – On track with strategic objectives.....	33	Figure 48.	SV – Read CSP	111
Figure 11.	BV – Strength attributes.....	35	Figure 49.	SV – Theme support	112
Figure 12.	BV – Challenge attributes	37	Figure 50.	SV – On track with themes.....	113
Figure 13.	BV - Major suggestions from other areas	38	Figure 51.	SV – Strength attributes	114
Figure 14.	BV - Priorities.....	40	Figure 52.	SV – Challenge attributes.....	116
Figure 15.	BV – Services & projects.....	42	Figure 53.	SV - Major suggestions from other areas.....	117
Figure 16.	GM – Respondent location	48	Figure 54.	SV - Priorities.....	119
Figure 17.	GM – Satisfaction with vision.....	50	Figure 55.	SV – Services & projects.....	120
Figure 18.	GM – Read CSP	51	Figure 56.	UL – Respondent location	128
Figure 19.	GM – Strategic priority support.....	52	Figure 57.	UL – Satisfaction with vision.....	130
Figure 20.	GM – On track with strategic priorities.....	53	Figure 58.	UL – Read CSP	131
Figure 21.	GM – Strength attributes	55	Figure 59.	UL –Strategic priorities support	132
Figure 22.	GM – Challenge attributes.....	57	Figure 60.	UL – On track with strategic priorities.....	133
Figure 23.	GM - Major suggestions from other areas.....	58	Figure 61.	UL – Strength attributes	134
Figure 24.	GM - Priorities.....	60	Figure 62.	UL – Challenge attributes.....	136
Figure 25.	GM – Services & projects	61	Figure 63.	UL - Major suggestions from other areas	137
Figure 26.	QP – Respondent location	68	Figure 64.	UL - Priorities	139
Figure 27.	QP – Satisfaction with vision.....	70	Figure 65.	UL – Services & projects.....	140
Figure 28.	QP – Read CSP	71	Figure 66.	YV – Respondent location	148
Figure 29.	QP – Strategic pillar support	72	Figure 67.	YV – Satisfaction with vision.....	150
Figure 30.	QP – On track with strategic pillars.....	73	Figure 68.	YV – Read CSP	151
Figure 31.	QP – Strength attributes.....	75	Figure 69.	YV – Strategic priorities support.....	152
Figure 32.	QP – Challenge attributes.....	77	Figure 70.	YV – On track with strategic priorities.....	153
Figure 33.	QP - Major suggestions from other areas.....	78	Figure 71.	YV – Strength attributes	155
Figure 34.	QP - Priorities.....	80	Figure 72.	YV – Challenge attributes.....	157
Figure 35.	QP – Services & projects	81	Figure 73.	YV - Major suggestions from other areas.....	158
Figure 36.	SM – Respondent location.....	88	Figure 74.	YV - Priorities.....	160
Figure 37.	SM – Satisfaction with vision	90	Figure 75.	YV – Services & projects	161
Figure 38.	SM – Read CSP.....	91			

Projectura acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and recognise their ongoing connection to the Wiradjuri and Yuin land and waterways.

We recognise the Ngunnawal People, Ngarigo People, Namadgi People, Ngarigo People, Walbanga People, Walgalu People, Murramurang People, Djiringanj People, Gandangara People, and Bemerangal People.

We also recognise the many other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members across the region who make up the vibrant communities where our organisation visits and works.

Projectura pays respect to the wisdom of Elders, past, present, and emerging and shares a commitment to engaging communities with a spirit of reconciliation and respect.



This report summarises the findings from the Towards 2042 Stage 1 community engagement. The engagement campaign sought to engage with the broad community to better understand their aspirations and priorities, in order to prepare a Regional Community Strategic Plan for seven councils who are members of Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO).

The community engagement activities took place across seven unique regions of various sizes and characteristics, including distinct heritage and history, varied natural landscapes, diverse strengths and challenges, and their own sense of priorities moving into the future.

The seven participating councils had strong participation with 6,512 people having their say. We heard people's views on the various current Community Strategic Plans (CSP), as well as their considered views on their current community, including its strengths and challenges, what they would like it to look like in the future, and how we might get there.

A summary of high-level findings for the region are provided below.

- Many children participated through the submission of drawing sheets, representing 13.4 percent of total participation. The two underrepresented age groups were 18–34-year-olds (2.2 percent) and those aged 85 years and over (0.4 percent). Male participation was low (36.7 percent) compared to female participation (61.0 percent). Participants came from both urban (55.9 percent) and rural (44.1 percent) residents both taking part.
- The engagement program and plan was severely impacted by COVID-19 restrictions that were imposed in NSW during 2021. Due to the restrictions, many of the face-to-face engagement methods that were planned were unable to proceed.
- Feedback from the Bega Valley Shire was the highest in the region, representing 29.5 percent of the total engagement. The Queanbeyan-Palerang region received the second-highest feedback, representing 26.5 percent of the total. The lowest response numbers were from Upper Lachlan Shire Council (4.3 percent) and Goulburn Mulwaree Council (6.6 percent).
- More than one fifth (20.7 percent) indicated they identified as a person from a minority background, including LGBTQIA+,

living with a disability, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, Non-English speaking, with lived experience of homelessness, mental health or drug issues, or with difficulties finding affordable housing in the area.

- 53.9 percent of respondents across the participating Councils indicated that they had read the current CSP for their shire.
- People said that the beautiful natural environment (17.4 percent), local people and spirit (9.1 percent), peace and quiet (9.1 percent), lifestyle (9.0 percent), and sense of community (7.2 percent) made their communities great places to live.
- Respondents listed the main challenges facing their respective communities as jobs and employment (10.7 percent), environmental sustainability (9.9 percent), governance and leadership (9.3 percent), retaining and supporting young people (9.0 percent) and financial sustainability (8.2 percent).
- Respondents shared suggestions from other areas that would enhance their respective community. Top responses related to parks and green space (21.0 percent), improved infrastructure (15.5 percent), additional activities or events (11.6 percent), economic growth (11.0 percent) and environmental sustainability (9.8 percent).
- The main things people would like to see achieved over the next 10 years include sports and recreation facilities (13.5 percent), infrastructure (12.4 percent), environmental impact (10.1 percent), economic growth (9.2 percent) and improved council (7.1 percent).
- The top three projects and services that respondents would like to see their respective Councils focus on were climate change adaptation (5.6 percent), housing affordability and availability (5.4 percent) and aged and disability services (5.2 percent).



**“More plants in the future,
and more netball courts”**
Female resident aged 10 years, Googong

The aim of the Towards 2042 project is to engage with the broad community to better understand their aspirations and priorities, in order to prepare a Regional Community Strategic Plan for seven councils who are members of Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO).

Following extensive engagement across a range of activities between 21 June and 31 August 2021, more than 6,500 people had their say about the future of the region.

Background

Following the success of a Regional Community Strategic Plan developed by Goulburn Mulwaree, Upper Lachlan and Yass Valley councils in 2016, the CRJO resolved to develop a broader Regional Community Strategic Plan (RCSP) for the period 2022-2042. The project is named Towards 2042.

A RCSP presents a progressive approach that meets the Office of Local Government requirements and presents a range of positive cooperative and regional opportunities.

The following councils are participating in Towards 2042:

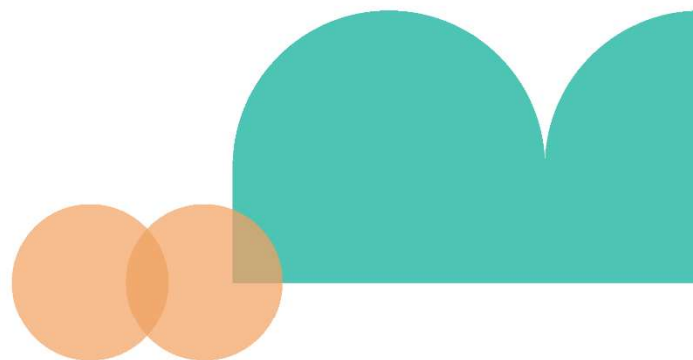
- Bega Valley Shire Council
- Goulburn Mulwaree Council
- Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council
- Snowy Monaro Regional Council
- Snowy Valleys Council
- Upper Lachlan Shire Council
- Yass Valley Council

Each participating council represents their own unique and distinct local government area. Together, the councils face similar challenges and share similar aspirations for the future.

Engagement objectives

The objectives of the stakeholder engagement are:

- To effectively engage the community in the development of a Regional Community Strategic Plan based on the social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights.
- To reach community members within the seven participating councils to identify new opportunities and set priorities for the future of their region.
- To engage hard-to-reach community groups.
- To meet with relevant stakeholders and agencies to identify how to deliver new strategic actions.
- To ensure local, regional and state priorities are considered in the development of the RCSP.



Communications and engagement approach

A range of communication and engagement activities were undertaken to inform, consult and involve participants across the community. Roughly 6,500 community members were engaged using a range of methods.

The communications and engagement approach was guided by the Community Engagement Plan finalised by Projectura in May 2021.

The week that the engagement was due to launch and be implemented, COVID-19 restrictions came into place in a staged manner across the state, requiring an adapted approach.

Communications

Across the seven Local Government Areas (LGAs), broad promotion of the public engagement opportunity was undertaken through a range of corporate communication channels and community networks including:

- Corporate communications including various Council websites.
- Distribution of posters directing people to Council's Towards 2042 page, and to the Towards 2042 survey.
- Social media promotion via Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook.
- News articles in local media, distributed to households across the region.
- Formal and informal email networks and e-newsletters.

Questions

Engagement activities sought responses to some key questions:

1. How do you feel about the vision in the adopted CSP?
2. Have you read the adopted CSP?
3. Do you agree with the high-level objectives/priorities/themes?
4. How are we tracking with the existing CSP?
5. Is there anything missing in the adopted CSP?
6. What makes your community a great place to live?
7. What do you think are the main challenges facing your community?
8. What have you seen in another area/shire that you think would work well in your community?
9. What is one thing you would like to see achieved in your community in the next ten years?
10. What services or projects do you think Council should be prioritising, or lobbying other levels of government for?

How we engaged

The Towards 2042 broad engagement was open from 21 June to 13 August 2021. The following methods were used across the seven participating councils. Each council used a mix of methods that suited their community.

Drawing sheets

- Two drawing sheets aimed at primary school aged children.
- Each sheet was one page, with an accompanying explanation note for teachers.

