



hear every voice, know where you stand

**STRAIGHTTALK**

# A SHARED VISION FOR PARRAMATTA

Defining community aspirations and identity

Final report

November 2016



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## **Document**

A shared vision for  
Parramatta – Final report

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City of Parramatta Council

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3.1

# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Straight Talk undertook research and community consultation for City of Parramatta Council (the 'City') in order to develop a shared vision, shared identity and understand community aspirations for the new Parramatta Local Government Area (LGA) following the implementation of council amalgamations.

Specific project objectives included engaging with residents, stakeholder and community groups to:

- 👉 Develop a shared vision and priorities for the City
- 👉 Create a new, shared identity for the City
- 👉 Identify major projects that can be implemented using the Stronger Communities Fund
- 👉 Understand community views of existing City services and their aspirations for these services in the future.

Straight Talk designed and conducted a comprehensive approach to engaging with the community:

1. An online survey
2. An intercept survey
3. Workshops with new and existing residents, youth, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) community members and stakeholders
4. One-on-one interviews with CALD community members, community leaders and stakeholder group representatives
5. Meetings with stakeholder groups (LRAC, FCRC, Access and ATSI committees)
6. A large scale, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Town Hall Meeting
7. Focus groups.

This research process reached a total of 1,241 people – 877 people completed the online survey, 54 people completed an intercept survey, 120 people took part in the workshops, 6 people were interviewed, 37 people attended the stakeholder meetings, 120 participated in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Town Hall Meeting and 27 attended the final three focus groups.

A concurrent program inviting new and existing residents to identify projects that could be funded through the Stronger Communities Fund was also run, and over 170 project ideas were generated.

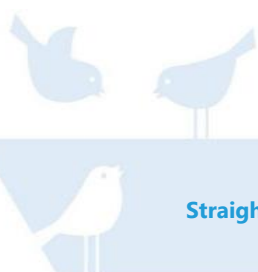
The methodology was based on a 'cascading' approach, with the data and research from surveys, workshops, interviews and meetings providing context for Council to consider the project ideas. Council decided, given the enthusiastic response from the community to develop ideas, that all of these should be considered at the large scale, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Town Hall Meeting, together with the feedback on vision, identity and priorities.

Finally, three focus groups, two of local residents (both new and existing) and one non-resident focus group (i.e. people who don't live within the City of Parramatta local government area), provided qualitative feedback to help Council develop a shared vision and identity as well as indicating priorities for Council in the future and their preferences for Stronger Communities projects.

The rationale for the second stage was two-fold. Firstly, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Town Hall Meeting allowed a large number of residents and stakeholders to work together on identifying priorities. The focus groups allowed us to 'test' these with small groups of people who tended to represent the unengaged; those who don't normally participate in engagement activities. This robust approach provides the City with confidence that the views of all residents – both new and existing, hard to reach and the unengaged, are documented together with the valuable insights of stakeholders and active citizens within this process of consultation.

## 1.1. Key findings

- The feedback from all consultation methods uncovered some clear and consistent themes around the future vision and identity of the City
- There were no findings from the second stage of consultation which directly opposed any of the findings from the first phase
- Feedback from the second stage of the consultation reaffirmed the importance of providing services and opportunities for community members across the entire LGA. Community members spoke about wanting more focus on each of the unique districts within the City of Parramatta and wanting to acknowledge and advertise the things that make them special
- Increasing accessibility and connectivity was generally seen as the cornerstone for supporting future growth and development across the City. This was interpreted as providing fluid and convenient public and private transport options
- There was a strong focus on community building from participants in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Town Hall Meeting and the focus groups. In particular, creating events, infrastructure and opportunities which encouraged people to gather and connect. The implication was that the community anticipated that Council could be more involved in project priorities such as developing community spaces and associated infrastructure and supporting the development of cultural and creative industries
- Increasing the amount of green space across the city and suburban areas of the LGA was mentioned frequently. Both residents and non-residents say they want to see more parks, reserves and natural places to relax, socialise and play. These spaces are seen as particularly important for the social and developmental needs of growing children as parents do not want their children growing up in entirely urban landscapes. Other participants voiced enthusiasm for parks as play spaces for adults and the inclusion of a sustainable, green city as part of the future identity for the City of Parramatta
- The future management of growth was also revealed as being important across all second stage activities. This refers to the infrastructure, services and programs needed to support the cultural and economic development of the City
- All workshop feedback indicated a very high level of satisfaction from participants.



## Vision and identity

- Parramatta is seen as the next big city. It is frequently referred to by community members as being diverse and vibrant with lots of potential
- Many community members feel a strong sense of connection to the City of Parramatta
- There is also a strong sense of local identity. The unique character of each local area is valued by its residents
- Most popular words for the future vision of the City:
  - 🐦 Green
  - 🐦 Heritage
  - 🐦 Creative
  - 🐦 Vibrant
  - 🐦 Optimistic
- The emerging themes for the vision and identity of the new Parramatta LGA were consistent across all stakeholder segments. The themes included:
  - 🐦 **Local identity.** Strongly identifying with their suburb
  - 🐦 **Community pride.** Proud of people and their place in the community
  - 🐦 **Cultural diversity.** Celebrating and deeply embedding cultural diversity
  - 🐦 **Green and open.** Growing green spaces and safeguarding open spaces
  - 🐦 **Local economy.** Driving local economies with local jobs
- Having opportunities to explore and develop the individual cultures within each suburb was often mentioned in workshops. Being able to honour and explore the multicultural, artistic and creative aspects within each area was seen as necessary

## Top strategic priorities

- Across the first and second stage of the consultation, the top three priorities were different, however anecdotally, the reasons behind the choices were similar. Participants often spoke about wanting the resources to connect with one another and allow those outside the LGA to come and appreciate all the City has to offer. '**Promoting green spaces and the environment**', '**Improving transport**' and '**Managing growth**' were the top priorities in the second stage from feedback at the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Town Hall Meeting
- **Building a strong council for the new community** was ranked as the top strategic priority during the first stage. Face to face conversations during intercept interviews reveal that many participants chose this option as a means to achieving the other priorities. During the focus groups and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Town Hall Meeting, there was comment that this priority should be regarded as normal business for Council and not distinctive in its own right



- **Transport** was frequently ranked in the top three priorities. Participants wanted to ensure there was going to be appropriate transport services to support population growth.

## Stronger Communities Fund – Major projects

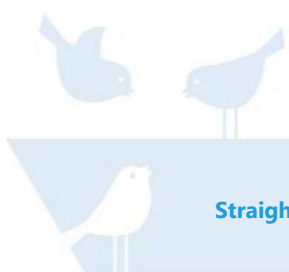
- In the first stage of the consultation, workshop participants were asked to comment on the Stronger Communities Fund, **'Social'** themed projects were said to be very important in general. Community members want to **create more connections with one another** and have **opportunities to express themselves creatively**. The 'Social' theme generated the most interest and many spontaneous comments were focused on ideas under this category
- Closely related to this, **'Cultural'** projects focused on **creating places that people want to be** were also highly popular
- Other major project ideas that were nominated as being important included, **creating strong local centres** under the **'Economic'** theme as well as **conserving urban bushland** and **creating sustainable buildings and places** which were both important items in the **'Environmental'** theme
- In the second stage of the consultation, there were similar points of focus. **Accessibility and connectivity** were important as well as having the **appropriate support of cultural and creative industries, events, programs and activation**.

There were some seemingly contradictory responses around the idea of creating a strong economy and financial sustainability for the LGA. The online survey uncovered three strategic priorities focused on economically related topics however, this was not as evident during the second phase of consultation and face-to-face discussions where participants talked about creating more green space, events and culture.

Indirectly, the financial and economic strength of the City was an influential idea as many participants described the future of the area as the second CBD. Associated with this, were spontaneous comments around having more employment opportunities as the Parramatta CBD's reach grew and expanded to rival the career opportunities offered in the Sydney CBD.

Throughout the project, participants also referenced wanting to support and wanting further Council support for the local economy. There was an expectation that Council should focus on local precincts and enabling each suburb within the new LGA to develop its own sub-culture and unique business offering. This would result in a more even spread of wealth across the City without too much emphasis and pressure on centralised economic growth from activities solely in the Parramatta CBD.

**The consultation found an implicit acceptance that economic strength was important but not an exclusive focus.** The financial performance of the LGA must be balanced with cultural and community accomplishments, spread across the whole City of Parramatta.



## Services

**Table 1a: Key feedback on local service provision and awareness**

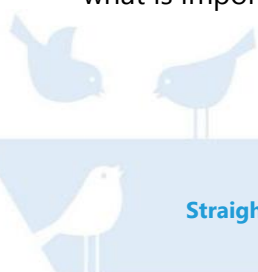
Item	Service
Community members are most aware of the City providing...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Libraries</li> <li>Waste collection</li> <li>Community and major events</li> </ul>
They are least aware of the City providing...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Services for seniors</li> <li>Children's services</li> <li>Food safety inspections</li> </ul>
The top three most important services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cleanliness of streets and neighbourhood</li> <li>Maintenance of parks and park facilities, such as playgrounds and picnic shelters or fitness equipment</li> <li>Waste collection services</li> </ul>
The top three suggested services for online delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community events and entertainment schedule</li> <li>Reporting of local issues such as faulty street lights or footpath maintenance</li> <li>Booking rubbish removal</li> </ul>
Frequently mentioned services which require improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Road and footpath upgrades</li> <li>Library services</li> <li>Lighting in public places</li> <li>Street cleaning</li> <li>Children's playgrounds</li> <li>The local pool</li> </ul>

It is important to note that there are some differences between the feedback at the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Town Hall Meeting and the focus groups. These relate mainly to the priorities for project categories, where the Town Hall Meeting participants supported heritage and environment more strongly than the focus groups. While generally, discussions in the focus groups tended to concentrate more on developing local events and activities.

In all likelihood, this is a reflection on participants at the Town Hall Meeting having either participated in an engagement activity or having responded to an advertisement. The expectation is that they already had some interest or motivation in taking part because they are involved in their local community or are active around one or more issues, similar to the stakeholders at the same event.

Participants at the focus groups, on the other hand, were randomly selected and motivated to attend by the payment of a stipend, so their opinions are more likely to reflect those of everyday people who have other priorities in life apart from engaging with Council.

Both perspectives are valid and valuable and provide the City with a well-rounded understanding of what is important to the people of Parramatta.



# 2. INTRODUCTION

## 2.1. Report purpose

This report has been prepared by Straight Talk for the City of Parramatta Council (the 'City') to document the outcomes of the community consultation program designed to engage a range of resident and stakeholder groups within the new Parramatta LGA. It provides details of all engagement activities and their outcomes.

An initial, interim report was prepared to highlight relevant, key findings to inform the second stage of the engagement (21<sup>st</sup> Century Town Hall Meeting and three focus groups) which tested the overarching findings.

This outcomes report provides details of all engagement activities and feedback and will be used by Council to:

- 👉 Inform the development of a shared vision and directions for the City of Parramatta
- 👉 Report to NSW Government on the priorities that the community see as important for the City of Parramatta
- 👉 Assist the independent assessment panel which has been convened to make recommendations on which major projects should be funded by the \$14 million Stronger Communities Fund, made available by NSW Government to assist merged councils.

## 2.2. Report structure

This report contains the following key sections:

**Section 3:** Background to the engagement

**Section 4:** Methodology

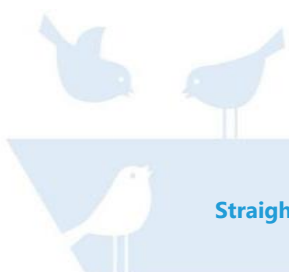
**Section 5:** Stage one outcomes

**Section 6:** Stage two outcomes

**Section 7:** Stage one workshop participant feedback

**Section 8:** Stage two workshop participant feedback

**Section 9:** Conclusion





# 3. BACKGROUND TO THE ENGAGEMENT

## 3.1. Strategic context

The City of Parramatta Council is situated approximately 25kms west of the Sydney CBD and is the second largest employment destination behind the Sydney CBD. As part of the Fit for the Future reforms, the boundaries of the city have been extended and now include: Baulkham Hills, Beecroft, Camellia, Carlingford, Clyde, Constitution Hill, Dundas, Dundas Valley, Eastwood, Ermington, Granville, Harris Park, Holroyd, Lidcombe, Mays Hill, Merrylands, Newington, North Parramatta, Northmead, North Rocks, Oatlands, Old Toongabbie, Parramatta, Pendle Hill, Rosehill, Rydalmere, Silverwater, Sydney Olympic Park, Telopea, Toongabbie, Winston Hills, Wentworth Point, Wentworthville and Westmead. A number of suburbs were also eliminated, including: Granville, South Granville, Guildford and Merrylands. Overall, the total area within the LGA has increased and with it, multiple new and diverse community groups and cultures.

## 3.2. Purpose and aims

This project was intended to form the consultation outcomes which the City will report to the NSW Government in December 2016. It will demonstrate how the City has engaged with their community around ideas for a future identity, future aspirations, priorities, insights into service provision and ideas for major projects to be funded through the Stronger Communities Fund.

The City of Parramatta has a long-established commitment to engagement with its stakeholders and communities that is effective, respectful and reflects good practice.

Engagement was required in order to demonstrate that new and existing residents had helped shape the new identity and vision for the City of Parramatta and Council, and identify their priorities for projects that could be funded with the \$14 million made available by the NSW Government to merged councils.

Given that engagement with new and existing residents was needed, Council decided to extend the engagement to:

- 👉 Understanding community perceptions of Council's services and their priorities for these
- 👉 Exploring directions and priorities to help inform the refresh of the Community Strategic Plan, due in 2017
- 👉 Testing three mood boards for colour palettes and 'look and feel' to help inform the development of the visual identity for Council.

Specific engagement aims included:

- 👉 Inviting all new and existing residents and stakeholders to participate in shaping the future of the City of Parramatta

- 🦉 Providing accessible and appropriate opportunities for participation for new, existing and hard to reach groups of residents
- 🦉 Developing a shared identity, shared vision and shared priorities for the new City of Parramatta
- 🦉 Identifying priorities for how the \$14 million Stronger Communities Fund can be spent on major projects
- 🦉 Understanding community views about current service provision and future aspirations for these services
- 🦉 Providing opportunities for different community members and stakeholders to discuss and understand the competing needs, priorities and aspirations of others in the local area; as well as develop a plan and set of programs which work for everyone

### 3.3. Approach and rationale

The overarching community research and engagement process commenced in June 2016 as Council reviewed its operational plan, key themes and priorities.

Council undertook a broad engagement process to connect with new residents, informing them about the range of services Council offered and encouraging them to share what was important to them.

Council also invited the community and stakeholders to identify potential projects that could be funded through the Stronger Communities Fund.

Straight Talk was engaged by the City in September 2016 to undertake consultation activities with a range of identified target audiences. These sessions were designed to explore the vision, directions, priorities and perceptions of council services of the many and highly diverse communities that make up the new Parramatta LGA.

The consultation framework included a mix of both public, broad and open invitation events as well as targeted invitations for specific groups. The workshop and open-forum style discussions were designed to provide an opportunity for all community members to work together to identify ideas and solutions which are able to meet a diverse range of needs. Surveys, administered in person at intercept activities and online through the website, explored perceptions and understanding of council services, and how well council was delivering these. A full description of each method of engagement follows in this report.

Feedback included both quantitative and qualitative data which was analysed by Straight Talk and is presented in this report.

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*It is important to note that the City of Parramatta has undertaken a highly comprehensive approach to engaging new and existing residents and stakeholders, hard to reach groups and the wider public. Straight Talk is confident the methodology is robust, rigorous and defensible and represents best practice, particularly in terms of the tight timeframes and complex nature of the breadth of issues covered.*

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# 4. METHODOLOGY

## 4.1. Stage One

Activities were undertaken throughout September and October, 2016 and included a mix of qualitative and quantitative research methods. Each method was designed to address the agreed objectives and target a broad spectrum of people from across the LGA. The five main methods used were:

- 👉 Online survey
- 👉 Intercept survey
- 👉 Workshops
- 👉 One-on-one interviews
- 👉 Group meetings.

The following section outlines each method in more detail.

### 4.1.1. Online survey

An online survey was designed by Straight Talk and subsequently uploaded and made available through the City's website. The survey was open for four weeks, from Monday 19 September to Monday 10 October 2016. In total 877 surveys were completed. Registered users of the Our City Your Say database were also invited to take the survey. Participation was voluntary and respondents were self-selected so the results are therefore not a demographic sample representative of the whole Parramatta community. This sample is useful in presenting a broad range of views from the residents who receive regular communication with or who already engage with the City.

Promotion of the online survey was through the following:

- Emails to the City's existing database of residents
- Posts on the City's Facebook page
- Media advertising and Administrator's message
- Flyer distribution to local residents and at high pedestrian traffic locations, such as Harris Park
- Social media and website



### 4.1.2. Intercept survey

Intercept surveys were undertaken in three-hour sessions, across four days and in four locations which were selected based on ease of access and likelihood of high pedestrian footfall. The purpose of conducting intercept surveys was to target community members who were otherwise unlikely to participate in other types of consultation. At each location, two consultants approached people at random and took them through an intercept survey on an iPad. A total of 54 intercept surveys were completed.

Details for each of the four days were as follows:

- Day one – Monday 19 September at Parramatta Westfield and Western Sydney University. The aim was to target different types ages of shoppers at Westfield as well as young people and students at the university
- Day two – Tuesday 20 September at Wentworth Point Bridge and Bicentennial Park. The focus was on new residents of the City of Parramatta LGA
- Day three – Saturday 24 September at Boronia Park Family Fun Day. Consultants attended a family event held by Parramatta Council in Boronia Park in Epping and spoke to parents in the local area
- Day four – Monday 26 September at Epping train station and the surrounding streets. This was focused on public transport commuters.

**Table 4a: Intercept interview details and responses**

Date	Time	Location	Surveys completed	Total completed
Monday 19 September	11am-12pm	Parramatta Westfield	3	<b>13</b>
	12pm-2pm	WSU	10	
Tuesday 20 September	11am-12pm	Wentworth Point Bridge	1	<b>11</b>
	12pm-2pm	Bicentennial Park	10	
Saturday 24 September	11am-1pm	Boronia Park	16	<b>16</b>
Monday 26 September	11am-2pm	Epping Train Station and immediate vicinity	14	<b>14</b>



### 4.1.3. Resident workshops

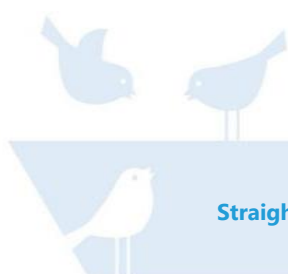
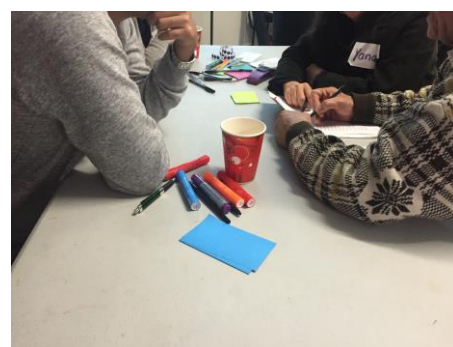
Four workshops were held, two in existing resident districts and two in new resident areas. Each workshop was three hours long, facilitated by an experienced Straight Talk moderator and attended by at least one City representative.

Invitations to these workshops were sent to those who had participated in previous pop-up event activities organised by the City in new suburb areas. All of the workshops were also openly advertised on the City's website and in relevant local media outlets. Each workshop was hosted at a major centre across the LGA. The workshops focussed on obtaining feedback on three key areas: vision and identity; council services; and major project ideas.