Council pop-up sessions

- Structured pop-up engagement activities delivered by participating councils.
- Held at various locations within each LGA, providing an opportunity for community to have their say.
- Opportunity for executive and councillors to attend and have community provide direct feedback for consideration.

Submissions

- Open to be made at any time during the public engagement period. Submissions were tendered to the respective council.

Survey

- Survey for the broad community.
- Available online and in hard copy.

Discussion Guide

- Guiding agenda and questions for the community groups and committee to complete together.
- Available online and in hard copy.

Online workshops

- 2.5 hour online workshops facilitate by Projectura.

Targeted telephone interviews

- One on one telephone interviews with nominated community and business leaders, and service providers.

Random telephone interviews

- One on one telephone survey with a random and representative group of community members.
- Conducted by Jetty Tavener Research Group

Towards 2042 web pages

- Each participating council developed a Towards 2042 page on their Council website.
- A mix of engagement platforms were used, allowing for varied experience from council to council.
- Encouraged the community to be informed and share feedback.

Social media

- Used to promote the Towards 2042 campaign and in-person engagement (pop up sessions and online workshops), and direct people to Towards 2042 webpages.
- Relevant comments in response were recorded.

What we asked

The same questions were used across each method to guide discussion and provide localised perspectives. Time and age-appropriateness meant that an abridged version of questions were asked in the Drawing Sheets, and in in-person engagement.

Table 1. Questions by method

Engagement activities	Questions						
	1. How do you feel about the vision in the adopted CSP?	2. How are we tracking with the existing CSP?	3. What makes your community a great place to live?	4. What do you think are the main challenges facing your community?	5. What have you seen in another area/shire that you think would work well in your community?	6. What is one thing you would like to see achieved in your community in the next ten years?	7. What services or projects do you think Council should be prioritising, or lobbying other levels of government for?
Drawing sheets			✓			✓	
Pop-up sessions	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Submissions							
Online survey	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Discussion Guides	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Online workshops	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Targeted telephone interviews	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Engagement activities were designed to enable broad participation (in-person, online and in writing, as well as at both structure times, and at times that suited the participants). Consequently, participant demographic details were captured to varying degrees and some individuals may have participated in more than one engagement activity. Location details were collected for every participant.

Table 2. Demographic details captured by method

Engagement activities	n=6,512	Demographics				
		Age	Gender	Location	Urban/rural	Diversity
Drawing sheets	547	✓	✓	✓		
Pop-up sessions	214	✓	✓	✓	✓ some	
Submissions	17			✓		
Online survey	3,669	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Discussion Guides	1,194			✓		
Online workshops	53	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Targeted telephone interviews	117	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Random telephone interviews	701	N/A – see report from Jetty Tavener				

Participation

Stage 1 engagement activities successfully gathered personalised views from a broad cross section of the community. The total participation level in Stage 1 was 6,512 people. Community members will have further opportunity to explore and prioritise strategies once the Draft Community Strategic Plan is available.

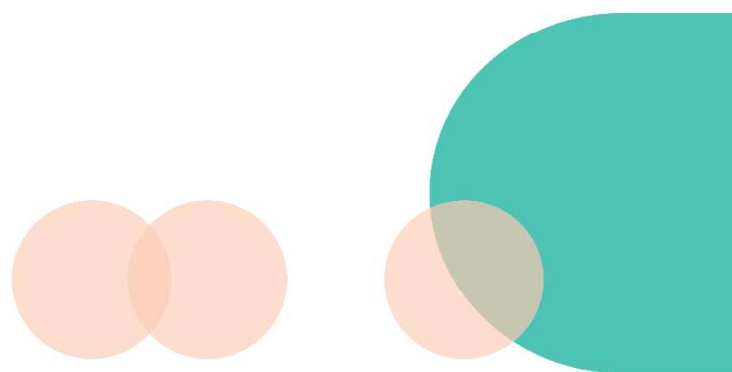
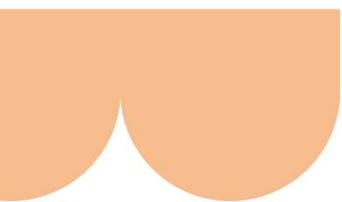
Table 3. CRJO region - Total participation

Council	Total participation	Population (2020 ERP)	% of population engaged
BVSC	1,922	34,727	5.5
GMC	431	31,554	1.4
QPRC	1,727	62,239	2.8
SMRC	854	20,997	4.1
SVC	535	14,412	3.7
ULSC	279	8,274	3.4
YVC	764	17,321	4.4
CRJO region total	6,512	189,524	3.4

As shown in Table 4, the online survey, group discussion guides, and drawing sheets generated the largest number of participants in Stage 1 Engagement. The online survey generated the greatest volume of useable data and participant demographic details. Blackened out spaces indicate where engagement methods were not used.

Table 4. CRJO region - Participation by method and council

Council	Drawing sheets	Pop-ups	Submissions	Online survey	Discussion Guides	Online workshop	Targeted telephone interviews	Random telephone interviews
	Drawing sheets received.	People who attended pop up sessions.	Formal submissions received.	Individual survey responses.	People who contributed to discussions.	Workshop participants.	Telephone interviews completed by Projectura.	Calls made by Jetty Tavener.
BVSC	74	40	4	1,275	418	N/A	12	99
GMC	N/A	23	1	241	50	N/A	16	100
QPRC	315	N/A	1	1,041	239	15	16	100
SMRC	N/A	N/A	4	416	301	20	13	100
SVC	4	144	N/A	246	10	N/A	30	101
ULSC	N/A	N/A	N/A	86	62	N/A	30	101
YVC	154	7	7	364	114	18	N/A	100
CRJO region	547	214	17	3,669	1,194	53	117	701



Who did we hear from?

The profile of the participants shows a large and broad cross-section of the CRJO regional community were involved in terms of age, gender, location, and diversity characteristics.

Table 5. CRJO region - Respondent profile

Characteristic	Breakdown	% of engaged people	CRJO Profile ID
Age	Under 18 years	13.4	21.4
	18-34 years	12.3	16.6
	35-49 years	25.4	18.4
	50-59 years	19.2	14.8
	60-69 years	18.7	14.4
	70+ years	10.9	14.4
Gender	Female	61.0	50.5
	Male	36.7	49.5
Location	Bega Valley Shire Council	29.5	-
	Goulburn Mulwaree Council	6.6	-
	Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council	26.5	-
	Snowy Monaro Regional Council	13.1	-
	Snowy Valleys Council	8.2	-
	Upper Lachlan Shire Council	4.3	-
	Yass Valley Council	11.7	-
Urban/Rural	Urban	44.1	-
	Rural	55.9	-
Diversity	LGBTQIA+	4.6	-
	Person with a disability	5.6	* 5.5
	Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	2.2	3.4
	Non-English speaking background	2.2	* 5.7
	Lived experience of homelessness, mental health or drug issues	5.8	-
	Difficulty finding affordable housing	0.3	-

NOTE: Red represents underrepresentation, and green represents overrepresentation compared to the 2016 census data shown in Profile ID.

* Source: ABS Cat 2001.0

Future engagement stages for the Community Strategic Plan should aim to improve representation of:

- People aged under 34 years (Pre-schoolers, Primary and Secondary schoolers, tertiary education and independence, and young workforce).
- People aged over 70 years (Seniors and elderly).
- Males.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.
- People from non-English speaking backgrounds.



"The amazing views"
Male resident aged 9 years, Candelo

Where are we now?

Q6. What makes your community a great place to live?

n=3,950

Participants throughout the region were asked what made their community a great place to live. The largest response was for the beautiful natural environment (17.4 percent), including the beautiful vistas, untouched landscapes, clean air and access to natural spaces. Special mention was given to the beach and coast, mountains and the country.

In addition, the local people and spirit (9.1 percent), peace and quiet (9.1 percent), and the lifestyle (9.0 percent) were featured prominently in the responses. People saw a strength being that people are kind, welcoming and caring. They also valued the peaceful lifestyle and quiet towns for places to live and raise families. The lifestyle also was a major strength, citing the relaxed and slower pace of living, and having the right balance between its rural atmosphere and its convenient proximity to larger metropolitan areas.

The sense of community was also commonly seen as a strength in the region (7.2 percent). Participants in the engagement valued the way the community would come together to help and support one another, especially when times are tough.

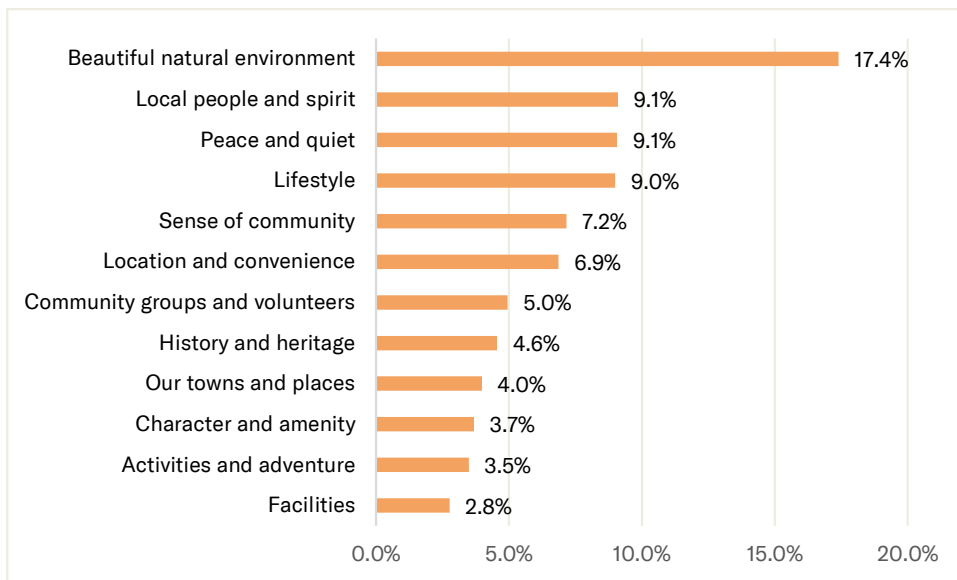


Figure 1. CRJO region - Strength attributes

Table 6. CRJO region - Strength attributes by region & LGA

LGA	Top attribute	Attribute 2	Attribute 3	Attribute 4	Attribute 5
CRJO region	Beautiful natural environment	Local people and spirit	Peace and quiet	Lifestyle	Sense of community
Bega Valley	Beautiful natural environment	Peace and quiet	Sense of community	Local people and spirit	Lifestyle
Goulburn Mulwaree	Beautiful natural environment	Location and convenience	Lifestyle	Peace and quiet	History and heritage
Queanbeyan-Palerang	Beautiful natural environment	Local people and spirit	Location and convenience	Peace and quiet	Lifestyle
Snowy Monaro	Beautiful natural environment	Lifestyle	Local people and spirit	Sense of community	Activities and adventure
Snowy Valleys	Beautiful natural environment	Peace and quiet	Lifestyle	Sense of community	Local people and spirit
Upper Lachlan	Sense of community	Beautiful natural environment	Local people and spirit	Lifestyle	Peace and quiet
Yass Valley	Beautiful natural environment	Lifestyle	Local people and spirit	Peace and quiet	Location and convenience/ Sense of community

Q7. What are the main challenges facing your community?

n=3,338

Residents were asked what the main challenges facing their communities were. The challenge most reported was that of jobs and employment (10.7 percent). People indicated that job availability, having job opportunities for young people, and attracting new residents through employment opportunities as being a big challenge.