**Table 4b: Resident workshop details and attendance**

Date	Time	Location	Attendees
Monday, 19 September 2016	6pm-9pm	The Epping Club, Epping	31
Tuesday, 20 September 2016	6pm-9pm	Northmead Bowling Club, Northmead	17
Wednesday, 21 September 2016	6pm-9pm	Harris Park Community Centre, Harris Park	22
Thursday, 22 September 2016	6pm-9pm	Newington Community Centre, Newington	15

A total of 85 residents attended the resident workshops.





#### 4.1.4. Youth workshops

Two workshops were held targeting young people aged 15-25 years old. These were advertised through a flyer drop, email invitation at Western Sydney University and individual invitations extended to local high schools in the LGA, including schools for those children with special learning needs.

Each workshop was two-hours long and hosted at the Parramatta Artist Studios. The structure of the workshop was slightly different to accommodate for the younger age ranges. Sessions were shorter and participants were taken through a number of fun exercises including local government services bingo, where everyone was given a bingo card and had to mark off council services which were being read out by the facilitator. The winner was given a gift card and prizes were given to second and third place. Each workshop still featured key activities focused on understanding a shared vision for the future of Parramatta and feedback on local government services and suggested new project ideas.

At the end of both workshops each student was given \$50 cash as a thank you for attending.

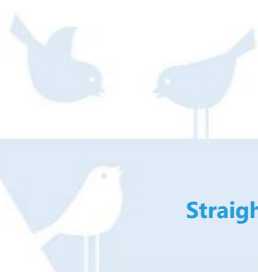
**Table 4c: Youth workshop details and attendance**

Date	Time	Location	Participants	Attendees
Monday, 5 October 2016	6pm-8pm	Parramatta Artist Studios	Youth who live locally and use the city centre, aged 17-22 years' old	6
Thursday, 13 October 2016	6pm-8pm	Parramatta Artist Studios	Four participating schools: Tara Anglican School for Girls James Ruse Agricultural High Parramatta High School RIDBC Thomas Pattison School	20

A total of 26 students attended the youth workshops.

#### 4.1.5. CALD activities

Three cultural groups were targeted for engagement - the local Korean community, local Arabic speakers and the local Chinese community. Workshops were planned for each cultural group, with interpreters to be available for non-English speakers. The workshops were widely advertised through Council's networks, the CMRC, the City's website and through media releases issued to local CALD newspapers for each cultural group. There was also intercept interviewing and flyer distribution in selected high traffic locations. The recruitment approach for the workshops included making contact with local community leaders to understand the barriers to participation and strategies to reach this traditionally hard-to-reach segment.





The workshops had been planned for the week commencing 26 September, 2016. However, due to low response rates, and following advice from local community leaders, it was decided that a revised approach was necessary in order to reach the Korean and Chinese communities in particular. The Arabic speakers' workshop was rescheduled and proceeded as planned, with attendance numbers low; many accepted the invitation and then did not attend on the night. Individual and mini-group interviews were scheduled with Korean and Chinese community leaders and community members in lieu of larger workshops. The following table provides details of the workshop and interviews. A total of 15 community representatives from three cultural groups were engaged.

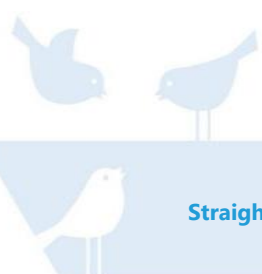
**Table 4d: CALD engagement details**

Date	Time	Cultural group	Location	Attendees	Participants
Monday, 10 October 2016	12.30pm-1.30pm	Chinese	Via telephone	Local resident	1
Tuesday, 11 October 2016	6pm-8pm	Arabic speakers	Information Cultural Exchange Office	Local residents	3
Tuesday, 11 October 2016	3pm-4pm	Chinese	Resident's home	Local community leaders	2
Tuesday, 11 October 2016	10am-11am	Korean	Community Migrant Resource Centre	Local community leaders	3
Tuesday, 18 October 2016	7pm-9pm	Mixed: Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Sri Lankan	Epping Baptist Church	Local residents	6

**A note about the CALD consultation:** Overall engagement with the different CALD communities was challenging. Establishing relationships with relevant contacts proved difficult, as was developing a network or group of people who had the time and inclination to attend a workshop. There were notable issues of trust at play as Council was initiating these connections for the first time. There were also significant cultural barriers to overcome, particularly in regards to how other cultures communicate with government organisations and their expectations around how the information may be used.

Some activities require an 8 to 12-week lead time in order to properly plan and coordinate activities with organisations and their community members.

One of the key learnings from this experience was that significant time and consistency of effort is required to engage these members of the community.



### 4.1.6. Stakeholder meetings

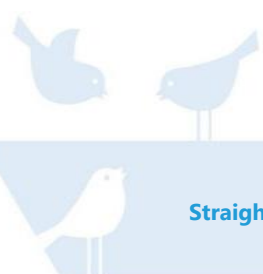
Straight Talk designed and facilitated two stakeholder meetings with a range of local stakeholder organisations. These organisations had been previously identified by the City and individual invitations were sent to invite representatives to participate. Each meeting was two-hours long and included a number of activities designed to open up discussion around City services and understand priorities around future project funding from the perspective of local groups. 37 participants representing 28 organisations attended the meetings.

**Table 4e: Full stakeholder organisation attendee list**

Stakeholder organisation attendees	
Access Committee	North Rocks Carlingford Little Athletics
Access News Australia Pty Ltd	Northcott
Arts NSW	NSW Education
Brislington Medical and Nursing	NSW Lancers Memorial Museum Incorporated
Centre for Population Health, NSW Health	Parramatta Athletics Clubs
Department of Family and Community Services	Parramatta Chamber of Commerce
Department of Planning and Environment	Parramatta Mission
Epping Civic Trust	Parramatta Female Factory Friends
Granville Waratah Soccer Football Club Inc.	Raffles
Hills, Merrylands and Parramatta CHCs	St Johns Anglican Cathedral
Hope Connect	Sydney Olympic Park Business Association Inc.
Jesuit Refugee Service	Sydney Olympic Park Authority
Land and Housing Corporation	The Hills Community Aid and Information Service Inc.
Leap NGO	WSLHD   High Street Youth Health Service

**Table 4f: Stakeholder meeting details and attendance**

Date	Time	Location	Attendees
Thursday, 22 September 2016	12pm-2pm	The Park Royal Hotel, Parramatta	31
Thursday, 22 September 2016	6pm-8pm	The Mantra Hotel, Parramatta	6



#### 4.1.7. LRAC meeting

Council and Straight Talk met with the LRAC on Tuesday 11 October 2016 at 6pm to discuss the progress of the visioning project and ask for feedback on the vision and priorities for the City. Each attendee was asked to contribute their opinion regarding their vision for the future of the City and offer their perspective on the top strategic priorities for the operational plan.

The visioning exercise revealed a number of consistent ideas towards the City in the future. **More apartments and high rises, busy spaces** – activated 18 hours a day, **a professional hub**, featured **green spaces**, well connected with public **transport**, **modern** and **world-class**. When asked to choose the most important priorities, **transport** was the most consistently mentioned followed by **financial sustainability**.

#### 4.1.8. FCRC meeting

Council and Straight Talk met with the FCRC on Monday 17 October 2016 at 6pm. During the meeting, an overview of consultation activities was presented, followed by opportunities for the committee to share their views on the project.

Committee members were asked to highlight relevant words and comments relating to the future vision for the City. This exercise revealed a very mixed response with some repeated words include: **connected**, **vibrant**, **local economy**, **heart** and **centre of excellence**.

The following comments were also included:

*'Providing the best Council services, recognised as such, at the lowest possible rates whilst building assets for the community'*

*'Parramatta will be the driving force and heart of Australia's most significant economic region, a welcoming home for diverse communities, vibrant local precincts, greener attractive streets and a centre of excellence in research, education and enterprise'*

Feedback regarding the most important strategic priorities was mixed with many indicating that all the priorities were viewed as essential. Committee members had some difficulty prioritising and as a group there were no clear preferences.

#### 4.1.9. Access Advisory Committee meeting

Council and Straight Talk met with the Access Advisory Committee on Tuesday 18 October 2016 at 6pm. The group was presented with the purpose and current findings from the visioning project and asked for their vision for the future of the City as well as any new, spontaneous ideas for the community.

The future vision included: a **safe city**, **green city**, **quality entertainment** and **employment, inclusive** of all people, **universal design** and **not lagging behind Sydney**.

Ideas for the City included:

*'A multifunctional community centre with lots of meeting rooms and a technology hub, or a series of hubs across the LGA. Community focused not just business focused'*

*'Accessible changing places/spaces – like in Adelaide and Melbourne'*

*'Audio tactiles at traffic lights, spread out from pole to pole'*

*'Create lip on line markings on footpath for crossing the traffic lights more easily if vision impaired'*

#### 4.1.10. ATSI Advisory Committee meeting

Council and Straight Talk met with the ATSI Committee on Wednesday 2 November 2016 at 6pm to co-facilitate a presentation on the visioning project so far and provide an opportunity for committee members to provide feedback. There was a group activity which was designed to understand how the committee evaluated each of the strategic priorities for the City.

There was an indication across the group that **“Building a stronger council for our community”** was a top priority. This was followed by a focus on **“Community engagement and consultation”**. When asked if there were other important priorities not mentioned on the list of 12, there were many suggestions recommending **more green space, parks and playgrounds**. Another prominent idea focused on **honouring the multicultural heritage of the area**, in particular, having a more visible aboriginal presence. This could include signs, symbols, library collections, displays or a cultural centre and art gallery which represents the colonial and indigenous heritage existing side by side within the community.

## 4.2. Stage Two

### 4.2.1. 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workshop

A large-scale, deliberative event was held on Saturday, 5 November 2016 at the ParkRoyal hotel in Parramatta. A total of 120 residents and stakeholders from the City of Parramatta self-selected to participate in the 21st Century Workshop.