Additionally, commonly mentioned challenges were environmental sustainability (9.9 percent), governance and leadership (9.3 percent) retaining and supporting young people (9.0 percent) and financial stability (8.2 percent).

Residents saw a challenge in conserving their natural landscapes, growing their population in a sustainable manner, and building more environmental stewardship. They also recognised the challenge of governance and leadership, including community relations, fiscal responsibility, and leadership in working across all tiers of government. The challenge of retaining and supporting young people was significant in the findings, relating to future education and training opportunities, activities and things to do, and job opportunities that would keep or attract young people. Financial sustainability was a challenge noted by many, with concerns around council viability while being a small town with less financial resources.

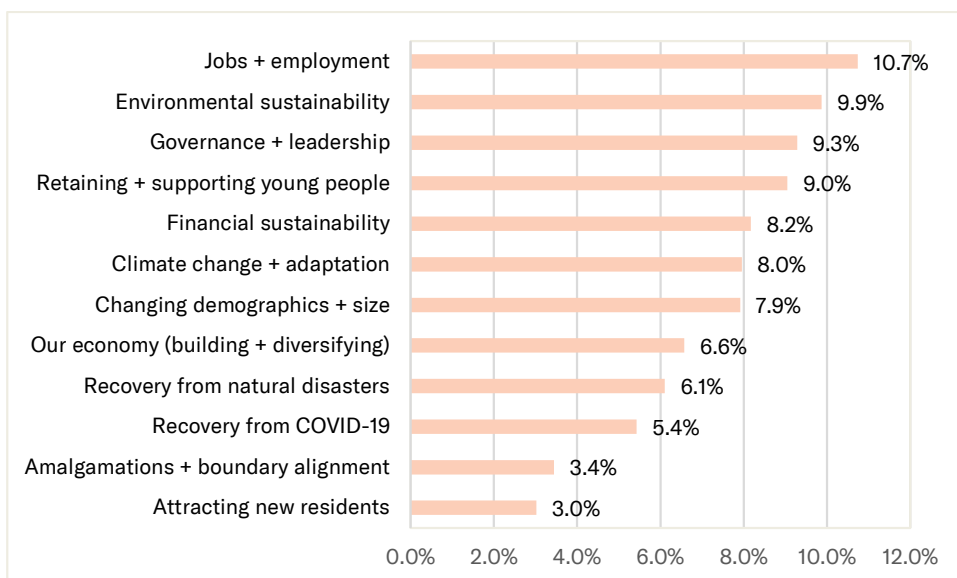


Figure 2. CRJO region - Challenge attributes

Table 7. CRJO region - Challenge attributes by region & LGA

LGA	Top attribute	Attribute 2	Attribute 3	Attribute 4	Attribute 5
CRJO region	Jobs and employment	Environmental sustainability	Governance and leadership	Retaining and supporting young people	Financial sustainability
Bega Valley	Jobs and employment	Retaining and supporting young people	Recovery from natural disasters	Environmental sustainability	Climate change and adaptation
Goulburn Mulwaree	Jobs and employment	Retaining and supporting young people	Our economy	Environmental sustainability	Governance and leadership
Queanbeyan-Palerang	Environmental sustainability	Changing demographics and size	Jobs and employment	Climate change and adaptation	Governance and leadership
Snowy Monaro	Governance and leadership	Jobs and employment	Retaining and supporting young people	Environmental sustainability	Financial sustainability
Snowy Valleys	Governance and leadership	Financial sustainability	Amalgamations and boundary alignment	Jobs and employment	Our economy
Upper Lachlan	Jobs and employment	Changing demographics and size	Retaining and supporting young people	Financial sustainability	Environmental sustainability
Yass Valley	Governance and leadership	Changing demographics and size	Environmental sustainability	Jobs and employment	Climate change and adaptation

Where do we want to be in ten years' time?

Q8. What have you seen in another area that would work well in your community?

n=2,245

Residents in the region were asked what they had seen in another area that might work well in their community. Over one fifth of responses (21.0 percent) included ideas for parks and green spaces, including thoughts surrounding dog-friendly parks, playgrounds, skate parks, walking and bicycling paths, rail trails and gardens. Participants also recalled examples related to improved infrastructure (15.5 percent), more activities and events (11.6 percent), economic growth (11.0 percent) and environmental sustainability (9.8 percent).

They shared ideas that would improve infrastructure, with many people mentioning indoor aquatic facilities and heated pools, improvements for roads and parking, sports facilities and improving accessibility for those living with a disability. In terms of additional activities and events, community members would like to see more festivals, events, parades and markets. Regarding economic growth, participants mentioned supporting businesses, diversifying industry and attracting tourism. Thoughts around environmental sustainability centred around ways to improve the conservation of natural landscape, ways to improve council leadership in the space, improvements to waste management and shifting to clean energy.

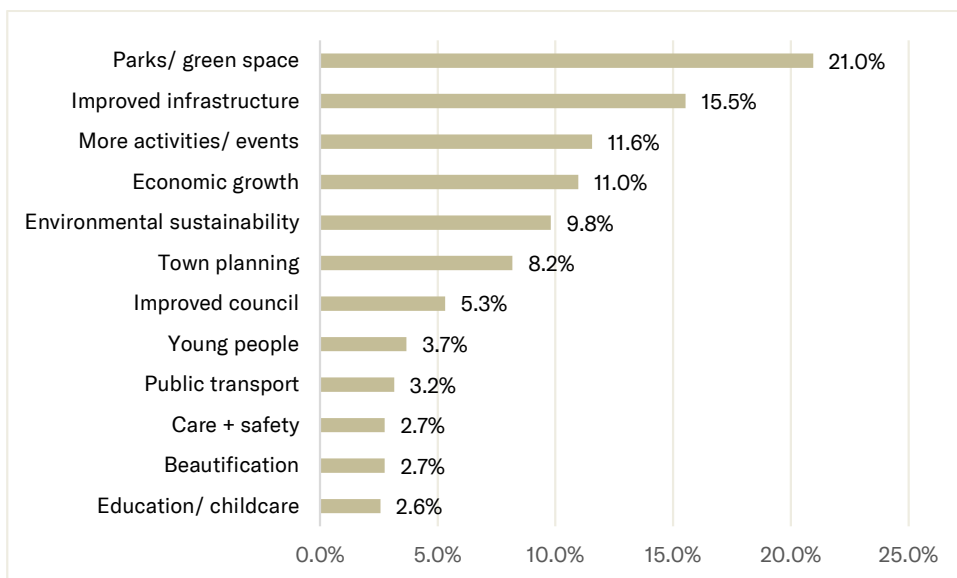


Figure 3. CRJO region - Suggestions from other areas

Table 8. CRJO region - Suggestions by region & LGA

LGA	Top attribute	Attribute 2	Attribute 3	Attribute 4	Attribute 5
CRJO region	Parks and green space	Improved infrastructure	More activities and events	Economic growth	Environmental sustainability
Bega Valley	Parks and green space	Improved infrastructure	Environmental sustainability	More activities and events	Economic growth
Goulburn Mulwaree	Economic growth	Improved infrastructure	More activities and events	Town planning	Park sand green space
Queanbeyan-Palerang	Parks and green space	Improved infrastructure	More activities and events	Economic growth	Town planning
Snowy Monaro	Parks and green space	Economic growth	More activities and events	Improved infrastructure	Environmental sustainability
Snowy Valleys	Parks and green space	Improved infrastructure	Economic growth	Improved council	More activities and events
Upper Lachlan	Improved infrastructure	Parks and green space	Economic growth	More activities and events	Town planning
Yass Valley	Improved infrastructure	More activities and events	Town planning	Parks and green space	Environmental sustainability

Q9. What would you like to see achieved in your community in the next ten years?

n=3,427

Residents were asked what one thing they would like to see achieved in their respective community in the next ten years. The number one priority resulting from this question was additional sports and recreation facilities (13.5 percent). Residents mentioned developing recreational facilities, indoor aquatic centres, mountain bike paths, walking trails, sports hubs and footie ovals. Also mentioned as priorities were infrastructure (12.4 percent), environmental impact (10.1 percent) economic growth (9.2 percent), and a better council/demerger (7.1 percent).

In terms of improved infrastructure, residents spoke largely of the revitalisation of their town centres, upgrading of local roads, maintaining gutters, and ensuring buildings and landscapes are well-kept. Priorities surrounding the environmental impact focussed largely on council's leadership in conservation of landscape and resources, leading in the space of climate change, maintaining the natural environment, and effectively managing waste. Visions for economic growth centred around increased tourism and business attraction. Participants also mentioned that improving council operations, community engagement, and leadership, perhaps through a demerger, would be something they'd like to see happen in the next ten years.