The purpose of the 21st Century workshop was to test those ideas, projects and priorities that had been gathered through the extensive consultation to date. Participants were drawn from participants from earlier engagement activities, as they had already engaged with the project and themes, supplemented by an open invitation to all Parramatta residents. Straight Talk invited all residents and stakeholders who participated in stage one engagement activities to the 21st Century Workshop. The workshop was also promoted on Council's website, through an email to Council's existing database of residents and through additional emails and brochures distributed by Council. There was significant interest in attending the event with participants being categorised according to their residential address and level of involvement in community organisations, then randomly selected for an invitation to attend. Those who were not selected in the first round of invitations were put on a waiting list and contacted when and if there were participant cancellations. Close to 200 people wanted to attend the event, with places being allocated to people on the basis of geographic location so that as much as possible, representatives from each part of the new LGA were participating.

Amanda Chadwick, Administrator, and Greg Dyer, Interim General Manager provided introductions to the event, which was facilitated by Lucy Cole-Edelstein from Straight Talk. Lakshmi Logathassan, a highly accomplished student from Western Sydney University, was guest speaker at the event and she discussed her experience of and vision for Parramatta.

The ‘deliberative democracy’ event consisted of small table discussions, audience response technology (keepads) and small group work. Participants used audience response voting technology to individually respond to close-ended questions. These questions were a mix of deliberative questions regarding the priorities of the City of Parramatta Council, possible projects to be funded by the Stronger Communities Fund Grants and event evaluation questions. Voting was complemented by small group discussions which captured qualitative and nuanced feedback. These table discussions were facilitated by a table facilitator

who also recorded key discussion points. A comment box was placed on each table for participants to leave 'other comments', which didn't relate to a workshop activity.

Each table facilitator had additional background materials they could share with participants, including descriptions of each priority, the selection criteria for the project ideas for the Stronger Communities Fund Grants and the project ideas categorised.

Straight Talk analysed the quantitative results of the audience response questions and illustrated the results in graphs. Table discussion notes and 'other comments' were reviewed to draw out key themes, concerns and conversations which supported the dynamic and rich data. Findings from the 21st Century Town Hall Meeting can be found below in Section 6 of this report.



## Demographics of participants

### Gender

Women were over-represented amongst participants, with 60% of participants identifying themselves as female. 39.1% of respondents identified themselves as male, and a single respondent identified themselves as another gender identity.

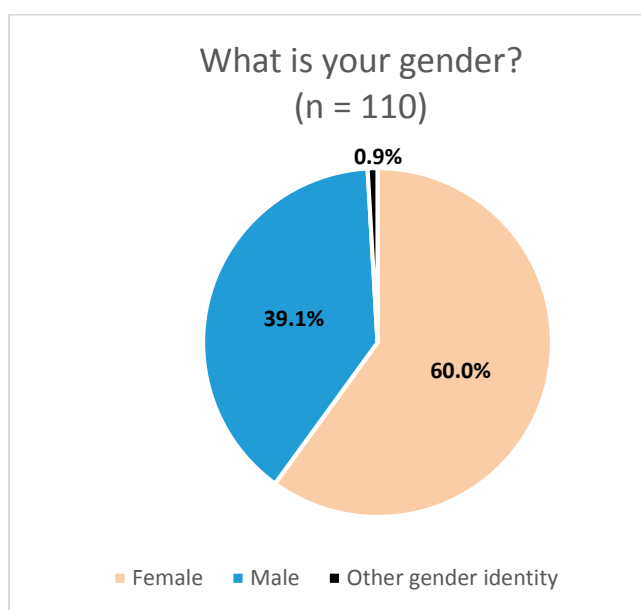
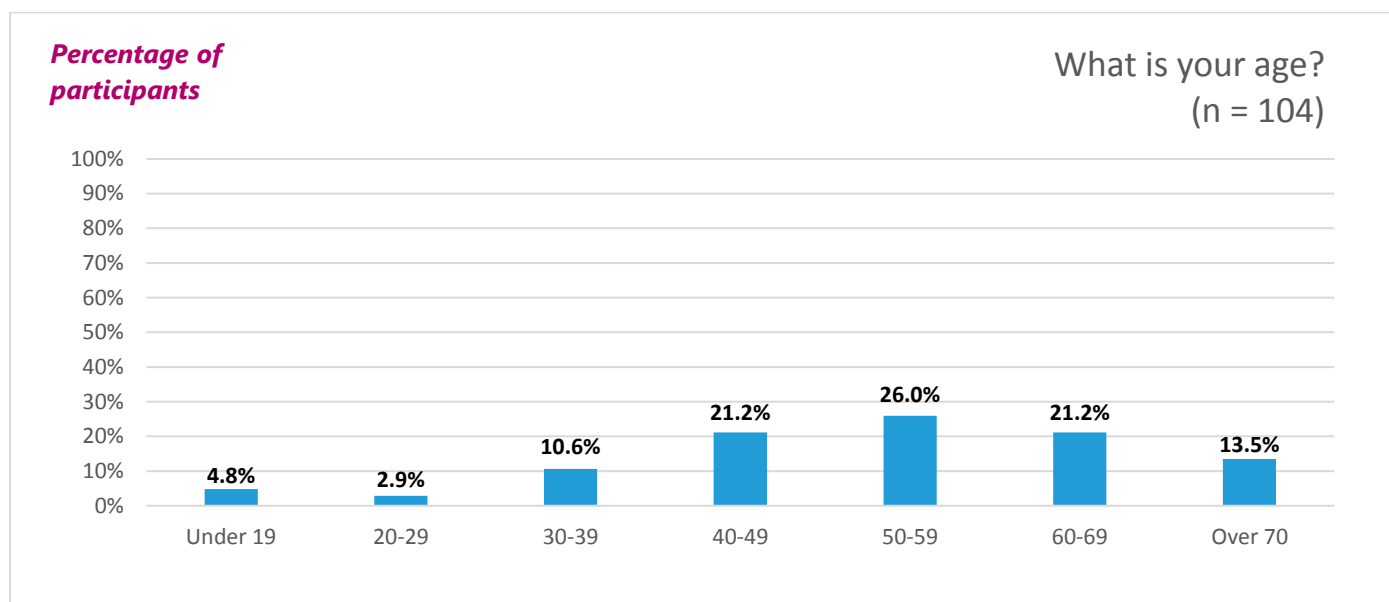


Table 4g: Gender spread of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workshop participants

## Age

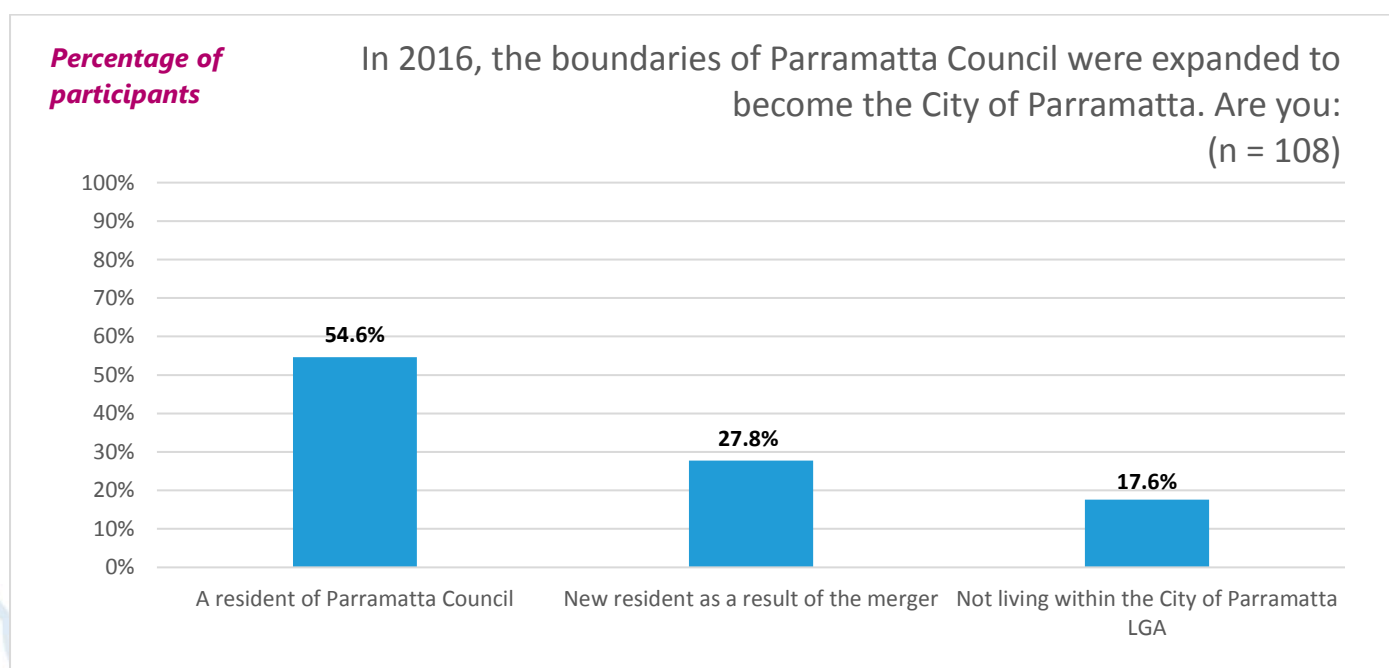
Participants from all age groups were present with participants from older age groups being comparatively more numerous. The most common age groups were 50-59 (26.0%), followed by 60-69 (21.2%) and 40-49 (also 21.2%). The least common age groups were 20-29 (2.9%, 3 participants), followed by "under 19" (4.8%) and 30-39 (10.6%). *Please note: Where n = <120, non-responses are excluded*



**Table 4h: Age spread of participants**

## Address

A majority (54.6%) of participants were residents of Parramatta Council before and after the merge. A little over a quarter (27.8%) of participants are new residents as a result of the merger and the remainder (17.6%) are not residents of Parramatta LGA (stakeholders). Non-residents are stakeholders attending the workshop; this was not a category that was used during Stage One. *Please note: Where n = <120, non-responses are excluded*