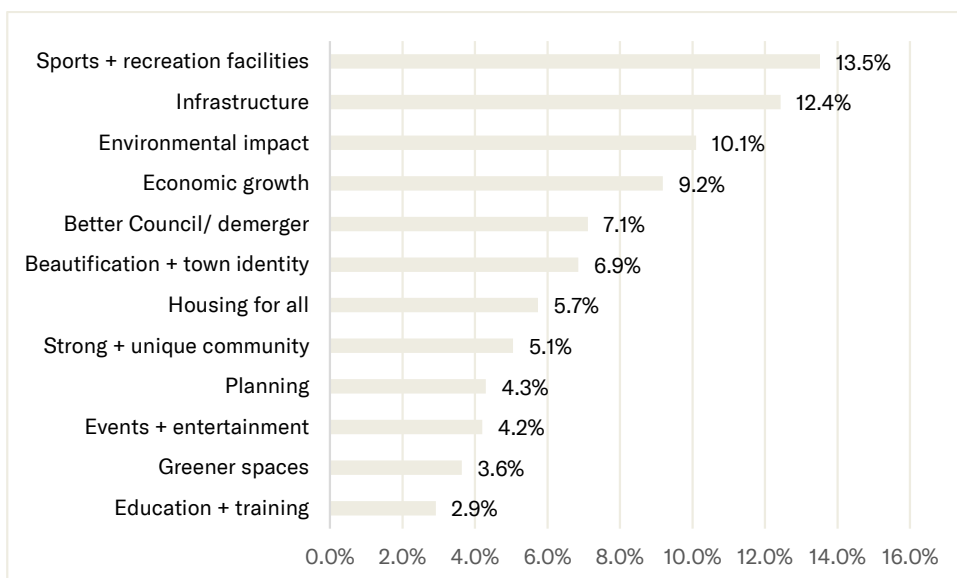


Figure 4. CRJO region - Priorities

Table 9. CRJO region - Priorities by region & LGA

LGA	Top attribute	Attribute 2	Attribute 3	Attribute 4	Attribute 5
CRJO region	Sport and recreation facilities	Infrastructure	Environmental impact	Economic growth	Better Council - demerger
Bega Valley	Environmental impact	Sport and recreation facilities	Housing for all	Economic growth	Infrastructure
Goulburn Mulwaree	Infrastructure	Economic growth	Environmental impact	Sport and recreation facilities	Beautification and town identity/ Strong and unique community
Queanbeyan-Palerang	Infrastructure	Environmental impact	Sport and recreation facilities	Economic growth	Beautification and town identity
Snowy Monaro	Sport and recreation facilities	Economic growth	Better Council - demerger	Infrastructure	Environmental impact
Snowy Valleys	Sport and recreation facilities	Better Council - demerger	Infrastructure	Economic growth	Strong and unique community
Upper Lachlan	Infrastructure	Planning	Economic growth	Beautification and town identity	Sport and recreation facilities
Yass Valley	Infrastructure	Sport and recreation facilities	Environmental impact	Beautification and town identity	Better Council - demerger

How will we get there?

Q10. What services or projects should we be prioritising, or lobbying other levels of government for?

n=3,120

Residents in the region were asked what services or projects council should be prioritising or lobbying other levels of government for. The responses were varied, with an even spread across many categories. The top priority residents shared was that of climate change and adaptation (5.6 percent). Other priorities include housing availability and affordability (5.4 percent), aged and disability services (5.2 percent), cycle, shared pathways and footpaths (4.9 percent) and roads and parking (4.8 percent).

Residents spoke for the need for urgency and leadership when mitigating climate change through policy and action, as well as adapting to climate change through preparing for and responding to natural disasters. In terms of housing availability and affordability, many participants saw that having more affordable housing options for a variety of income levels and household sizes as being a top priority. Aged and disability services were shown as a priority with a focus on ensuring older residents and those living with a disability had better access to community services and facilities, and felt welcomed and empowered in the community. Regarding cycling, shared pathways and footpaths, residents felt like these things would improve the community overall, flowing into economic development and attracting new residents. Finally, participants for this question mentioned often the need for improved roads, better parking, and maintained streetscapes and gutters.

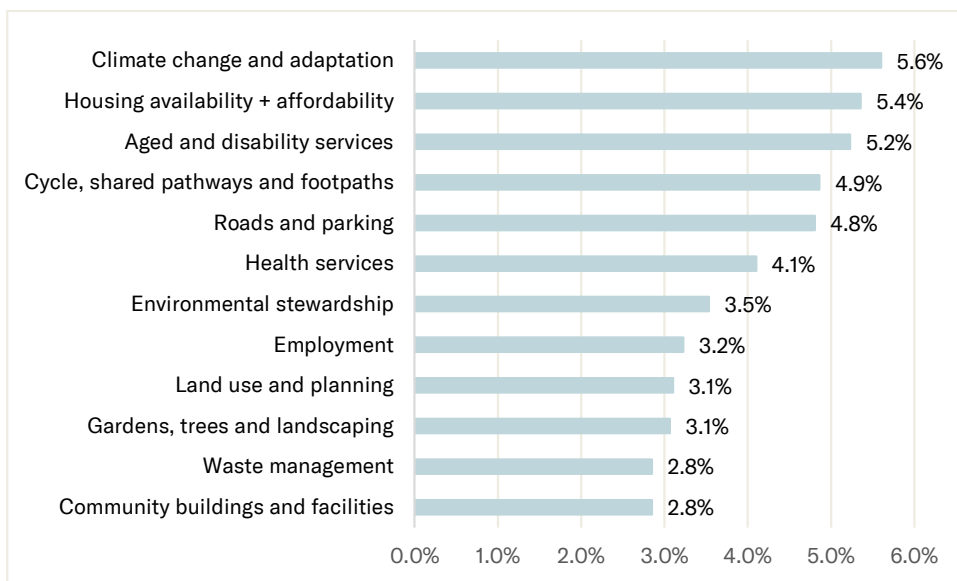


Figure 5. CRJO region - Services & projects

Table 10. CRJO region - Services & projects by region & LGA

LGA	Top attribute	Attribute 2	Attribute 3	Attribute 4	Attribute 5
CRJO region	Climate change and adaptation	Housing availability and affordability	Aged and disability services	Cycle, shared pathways and footpaths	Roads and parking
Bega Valley	Housing availability and affordability	Climate change and adaptation	Aged and disability services	Health services	Bushfire/flood recovery
Goulburn Mulwaree	Roads and parking	Employment	Aged and disability services	Events and festivals	Infrastructure
Queanbeyan-Palerang	Climate change and adaptation	Roads and parking	Aged and disability services	Cycle, shared pathways and footpaths	Gardens, trees and landscaping
Snowy Monaro	Cycle, shared pathways and footpaths	Aged and disability services	Housing availability and affordability	Climate change and adaptation	Roads and parking
Snowy Valleys	Roads and parking	Tourism and visitors	Cycle, shared pathways and footpaths	Aged and disability services	Financial sustainability
Upper Lachlan	Roads and parking	Land use and planning	Aged and disability services	Infrastructure	Health services
Yass Valley	Community buildings and facilities	Roads and parking	Aquatic facilities	Climate change and adaptation	Cycle, shared pathways and footpaths

BEGA VALLEY SHIRE COUNCIL

Community Engagement
Report, October 2021.



projectura

Contents

Summary findings.....25

Methods and participation.....26

Are we on track? 30

Q1. How do you feel about the vision in the adopted Bega Valley Shire Community Strategic Plan 2040?..... 30

Q2. Have you read the Bega Valley Shire Community Strategic Plan 2040?..... 31

Q3. Do you agree with these strategic objectives?.....32

Q4. Do you think we're on track with delivering the 6 high-level strategic objectives?.....33

Q5. Is anything missing in the Bega Valley Shire Council Community Strategic Plan 2040?.....33

Where are we now?..... 35

Q6. What makes your community a great place to live?.....35

Q7. What do you think are the main challenges facing our community?.....36

Where do we want to be in 10 years' time? 38

Q8. What have you seen in another area/shire that you think would work well in your community?.....38

Q9. What is one thing you would like to see achieved in your community in the next ten years?39

How will we get there?41

Q10. What services or projects do you think Bega Valley Shire Council should be prioritising, or lobbying other levels of government for?..... 41



Summary findings

Bega Valley Shire is located on the Sapphire Coast of southern New South Wales and is home to over 34,000 residents. The Shire has a unique and diverse environment which ranges from spectacular coastlines to amazing landscapes featuring beautiful natural environment and productive farmlands. The main townships that comprise the Shire include Bega, Pambula, Merimbula, Eden, Bermagui and Tathra with surrounding villages.

Almost 2,000 Bega Valley Shire residents participated in the Towards 2042 engagement from 21 June to 13 August 2021. The people of the community contributed their thoughts and opinions through an online survey, pop ups, discussion guides, submissions, telephone interviews and drawing sheets.

The engagement was essentially focused on four questions. Where are we now, where do we want to be, how will we get there and when will we know we have arrived.

The following is a summary of the high-level findings obtained from participant feedback.

- There was a high participation rate for those aged between 35 and 60 years old. Those aged 35 and under or 70 and above were underrepresented. Women represented over 60 percent of participants, with male participation underrepresented. There was a fairly even split between urban and rural participants in the engagement.
- 51 percent of participants were happy or very happy with the current Community Vision.
- Over 50 percent of participants indicated they had read the Community Strategic Plan. 59.1 percent agreed with all of the strategic objectives and a further 29.3 percent agreeing with some.
- A majority of participants felt that Council was partly on track to delivering strategic objectives across the areas of active and healthy communities, employment and learning opportunities, sustainable living, liveable places, connected communities and strong and consultative leadership.
- Participants identified the beautiful natural environment (21.6 percent), peace and quiet (9.8 percent) and the sense of community (9.4 percent) as aspects that made their community a great place to live.
- The main challenges facing the community were jobs and employment (11.5 percent), retaining and supporting young people (10.5 percent) and recovery from natural disasters (10.1 percent).
- Respondents were asked if they had seen anything in other areas, they thought would enhance the Bega Valley. Ideas shared include parks and green spaces (18.4 percent), improved infrastructure (15.4 percent) and environmental sustainability (13.3 percent).
- Environmental impact (13.8 percent), sport and recreation facilities (12.3 percent) and housing for all (9.8 percent) were the main priorities respondents would like to see achieved over the next 10 years.
- Respondents would like Council to prioritise housing for all (8.0 percent), climate change and adaptation (5.5 percent) and health services (5.4 percent).

Methods and participation

Stage 1 engagement activities successfully gathered personalised views from a broad cross section of the community. The total participation level in Stage 1 was 1,922 people. Community members will have further opportunity to explore and prioritise strategies once the Draft Community Strategic Plan is available.