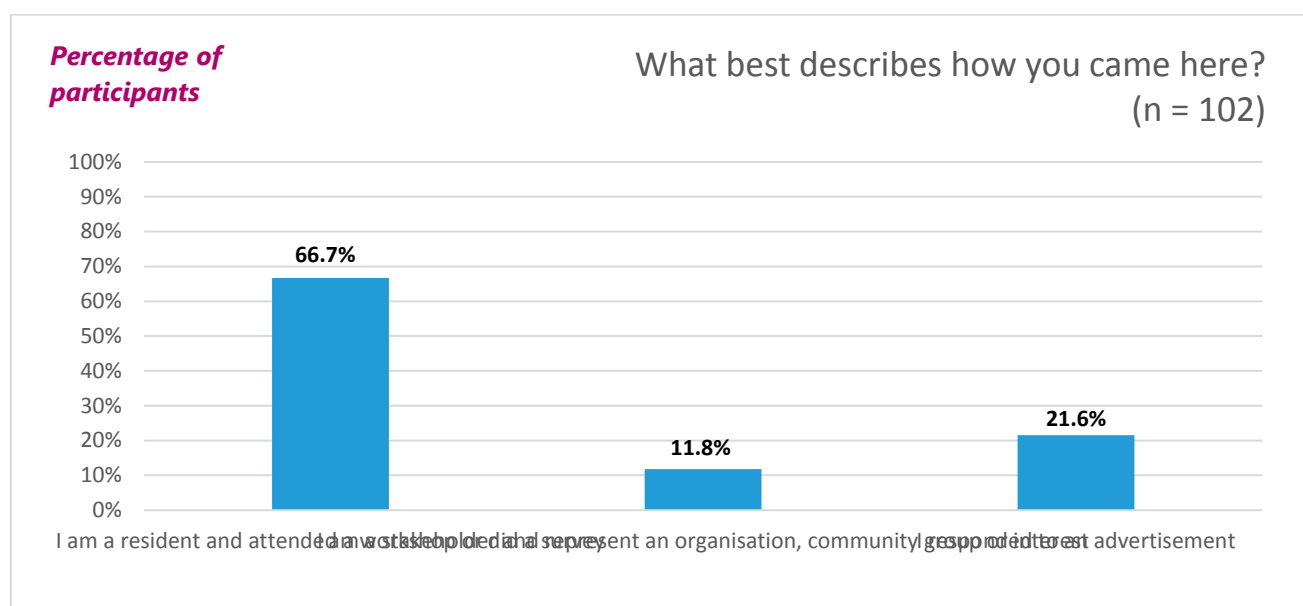




**Table 4i: Address of participants**

### How participants came to be here

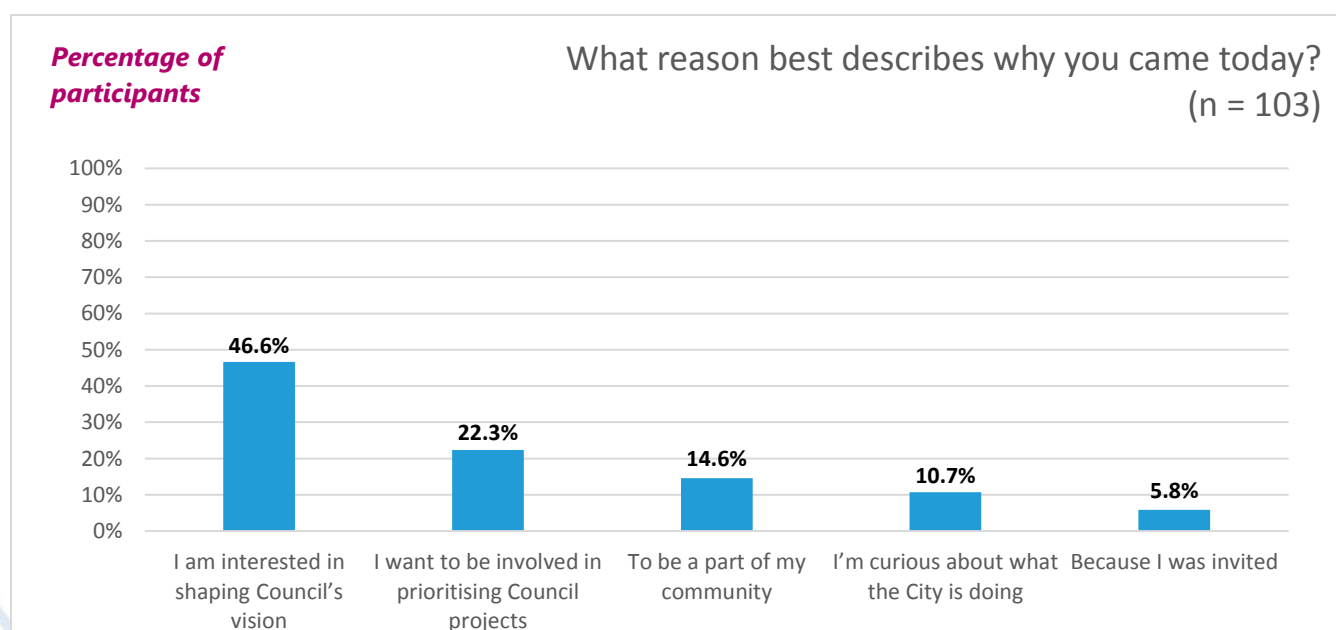
Two thirds (66.7%) of respondents were residents who attended a workshop or completed a survey (66.7%). The next most common recruitment method was responding to an advertisement (21.6%), followed by being a stakeholder representing an organisation, community group or interest (11.8%). *Please note: Where n=<120, non-responses are excluded*



**Table 4j: How participants came to be here**

### Reason for coming

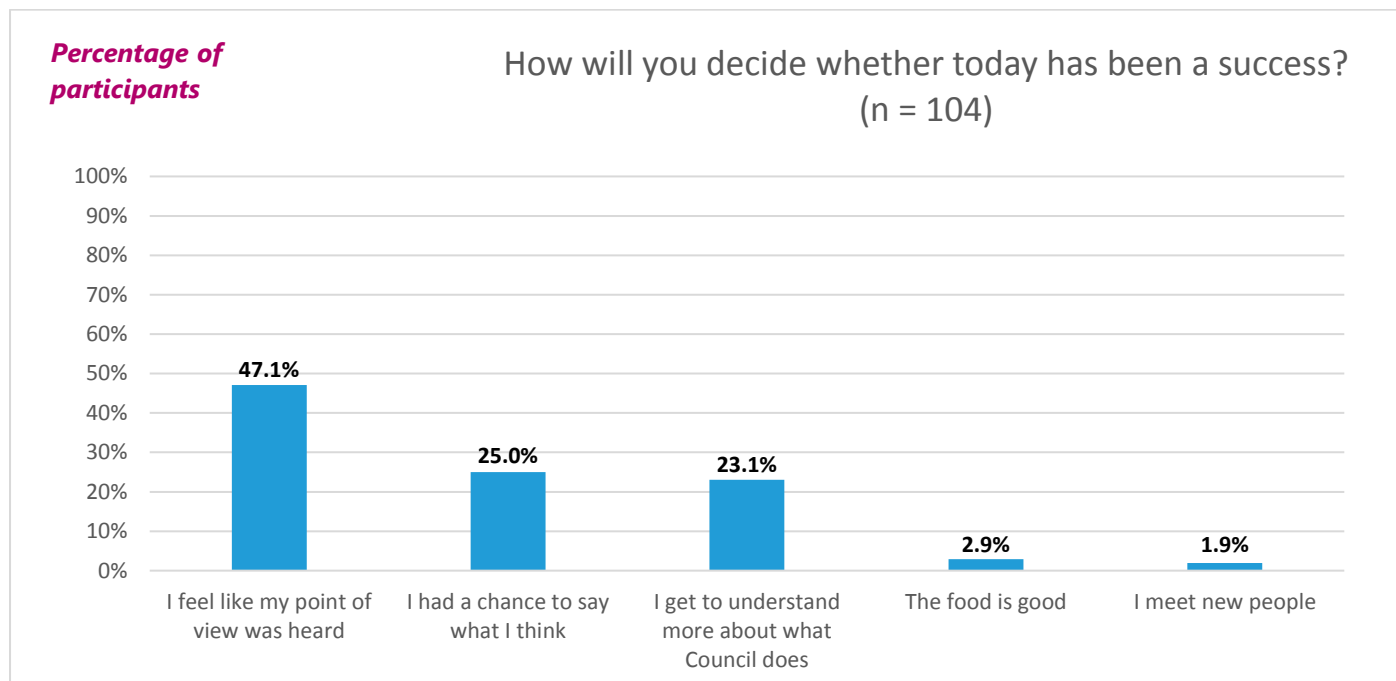
The most common reason for participation, with almost half of all responses was that the participant was interested in shaping Council's vision (46.6%). The next most common reason for participation was wanting to be involved in prioritising Council projects (22.3%), followed by participating to be a part of one's community (14.6%). *Please note: Where n=<120, non-responses are excluded*



**Table 4k: Reasons why participants came**

## Judging if today a success

The most common answer, with almost half of responses was "I feel like my point of view was heard" (47.1%). Almost all other responses were split (nearly evenly) between "I had a chance to say what I think" (25.0%) and "I get to understand more about what Council does" (23.1%) Please note: Where  $n < 120$ , non-responses are excluded



**Table 4I: How participants judge if the day was a success**

### 4.2.2. Focus groups

A total of 27 participants attended three focus groups which were held on Tuesday 8 November and Wednesday 9 November 2016. There were two groups on Tuesday, both with a mix of new and existing residents of the Parramatta LGA and one group of non-residents on Wednesday evening.

The purpose of these groups was to test and validate the vision, perceptions and preferences within the framework of major project categories. The non-resident group was included to provide some outside perspective and validate the ideas from those who have a different relationship with the area.

Each group was two-hours in length and was hosted at the focus group facility, City Group Rooms in the Parramatta CBD. All three groups were asked to rank each of the categories themselves across the social and economic major projects as well as illustrate their future vision for the City in 20 years. Participants were also shown the outcomes from the first phase of the consultation and asked to comment on how these results compared to their own opinions.

The results of the focus groups can be found in Section 6 of this report.

# 5. STAGE ONE OUTCOMES

Overall, 1,088 people participated in the first phase of consultation. Specific feedback relating to four key project outcomes are as follows.

## 5.1. Vision and identity

The emerging themes for the vision and identity of the new Parramatta LGA were consistent across all stakeholder segments. The themes included:

- Local identity - Strongly identifying with their suburb
- Community pride – Proud of people and their place in the community
- Cultural diversity - Celebrating and deeply embedding cultural diversity
- Green and open – Growing green spaces and safeguarding open spaces
- Local economy - Driving local economies with local jobs

### Resident workshops

Through the local resident workshops, both the existing and new local residents wanted to build on each local centre's strengths –not only in the Parramatta Central Business District (CBD). Residents strongly identified with their suburb/local centre and wanted services and facilities that were close to home and reflected their needs.

### Stakeholder workshops

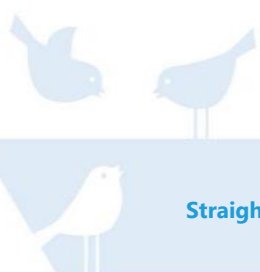
The stakeholder workshops identified great pride in the Parramatta CBD. Most stakeholders were focussed on driving the local economy and preparing Parramatta as the second CBD of Sydney.

### Youth workshops

Feedback from young people indicated their identification of the Parramatta CBD as a place to shop, eat and socialise. Importantly, young people were focussed on improvements to personal safety and security and also self-identified as future leaders in the area.

### CALD activities

Feedback from the cultural and linguistically diverse segment indicated the need for interpreter services – and not just translation services. The lack of language services was identified as the major barrier to their participation and involvement, and their understanding of the City's services and facilities. They also expressed a desire for a collaborative approach to cultural celebrations so that **all cultures could share their values and experiences** to better understand and value one another.





### Figure 5b: Qu6 Wordle – What we want for Parramatta



- The repetition of some words like: **history, green and community**, show that community members want to celebrate the things that make the area special, namely its history and unique community. The word 'green' reflects a number of things; wanting to focus on sustainable ways of living, having **green** space and **open** spaces for family and **cultural events**. Ensuring the city is seen as **modern, clean, vibrant** and **accessible** are also important elements of future development.

## What we want for the suburbs we live in

All survey participants were asked the following question:

Actual survey question (Qu7) - Thinking about the suburb you live in what words or phrases would you use to describe how you would like it to be in 5-10 years' time?

**Figure5c: Qu7 Wordle**



- The following words: **transport, accessible, traffic, density, roads** and **busy** illustrate community expectations about growth in the area and wanting to make sure this is managed properly. At the same time there is a lot of optimism for future progress.

## 5.2. Operational Plan 2016-2017 strategic priorities

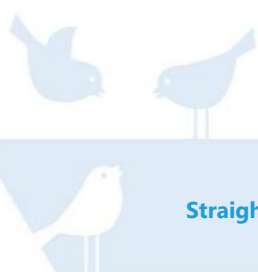
As part of the online and intercept survey, participants were asked to rank 12 different priorities for the City. The final ranking is indicated in the following table.

**Table 5d: Priorities ranking**

Priority No.	Priority item
1	Building a stronger Council for our new community
2	Transport ( <i>Work with government partners to improve connections within and to the City of Parramatta to connect people to jobs and the rest of the region</i> )
3	Parramatta Square ( <i>A major development that will deliver work class office, retail, residential and public space to accommodate population growth and meet demand for more jobs and better services</i> )
4	City Centre ( <i>We will work with key partners to deliver vibrant and attractive office, retail, residential and public space to accommodate more jobs, better services and meet the demand of population growth</i> )
5	Precinct Renewal ( <i>Renew key precincts across the local government area to drive renewal and increase jobs, housing, development and transport options</i> )
6	Smart City ( <i>Position the City as a 'Smart City' capable of creating well-connected businesses, residents, government and community organisations and clusters of knowledge capital and high-skill jobs through leading-edge technology</i> )
7	City Activation ( <i>Celebrate the City's cultural life and build positive perception of Parramatta by delivering a program of high quality festivals, major events and street activities</i> )
8	Sport and Recreation
9	Destination for sport and culture ( <i>maintain and enhance the City as the central sporting and entertainment destination for Western Sydney</i> )
10	Community engagement and consultation ( <i>connect and consult with the community</i> )
11	Providing great services to our community
12	Financial sustainability

### Results:

- **The top priority was to build a stronger council for our new community.** Face-to-face discussions across the workshop and interviews also supported this view. Community members recognise that having a united and capable Council which reflects the whole of the new Parramatta LGA is important





- **Transport was the second priority.** Many group conversations also featured comments and concerns regarding whether there was, or would be, enough transport services and infrastructure to support the growing region
- **The third priority was Parramatta Square.** This ties into an idea mentioned throughout the various workshops, that Parramatta should have the right foundations to support local employment opportunities and public services
- **The fourth and fifth priorities were: City Centre and Precinct Renewal.** In face-to-face discussions, many community members spoke of Parramatta being the next big city. Similar to their expectations around Parramatta Square creating foundations for future growth and development, having a vibrant city centre balanced with events and opportunities within key precincts across the LGA was seen as crucial. The focus should be on the whole LGA and all community members, not just those located or associated with the CBD.

**A note about the strategic priorities:** The final ranking for priorities 6-12 were in the same order as they were presented. This suggests that respondents may have moved onto subsequent questions and not ordered the last items on the list. Comments made in the stakeholder workshops indicate that some thought these priorities were understood to be business-as-usual and did not provide any new strategic direction for the City.

## 5.3. Major project ideas for the Stronger Communities Fund

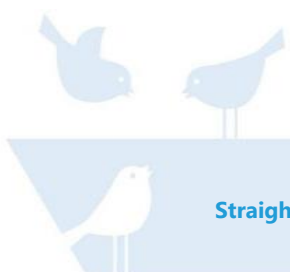
Workshop and group participants were asked to prioritise a number of project ideas under four themes.

The four themes:

1. Social
2. Cultural
3. Economic
4. Environment.

The top three project ideas across all four themes:

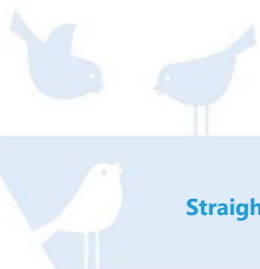
1. Create strong local centres
2. Creating places people want to be
3. Conserve urban bushland



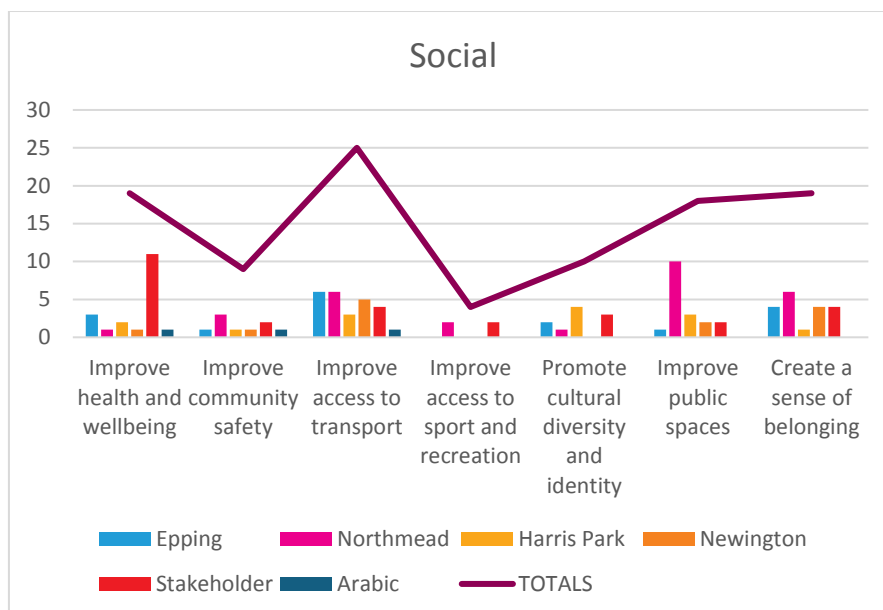
## Feedback from the themes

- **Anecdotally, all of the items within the 'Social' theme were considered important as they were frequently discussed throughout the workshops.** The associated table indicates this theme has the most even spread of responses which correlates to workshop participants voting evenly across all of these project ideas
- **'Improve access to transport' was the most voted project under the 'Social' theme.** 'Improve health and wellbeing', 'Improve public spaces' and 'Create a sense of belonging' also received a high number of votes
- **Within the 'Cultural' theme, the most popular idea was 'Creating places that people want to be'.** 'Improving community connectedness' was also clearly popular. The other items under this theme were mentioned sporadically throughout workshop discussions. Many said that increasing access to cultural projects like artist galleries, theatre and music was important
- **'Create strong local centres' was the most popular idea under the 'Economic' theme.** Community members indicated that they wanted to preserve their sense of unique, local identity within the new Parramatta LGA. A big part of being able to maintain this sense of identity was having the economic support to do so, which means having the money to fund new projects which mean something to the local community
- **There were two similarly popular ideas under the 'Environmental' theme.** The first is 'Conserve urban bushland', closely followed by 'Create sustainable buildings and places'. There were many comments through all face-to-face discussions where respondents spoke of wanting to preserve and develop native bushland and have adequate green spaces within suburban areas. Other feedback centred on wanting to contribute to a more sustainable future by having buildings and public spaces which incorporated environmentally responsible and resource efficient designs.
- **Northmead participants focused strongly on creating a better sense of community.** They had spikes of interest in the following topics: improving public spaces, creating places people want to be, creating strong local centres and conserving urban bushland
- **The stakeholder group had a notable focus on conservation and health.** The most important projects here were focused on: improving health and wellbeing and creating sustainable buildings and places
- **Epping, Harris Park, Newington and the Arabic group had a more consistent view across each project type.** These areas tended to vote evenly between each of the project themes. This indicates that they view all opportunities as proportionally relevant.