Table 11. BV - Participation summary

Total participation	Population (2020 ERP)	% of population engaged
1,922	34,727	5.5

As shown in Table 12, Bega Valley Shire Council used seven different methods to engage with the community. The online survey and group discussion guides generated the largest number of participants in Stage 1 engagement. The online survey generated the greatest volume of useable data and participant demographic details.

Table 12. BV - Participation summary by method

Method	Participation	
	Measure	Number
Drawing sheets	Number of drawing sheets received.	74
Pop-ups	Number of people who attended pop up sessions.	40
Submissions	Number of formal submissions received.	4
Online survey	Number of individual survey responses.	1,275
Discussion Guides	Number of people who contributed to discussions.	418
Online workshop	Number of workshop participants.	0
Targeted telephone interviews	Number of telephone interviews completed by Projectura.	12
Random telephone interviews	Number of calls made by Jetty Tavener.	99

The following is a summary of community engagement data collected.

1. Drawing sheets

- BVSC prepared school packs and delivered them to 15 schools within the Shire on 27 July 2021.
- 74 Drawing Sheets were submitted.

2. Pop-up sessions

- Two pop-up sessions held and 40 people participated:
 - In Bega on 25 June 2021. 30 participants. 100% of attendees identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Pop-up was held at event to celebrate the 20th anniversary of MOU between BVSC and Local Aboriginal Land Councils.
 - In Bermagui on 30 July 2021. 10 participants.

3. Submissions

- 4 submissions received:
 - 17 August 2021 - Organisation.
 - 17 August 2021 – Male resident.
 - 17 August 2021 – Female resident.
 - 19 August 2021 – Male resident.

4. Online survey

- 1,275 individual responses were received to the Online Survey through SurveyMonkey.

5. Discussion Guide

- 65 Discussion Guide responses were received. 20 completed responses, 18 partially completed responses, and 27 incomplete responses (only answered Q1).
- A total of 418 people contributed to the 38 (fully and partially) completed responses.

6. Online workshop

- No online workshop was held.

7. Targeted telephone interviews

- Projectura completed 12 telephone interviews.

8. Random telephone interviews

- 99 random phone calls completed by Jetty Tavener.
- The results will be provided by Jetty Tavener.



The profile of the participants shows a broad cross-section of the Bega Valley community were involved in terms of age, gender, location, and diversity characteristics.

Table 13. BV - Respondent profile

Demographics		T2042 Engagement	CRJO Profile ID
Characteristic	Breakdown	%	2016 (%)
Age	Under 18 years	8.5	19.3
	18-34 years	12.4	13.0
	35-49 years	23.4	15.8
	50-59 years	20.4	16.7
	60-69 years	22.6	18.2
	70+ years	12.8	17.0
Gender	Female	66.2	51.1
	Male	31.5	48.9
Urban/Rural	Rural	47.0	-
	Urban	53.0	-
Diversity	LGBTQIA+	5.4	-
	Person with a disability	6.1	* 6.0
	Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	1.3	3.1
	Non-English speaking background	2.0	* 3.0
	Lived experience of homelessness, mental health or drug issues	8.2	-
	Difficulty finding affordable housing	0.0	-

NOTE: Red represents underrepresentation, and green represents overrepresentation compared to the 2016 census data shown in Profile ID.

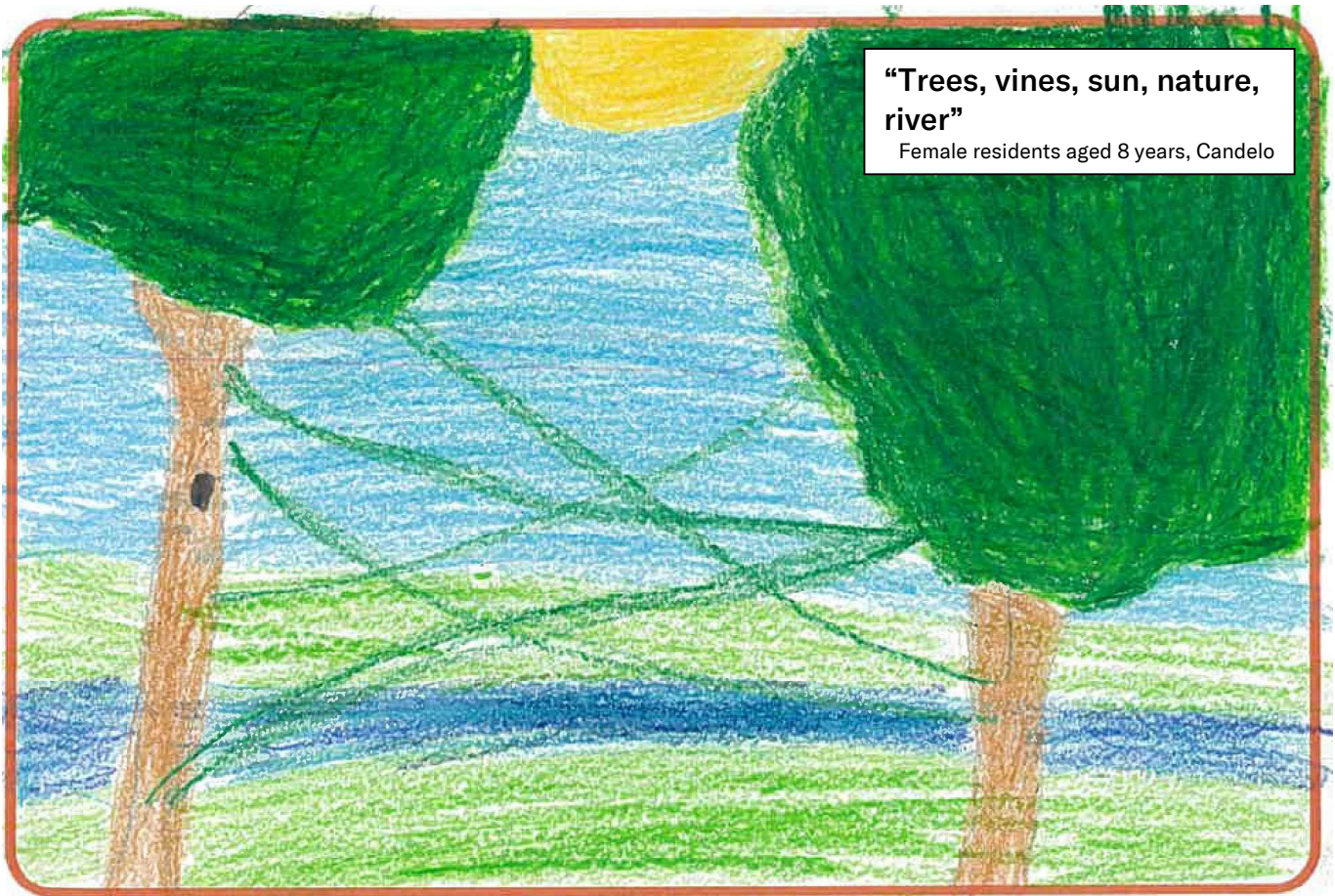
* Source: ABS Cat 2001.0



Figure 6. BV - Respondent location

Future engagement stages for the Community Strategic Plan should aim to improve representation of:

- People aged under 34 years (Pre-schoolers, Primary and secondary schoolers, tertiary education and independence, and young workforce).
- People aged over 70 years (Seniors and elderly).
- Males.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.
- People from non-English speaking backgrounds.



**“Trees, vines, sun, nature,
river”**

Female residents aged 8 years, Candelo

Are we on track?

The people of the Bega Valley Shire have an existing Community Strategic Plan. As part of the review and update of this document, we asked the community if they thought the plan was tracking well and if they had any feedback.

Vision 2040

By working together, the Bega Valley Shire community integrates quality of life, enterprising business, sustainable development, and conservation of the environment.

Q1. How do you feel about the vision in the adopted Bega Valley Shire Community Strategic Plan 2040?

n=933

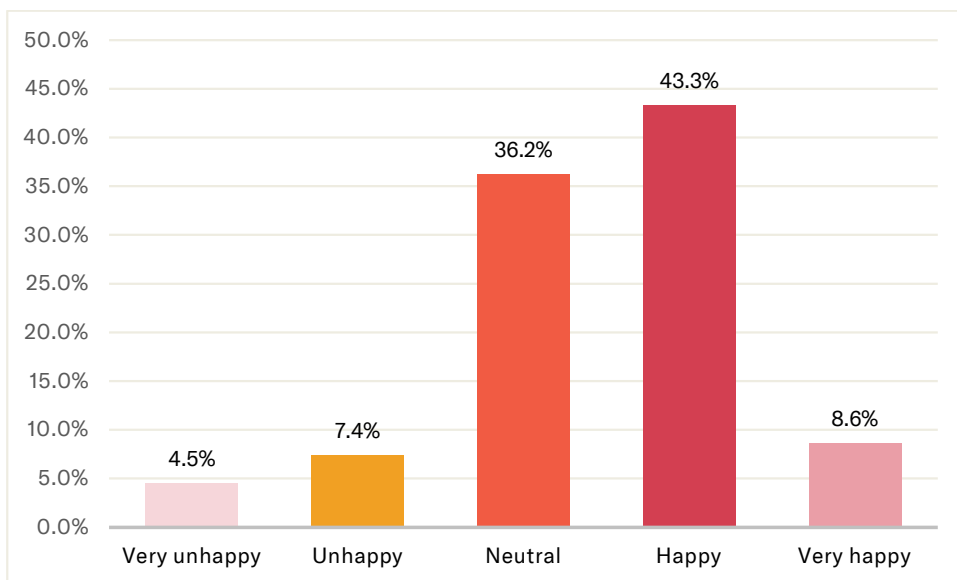


Figure 7. BV - Satisfaction with vision

There is significant support for the current Vision contained in the Bega Valley Shire Council Community Strategic Plan 2040. Across the engagement methods over 50 percent of respondents were either happy or very happy with the current Community Vision, with a further 36 percent indicating they were neutral. Participants provided 183 open-ended comments across all engagement methods to improve the current Vision.

A summary of suggested improvements is included below.