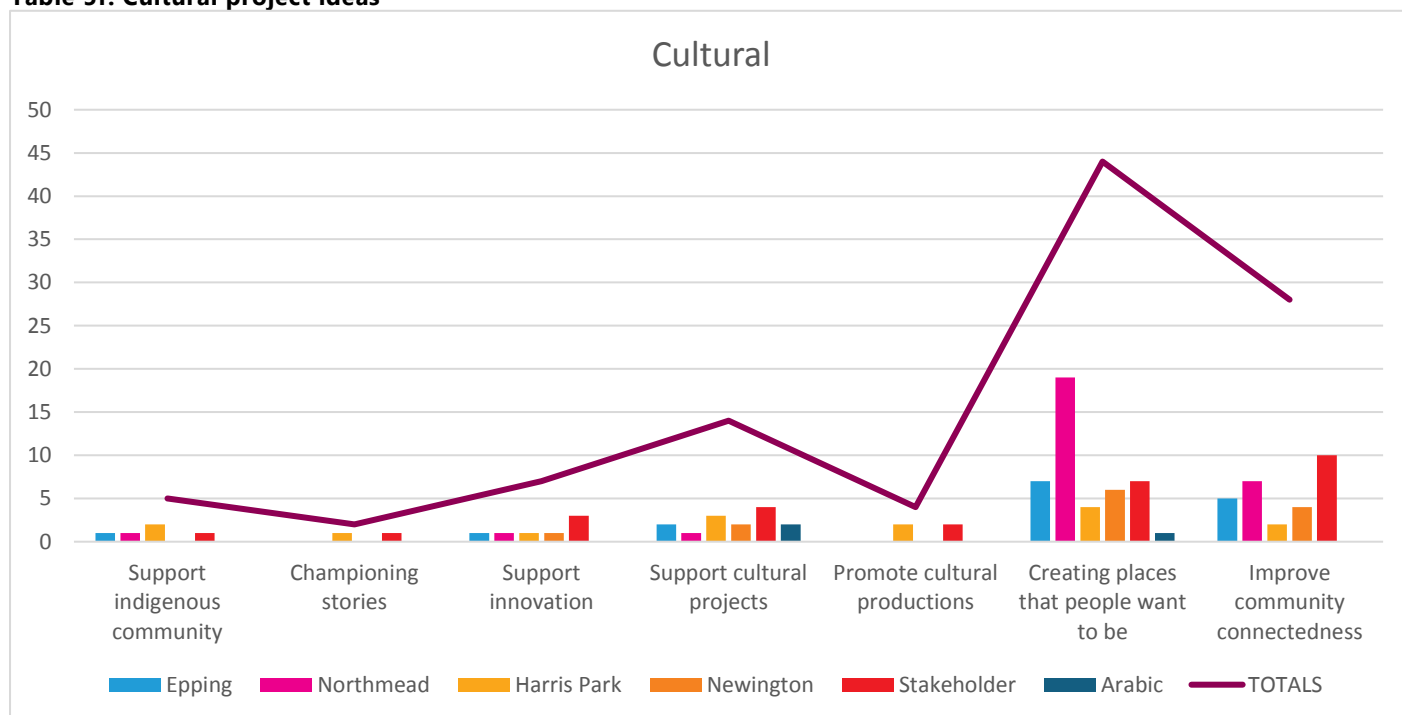
The following tables indicate vote-spread across each of the four categories for all workshops and groups.



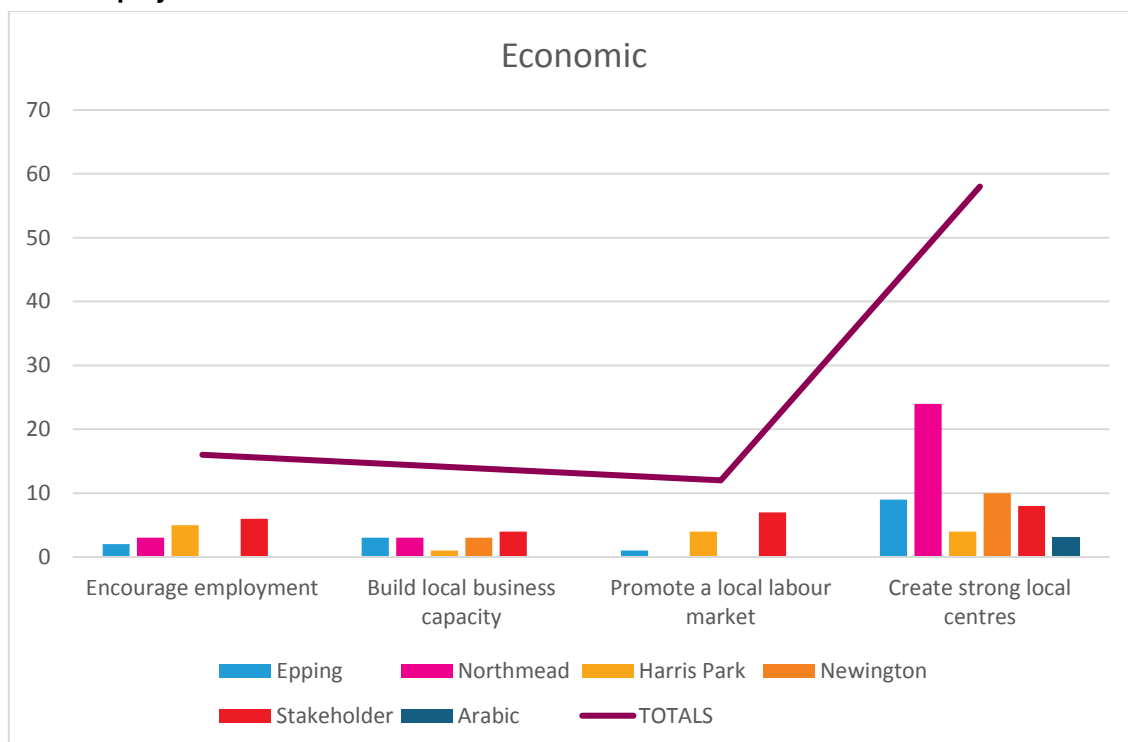
**Table 5e: Social project ideas**



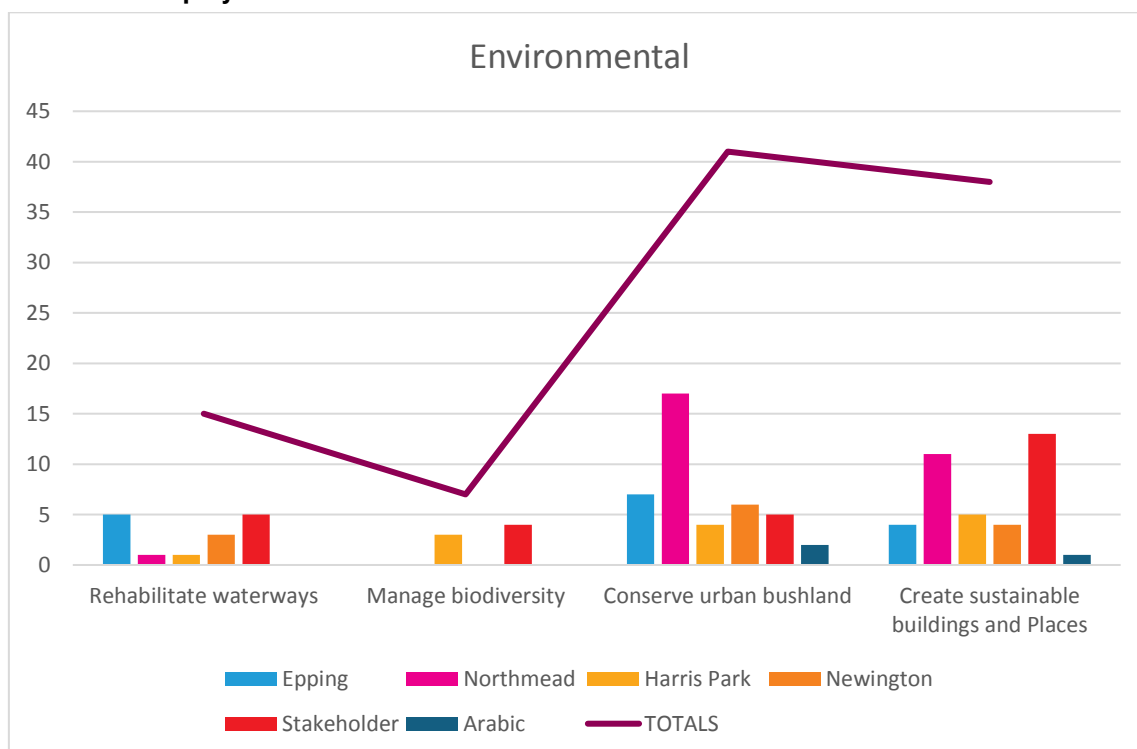
**Table 5f: Cultural project ideas**



**Table 5g: Economic project ideas**



**Table 5h: Environmental project ideas**

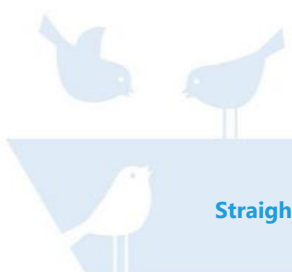


## 5.4. Services now and in the future

Across all consultation activities, participants were asked a number of questions regarding their awareness and perception of local council services.