Table 14. BV – Considerations to improve Vision

Add	Alter/refine/define	Remove
Diversity and inclusion. First Nations people. Accessibility. Community connection. Tourism.	Balance economy, environment, and social issues. 'Ecologically sustainable development'. Prioritise environment. Define what 'integrates' means within the vision. Is this measurable?	Nil

Q2. Have you read the Bega Valley Shire Community Strategic Plan 2040?

n=958

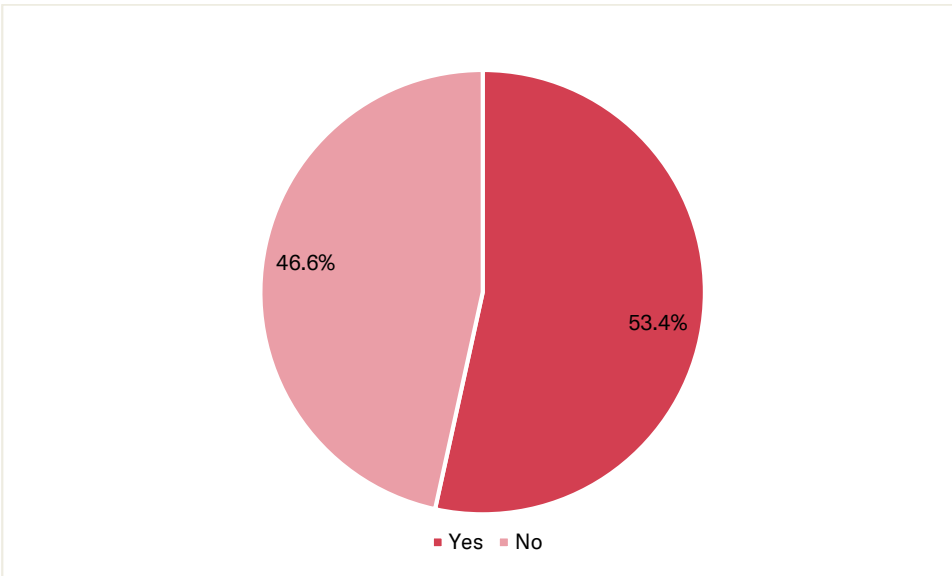


Figure 8. BV – Read CSP

Across the engagement, 53.4% of people had read the CSP. Those that had read the CSP were asked further questions. Their responses are detailed on the following pages.

Within the plan, there are 6 high level strategic objectives. The strategic objectives are:

1. Active and healthy communities.
2. Employment and learning opportunities.
3. Sustainable living.
4. Liveable places.
5. Connected communities.
6. Strong, consultative leadership.

Q3. Do you agree with these strategic objectives?

n=447

Over 59 percent of respondents across engagement methods indicated they agreed with all of the strategic objectives, and over 88 percent indicated they agreed with at least some of the objectives. This indicates a strong level of support for the current strategic objectives.

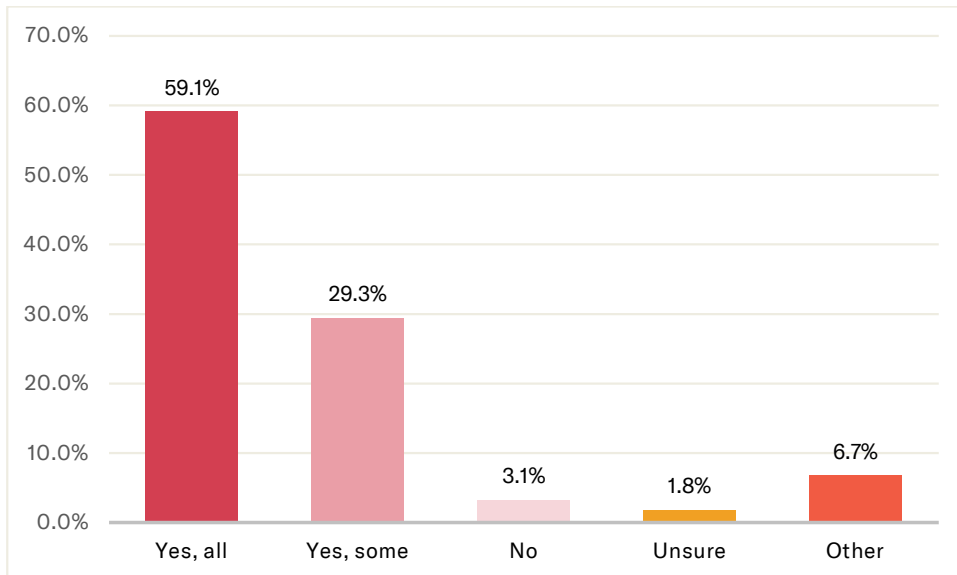


Figure 9. BV - Strategic objective support

Q4. Do you think we're on track with delivering the 6 high-level strategic objectives?

n=442

The majority of respondents thought the Shire was on track or partly on track for achieving the strategic objectives. Demonstrating the respondents higher perception of being on track, with almost 75 percent of respondents indicating that they thought the Shire was on track or partly on track, with achieving the 'Active and healthy communities' strategic objective (74.9 percent) and the 'Connected communities' objective (68.9 percent). Showing a lower respondent perception of being on track or partly on track with achieving the 'Strong, consultative leadership' objective (54.1 percent) and the 'Sustainable living' objective (61.2 percent).

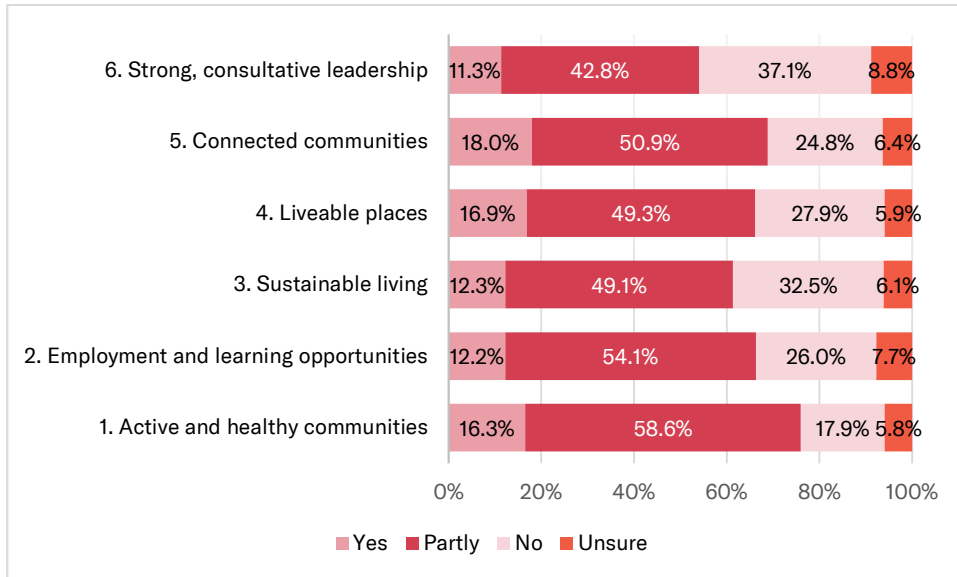


Figure 10. BV - On track with strategic objectives

Q5. Is anything missing in the Bega Valley Shire Council Community Strategic Plan 2040?

n=230

Engagement participants were asked to review the current strategic objectives and provide feedback on anything that was missing. The strategic objectives within BVSC's current plan are active and healthy communities, employment and learning opportunities, sustainable living, liveable places, connected communities and strong consultative leadership. We also considered feedback under the heading of 'other' that sat outside of these themes. Below is a summary of the subject matters identified by participants who provided feedback on this section.

Table 15. BV - Missing from the CSP

Strategic objectives					
1. Active and healthy communities	2. Employment and learning	3. Sustainable living	4. Liveable places	5. Connected communities	6. Strong consultative leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connected paths and trails. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocational education (TAFE). University. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate adaptation. Renewable energy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable and available housing for all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community development (to initiate and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community engagement. Leadership. Accountability.

Table 15. BV - Missing from the CSP

Strategic objectives					
1. Active and healthy communities	2. Employment and learning	3. Sustainable living	4. Liveable places	5. Connected communities	6. Strong consultative leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to GP's and specialists. • Accessibility. • Wellbeing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain young people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste, water and sewerage. • Planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ages and stages. • Planning and development. • Environmental stewardship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support connection). • Public transport. • Roads and parking. • Internet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication .
Other					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures, KPI's and reporting. • More actions. • Financial management. 					



Bermagui pop-up session

Where are we now?

Q6. What makes your community a great place to live?

n=1,102

Bega Valley residents were asked to identify what made their community a great place to live. 4,557 insights were provided by 1,102 people across six engagement methods, including drawing sheets, pop ups, submissions, online surveys, discussion guides and targeted telephone interviews.

The top five strengths identified across all methods include the beautiful natural environment, peace and quiet, sense of community, local people and spirit, and lifestyle. Comments relating to these strengths include:

Beautiful natural environment (21.6 percent): The beaches, sea and coast, including the beauty of the rolling hills and unspoilt natural landscape, as well as the peacefulness that the nature and bushland offer.

Peace and quiet (9.8 percent): Peacefulness, a lack of traffic and crowds, and in generally, being a quiet town.

Sense of community (9.4 percent): Supportive nature of the community, especially during difficult times. The community working together, and sense of connection to each other and the landscape.

Local people and spirit (8.6 percent): The kindness and caring attitude of the people, the diversity of residents and how that is celebrated, and that there is a sense of pride in the Bega Valley.

Lifestyle (6.3 percent): The relaxed lifestyle and slower pace of life, as well as the rural and outdoor setting and 'vibe'.

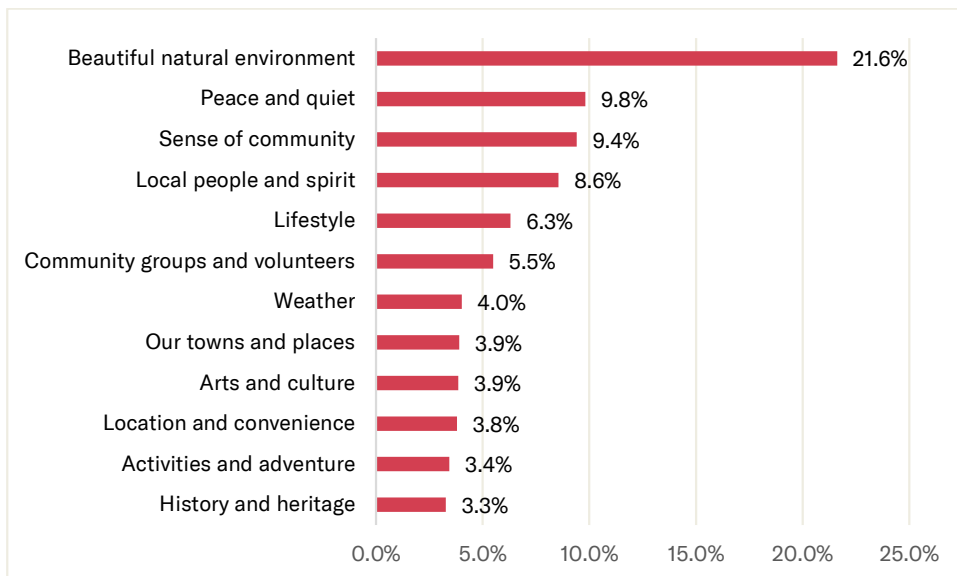


Figure 11. BV - Strength attributes

The strengths listed above correlate with the findings of the online survey, which represent 94 percent of all inputs for this question. Whilst comprising of less than 6 percent of total feedback gathered, different engagement methods highlighted strengths such as the community and volunteer groups, the arts and culture opportunities, and the area's history and heritage.

Table 16. BV - Strength attributes by method

LGA	Top attribute	Attribute 2	Attribute 3	Attribute 4	Attribute 5
Bega Valley <i>n=1,102</i>	Beautiful natural environment	Peace and quiet	Sense of community	Local people and spirit	Lifestyle
Drawing sheets <i>n=37</i>	Sports and recreation	Beautiful natural environment	Education and training	Activities and adventure	Services/ Arts and culture/ Sense of community
Pop ups <i>n=40</i>	Beautiful natural environment/ Arts and culture		Facilities/ Location and convenience		Events and entertainment/ Activities and adventure/ Our towns and places/ Sense of community/ Peace and quiet
Submissions <i>n=4</i>	Arts and culture/ Beautiful natural environment / Lifestyle/ Sense of community / Services				
Online survey <i>n=768</i>	Beautiful natural environment	Peace and quiet	Sense of community	Local people and spirit	Lifestyle
Discussion guides <i>n=242</i>	Beautiful natural environment	Local people and spirit	Community groups and volunteers	Sense of community	Lifestyle
Targeted telephone interviews <i>n=11</i>	Local people and spirit	Beautiful natural environment/ Location and convenience		Sense of community	Community groups and volunteers

Q7. What do you think are the main challenges facing our community?

n=1,062

The Bega Valley community considered the main challenges facing their community. 4,633 insights were provided by 1,062 people across six engagement methods including an online survey, drawing sheets, pop ups, submissions, discussion guides and targeted telephone calls.

The top five challenges identified across the engagement methods were jobs and employment, retaining and supporting young people, recovery from natural disasters, environmental sustainability and climate change and adaptation. Comments relating to these challenges include:

Jobs and employment (11.5 percent): The amount and diversity of job opportunities, career growth and progression, attracting and retaining a skilled workforce and more recently losing jobs in the area.

Retaining and supporting young people (10.5 percent): Local employment and training opportunities for young people along with supportive youth services, activities and placemaking to engage young people.

Recovery from natural disaster (10.1 percent): Continuing recovery from bushfires encompassing individual, infrastructure and economic recovery. Participants felt recovery was being compounded by having to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic whilst recovery efforts were taking place. Participants felt that vulnerable cohorts were particularly disadvantaged. Partnerships, advocacy and coordination with other levels of government was also of concern.

Environmental sustainability (9.9 percent): Conservation, land management, education and awareness, water security and a transition to clean industry were all raised as areas of focus.

Climate change and adaptation (9.0 percent): Need for strong emergency management in preparedness for extreme weather events and natural disasters, the impacts to health and wellbeing and the economy, and the need for awareness and urgency relating to climate action and adaptation.

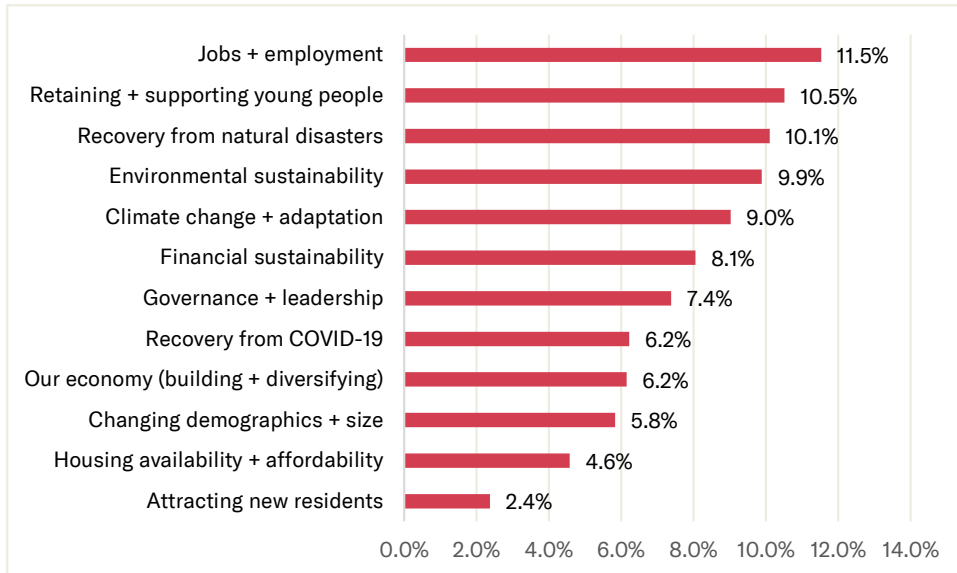


Figure 12. BV - Challenge attributes

The online survey was the predominant method of feedback for participants. The challenges that have been identified through the overall analysis align with those identified by participants in the online survey. For those groups and participants who took part in the discussion guides or targeted phone calls, other important challenges identified, including financial sustainability, governance and leadership, housing and the economy. This distinction needs to be read with caution due to the proportionality of participation through discussion guides and targeted phone calls in comparison to the online survey.

Table 17. BV - Challenge attributes by method

LGA	Top attribute	Attribute 2	Attribute 3	Attribute 4	Attribute 5
Bega Valley <i>n=1,062</i>	Jobs and employment	Retaining and supporting young people	Recovery from natural disasters	Environmental sustainability	Climate change and adaptation
Pop ups <i>n=40</i>	Housing availability and affordability/ Jobs and employment		Education and training/ Environmental sustainability/ Social issues		
Submissions <i>n=4</i>	Governance and leadership	Climate change and adaptation/ Infrastructure/ Our economy			-
Online survey <i>n=765</i>	Jobs and employment	Retaining and supporting young people	Recovery from natural disasters	Environmental sustainability	Climate change and adaptation
Discussion guides <i>n=242</i>	Retaining and supporting young people	Financial sustainability	Governance and leadership/ Jobs and employment/ Recovery from COVID-19		
Targeted telephone interviews <i>n=11</i>	Our economy	Governance and leadership/ Housing availability and affordability/ Jobs and employment/ Retaining and supporting young people			

Where do we want to be in 10 years' time?

Q8. What have you seen in another area/shire that you think would work well in your community?

n=811

The Bega Valley community were asked if they had seen anything in another area or shire that would be good in their community. Of the 811 people who responded, 67.1 percent answered 'yes', resulting in 544 inputs. We heard from people across five engagement methods, including pop-ups, submissions, online surveys, discussion guides and targeted telephone calls.

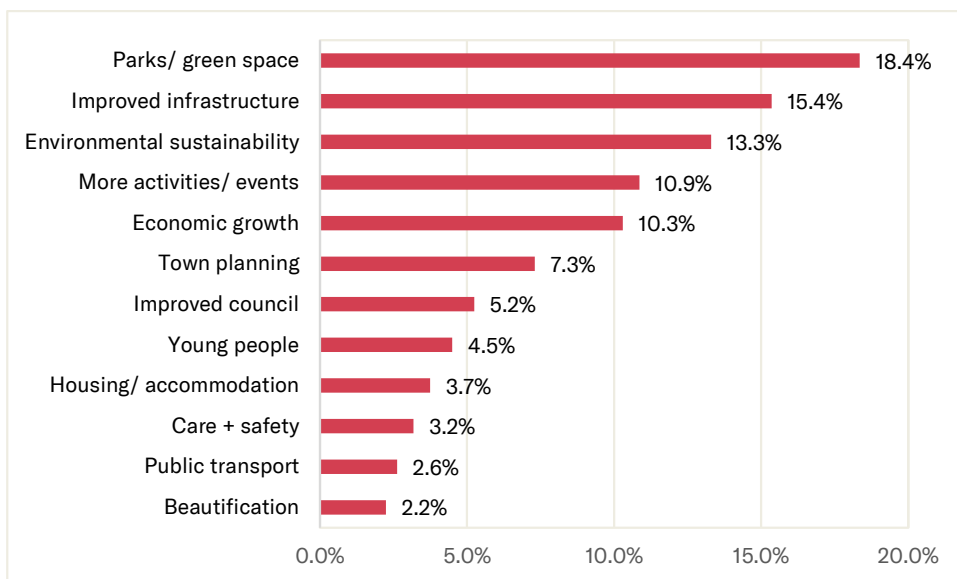


Figure 13. BV - Major suggestions from other areas

The top five categories include the parks and green space, improved infrastructure, environmental sustainability, more activities and events, and economic growth. Comments relating to these categories include:

Parks and green spaces (18.4 percent): Community gardens, more dog-approved spaces, botanical gardens, playgrounds for children, skate parks, footpaths and bicycle trails, and seating areas for picnics.

Improved infrastructure (15.4 percent): Increased accessibility, clean and maintained amenities, facilities and community spaces, maintenance of footpaths, more sports facilities, improved roads and car parking, and the addition of a pool.

Environmental sustainability (13.3 percent): Clean energy such as solar power, climate change mitigation, conservation of forests and biodiversity, increased environmental leadership on a council-level, plastic-free communities, waste management and water management.

More activities and events (10.9 percent): Arts and culture activities, cinema, events, more non-sport activities, and additional things to do in the evenings.

Economic growth (10.3 percent): Fostering agritourism, supporting businesses, diversifying industry, job creation, increased retail outlets, and tourism opportunities.

The overall findings correlate with the findings of the online survey, which represented 93 percent of all inputs for this question. Whilst comprising of less than 7 percent of total feedback gathered, different engagement methods such as pop-ups, submissions, discussion guides, pop-ups and telephone calls, in addition to the top categories listed above, identified public transport and improved safety as being things they would like to see in their own communities.

Table 18. BV - Suggestions from other areas by method

LGA	Top attribute	Attribute 2	Attribute 3	Attribute 4	Attribute 5
Bega Valley <i>n=680</i>	Parks and green space	Improved infrastructure	Environmental sustainability	More activities and events	Economic growth
Pop ups <i>n=40</i>	Care and safety	Education/ childcare	-	-	-
Online survey <i>n=471</i>	Parks and green space	Improved infrastructure	Environmental sustainability	Economic growth/ More activities and events	
Discussion guides <i>n=154</i>	Improved infrastructure	Parks/ green space	More activities/ events	Improved council	Town planning
Targeted telephone interviews <i>n=11</i>	Parks and green space	Improved infrastructure	More activities/ events	Beautification	Town planning/ Economic growth

Q9. What is one thing you would like to see achieved in your community in the next ten years?

n=928

Bega Valley residents were asked what one thing they would like to see achieved in the next 10 years. 1,796 insights were provided by 928 people. Feedback was received across six engagement methods, including drawing sheets, community pop-ups, submissions, online surveys, discussion guides and targeted telephone calls.

The top 5 categories of things the community would like to see achieved in the next 10 years across all methods of engagement include housing for all, infrastructure, planning, beautification and town identity, and economic growth. Comments relating to these categories include:

Environmental impact (13.8 percent): Council leadership on climate change adaptation and mitigation, environmental stewardship, focussing on renewable energy such as solar power and zero-waste strategies.

Sports and recreation facilities (12.8 percent): Building a stronger network of bicycle paths, inserting bike lanes, more mountain bike paths, additional walking paths and shared walkways, building a skate park, and building sporting facilities with an indoor pool.

Housing for all (9.8 percent): Affordable housing with availability for a variety of household sizes. Addressing holiday homes that are left empty out of peak-season, housing options for aging or retiring population, and supporting those experiencing homelessness.

Economic growth (9.0 percent): Supporting businesses, diversifying industry, ceasing and transitioning native and old-growth forest logging, attracting new businesses, and promoting tourism.

Infrastructure (8.0 percent) Improving road conditions, more footpaths, public toilets, tarring the heavily-used dirt roads, preservation of heritage infrastructure, and better infrastructure maintenance in general.

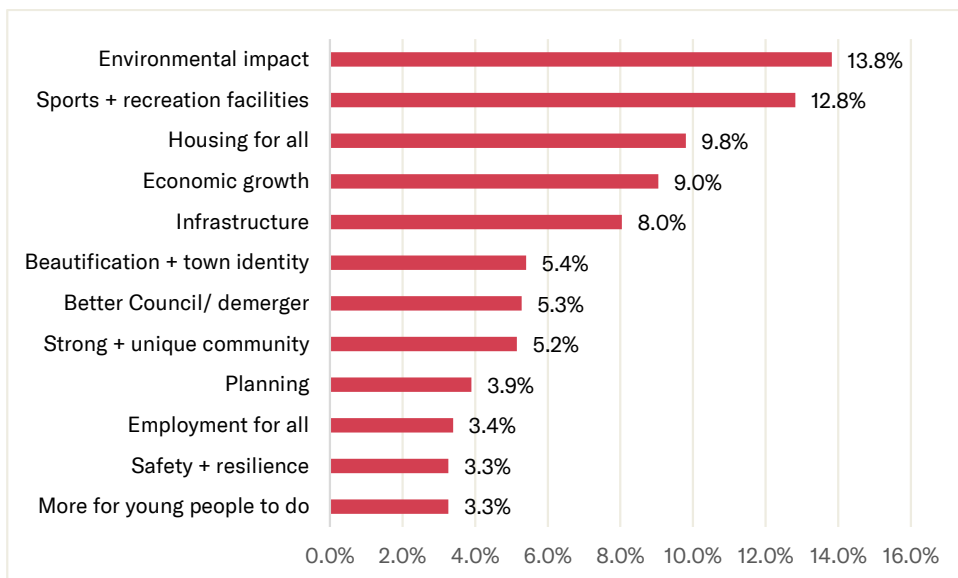


Figure 14. BV - Priorities

The priorities above correlates closely with the findings of the online survey, which represented 85.8 percent of all insights for this question. Different responses from the pop-ups, submissions, discussion guides, pop-ups and telephone calls included planning sustainably, beautification and town identity, and economic growth.

Table 19. BV - Priorities by method

LGA	Top attribute	Attribute 2	Attribute 3	Attribute 4	Attribute 5
Bega Valley <i>n=928</i>	Environmental impact	Sports and recreation facilities	Housing for all	Economic growth	Infrastructure
Drawing sheets <i>n=37</i>	Sports and recreation facilities	Greener spaces	More for young people to do	Economic growth	Education and training
Pop ups <i>n=40</i>	Strong and unique community	More for young people to do/ Environmental impact		Events and entertainment/ Employment for all/ Housing for all/ Sports and recreation facilities	
Submissions <i>n=4</i>	Beautification and town identity/ Infrastructure		Public transport/ Planning/ Economic growth/ Housing for all/ Sports and recreation facilities		
Online survey <i>n=626</i>	Environmental impact	Housing for all	Sports and recreation facilities	Economic growth	Infrastructure
Discussion guides <i>n=209</i>	Sports and recreation facilities	Environmental impact	Strong and unique community	Facilities	Infrastructure
Targeted telephone interviews <i>n=12</i>	Housing for all	Infrastructure	Planning	Economic growth	Beautification and town identity

How will we get there?

Q10. What services or projects do you think Bega Valley Shire Council should be prioritising, or lobbying other levels of government for?

n=998

When asked which services and projects, they would like Council to prioritise participants selected from a multiple-choice list of Council services, projects and community priorities. In all, 998 respondents provided 3,856 insights which have provided an indication of where community priorities lie across the next 20 years. Feedback was received across four engagement methods including an online survey, telephone interviews, discussion guides and submissions.

Analysis of input across all engagement methods indicate that housing affordability and availability, climate change and adaptation, aged and disability services, health services, cycle, shared pathways and footpaths and employment were the top five priority areas. Below is a summary of the comments provided in support of these priorities.

Housing for all (8.0 percent): Both housing affordability and availability were identified as priorities across the area. In addition to this a diversity of housing stock to allow people to live in homes that are suitable across each stage of their lives and homelessness were identified as further priorities.

Climate change and adaptation (6.6 percent): Adapting and taking action to mitigate the effects of climate change.

Aged and disability services (5.5 percent): Services, housing, accessibility and activities.

Health services (5.4 percent): Better hospital facilities, access to GP's and access to better health care with shorter waiting times.

Bushfire and flood recovery (4.9 percent): The rebuilding and revitalisation of buildings, the environment, communities, and the economy. Preparedness for future emergencies and events. Helping people heal.

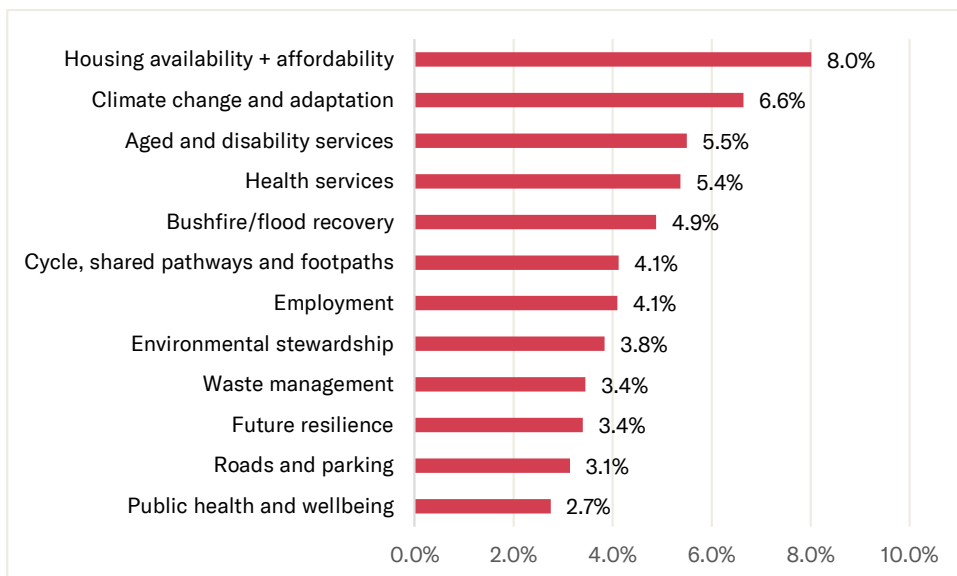


Figure 15. BV – Services & projects

86 percent of responses to this question were provided by participants who completed the online survey. Their priorities are consistent with the five focus areas above. Telephone interview respondents identified roads and parking, economic development, employment, community engagement and tourism and visitors as priorities. Discussion guide respondents were more likely to identify infrastructure matters as priorities with sports facilities, community buildings and facilities and tourism and visitors also being identified by this cohort. Housing was identified across all engagement methods as a priority.

Table 20. BV – Services & projects by method

LGA	Top attribute	Attribute 2	Attribute 3	Attribute 4	Attribute 5
Bega Valley <i>n=998</i>	Housing availability and affordability	Climate change and adaptation	Aged and disability services	Health services	Bushfire/flood recovery
Submissions <i>n=4</i>	Climate change and adaptation/ Economic development/ Environmental stewardship/ Housing availability and affordability/ Infrastructure / Strategic planning / Tourism and visitors				
Online survey <i>n=740</i>	Housing availability and affordability	Climate change and adaptation	Aged and disability services	Health services	Bushfire/flood recovery
Discussion guides <i>n=242</i>	Sports facilities	Community buildings and facilities/ Housing availability and affordability/ Tourism and visitors			Aged and disability services/ Climate change and adaptation/ Environmental stewardship/ Events and festivals/ Land use planning/ Roads and parking
Targeted telephone interviews <i>n=12</i>	Housing availability and affordability	Roads and parking	Economic development/ Employment		Community engagement/ Tourism and visitors