### Key findings:

- The services with the highest level of awareness were:
  1. Libraries
  2. Waste collection services
  3. Community and major events.
- There were a number of services which community members were consistently unaware of:
  1. Services for seniors
  2. Children's services
  3. Food safety inspections.
- The top three most important council services were:
  1. Cleanliness of streets and neighbourhood shopping precincts
  2. Maintenance of parks and park facilities such as playgrounds, picnic shelters and fitness equipment
  3. Waste collection services.
- The services which were most used and interacted with daily broadly include:
  1. Provision and maintenance of footpaths
  2. Local road maintenance
  3. Cleanliness of streets and neighbourhood shopping precinct.
- Services which were used on a weekly basis broadly include:
  1. Waste collection services
  2. Maintenance of parks and park facilities such as playgrounds, picnic shelters and fitness equipment
  3. Cleanliness of streets and neighbourhood shopping precinct.
- The services reported as being '**extremely well**' delivered include: waste collection services, libraries, community and major events and Riverside theatres
- Services reported as being '**extremely badly**' delivered include: Pools, parking enforcement and provision and maintenance of footpaths.



- Frequently mentioned services which residents believe should be available online include:
  1. Community events and entertainment schedule. Having an online calendar to publicise where and when local and upcoming events are being held
  2. Reporting issues in the local area e.g. faulty street lights, footpath maintenance, flood reporting, cycleway maintenance, illegal dumping
  3. Booking rubbish removal
  4. General feedback and ideas for the City
  5. Paying Council rates
  6. Library e-books and current publications

- Frequently mentioned services which require improvement include:

### **1. Road and footpath upgrade and maintenance**

*'Some major structural upgrades needed.'*

*'Fix road pot holes.'*

*'Plant more appropriate trees whose roots will not lift the footpaths.'*

*'Ensure footpaths are wide enough for people to pass without having to move onto grass verges.'*

### **2. Library services**

*'More physical space for study and seating and programs.'*

*'Larger physical collections especially books.'*

*'There is no library in Newington.'*

### **3. Lighting in public spaces**

*'Stronger street lighting.'*

*'Light up the streets, most of the streets are in the dark.'*

### **4. Street cleaning**

*'Major anti-litter education campaign. Make apartment blocks more accountable for the dumping that typically occurs on the street out front.'*

*'Monthly rubbish pick up to avoid dumping.'*

### **5. Children's playgrounds**

*'Newer equipment, in line with what is being provided in Epping.'*

*'Better landscaping and park maintenance. No knee-high grass, weeds and rubbish.'*

### **6. Pool**

*'Ensure that a dedicated local Parramatta pool remains open.'*

*'The closure of Parramatta Pool without an alternative in place is simply unacceptable.'*



# 6. STAGE TWO OUTCOMES

## 6.1. Vision

### 21st Century Town Hall Meeting

Participants were asked, at the beginning of the workshop, to reflect on words identified through earlier consultation that described a vision for the City of Parramatta.

Ten words were presented at the workshop, which represented a vision for the City of Parramatta. Overall, there was a positive response to the words presented. Multiple participants stated all the words were important and that it was difficult to prioritise them. Representative comments include:

👉 *'Love all the words'*

👉 *'Why can't we do a bit of everything'.*

Workshop participants were asked to place a green dot next to a 'vision' word they had a positive response towards, an orange dot next to a word they were neutral towards and a red dot next to a word they had a negative response to. Multiple participants did not have a negative response to any of the 'vision' words and consequently did not use a red dot.

As shown below in Figure 6a, participants were most positive towards the following words:

1. Green (21 votes)
2. Heritage (18 votes)
3. Creative (17 votes)
4. Accessible (16 votes).

Each of these words were deemed to be important for different reasons, which included:

👉 *'Green – concerned about destruction of trees with development'*

👉 *'Green and sustainable e.g. waste management/water especially because of high density lifestyle'*

👉 *'We have a responsibility to protect the Heritage in Parramatta. Design business and infrastructure around heritage buildings.'*

👉 *'Heritage, but not just colonial'*

👉 *'Creativity is valued'*

👉 *'Accessibility needs to embrace diversity'*

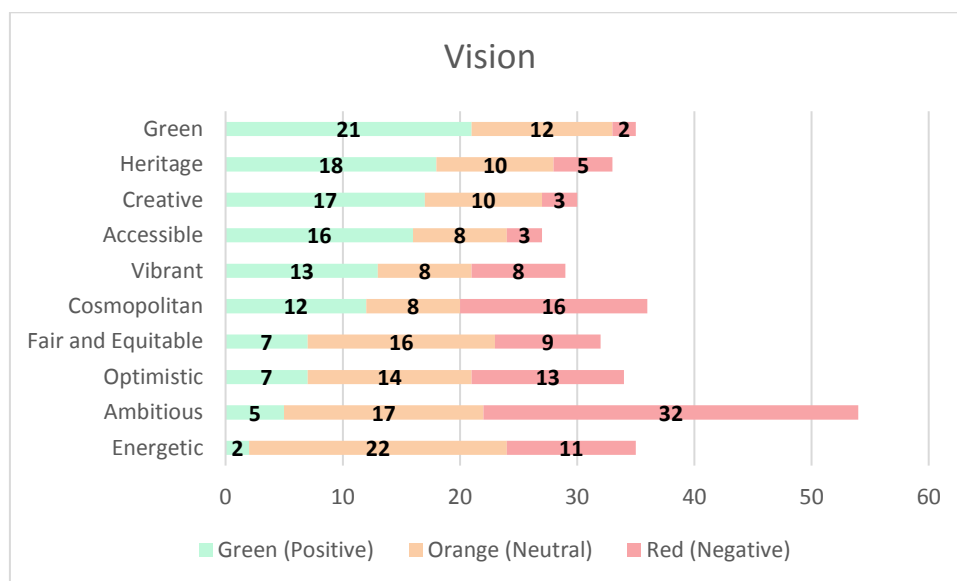
👉 *'Accessibility needs to include bike paths (needs more paths) and walkability (city needs to be walkable)'.*

As shown below in Figure 6a, participants were most neutral or negative towards the word 'Ambitious' (49 votes).

Some participants identified words missing from the vision, including:

1. Community (4 mentions)
2. Sustainable (3 mentions)
3. Safety (3 mentions)
4. Innovative (2 mentions).

Some participants stated the vision was 'vanilla' and that Council 'need a more dynamic statement'. It was also mentioned that the vision 'Needs to be longer term, not Council driven politics or interest groups.'



**Figure 6a: Vision activity**



## Focus groups

We asked participants to imagine what their vision is for the City in 20 years' time. Across all three groups, there were similar words and concepts which participants spontaneously used to describe the City. These ideas were broadly grouped into three reoccurring themes

### 1. Sydney's second CBD

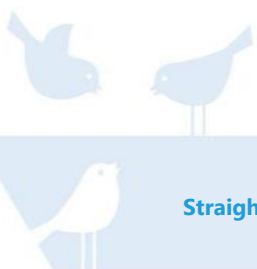
Key words and phrases: The centre of Sydney, the gateway to the west, metropolis within a metropolis, big, upcoming CBD, cost effective, accessible

- Parramatta is recognised as being the geographic centre of Sydney and as such, many participants say that it's importance will grow exponentially in the future. It offers a more accessible, central hub to those who live in the greater western districts, both geographically and financially. It is a city haven for those who cannot or do not desire to live in the Sydney CBD. The Parramatta of the future has a population boom which results in a greater level of prosperity and services to the area. Linked public transport services, car sharing/parking station hubs and greater cycleway provide access for those who commute locally
- Relevant visioning words from stage one include: vibrant, optimistic, cosmopolitan, accessibility
- Although many interpreted the meaning behind the word 'cosmopolitan' as being relevant, a notable number said they would not like to see the word used as it felt too showy, too exaggerated.

### 2. A business/development hub

Key words and phrases: high rises, white collar, jobs, professionals, more employment, expanding, progressive, technology, smart spaces

- Following on from the recent inflow of international and large-scale businesses over the last decade or so, most see the future including even more businesses and therefore more employment opportunities in the CBD. As an increasing number of organisations and multinationals set up headquarters in the area, this will allow more residents to avoid the commute into the Sydney CBD without having to sacrifice their career aspirations
- The influx of white collar jobs is also imagined to have a flow-on effect to office lifestyle innovations. Public spaces, equipment and programs especially designed to help keep people active, who work a nine to five working week. This could include indoor sporting facilities, green spaces on buildings, bridges and walkways over and through existing places
- In the future, some say that as the business and economic power of the area develops, they would like it to develop a reputation for being a green, sustainable city. They would like the City to take advantage of the potential to implement internationally recognised green standards to put Parramatta on the world map for being innovative in their environmental responsibilities
- Relevant visioning words from stage one include: optimistic, creative, green



### 3. A diverse and lively community

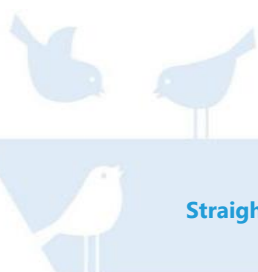
Key words and phrases: Alive, agile, magnetic, community, flourishing, multifaceted, family-friendly

- Both residents and non-residents imagine the multicultural and creative potential for the whole LGA would be developed to its fullest. This means celebrating the unique, cultural and geographic districts within the City of Parramatta. Events and social outings could include a visit to a locally famous eatery or park in Beecroft, as much as it could be in Lidcombe. Places that are special to the locals would be celebrated and shared with the whole community and those outside the LGA as well.
- Developing the potential of the community means encouraging all types of events, things that are relevant for all ages, all family types at different times of the week. It means offering and creating a unique night life as well as day time opportunities to relax and meet people.
- Community cultural events should include a balance of old and new, retaining some links to the rich history of the area.
- Relevant visioning words from stage one include: vibrant, energetic, accessible, creative, heritage

Words which did not test well in the focus groups included:

- **Fair**  
*'I don't like it'*  
*'Life is not fair'*
- **Equitable**  
*'Not realistic, there's a clear growing gap between richer and poorer'*  
*'Just another political word'*
- **Ambitious**  
*'Cut-throat'*  
*'Greedy'*

There was significant dislike around using the word 'ambitious' for some it felt too pretentious and did not properly reflect the non-discriminatory quality of the Parramatta community. Others interpreted the word to mean cut-throat and greedy.



## 6.2. Priorities

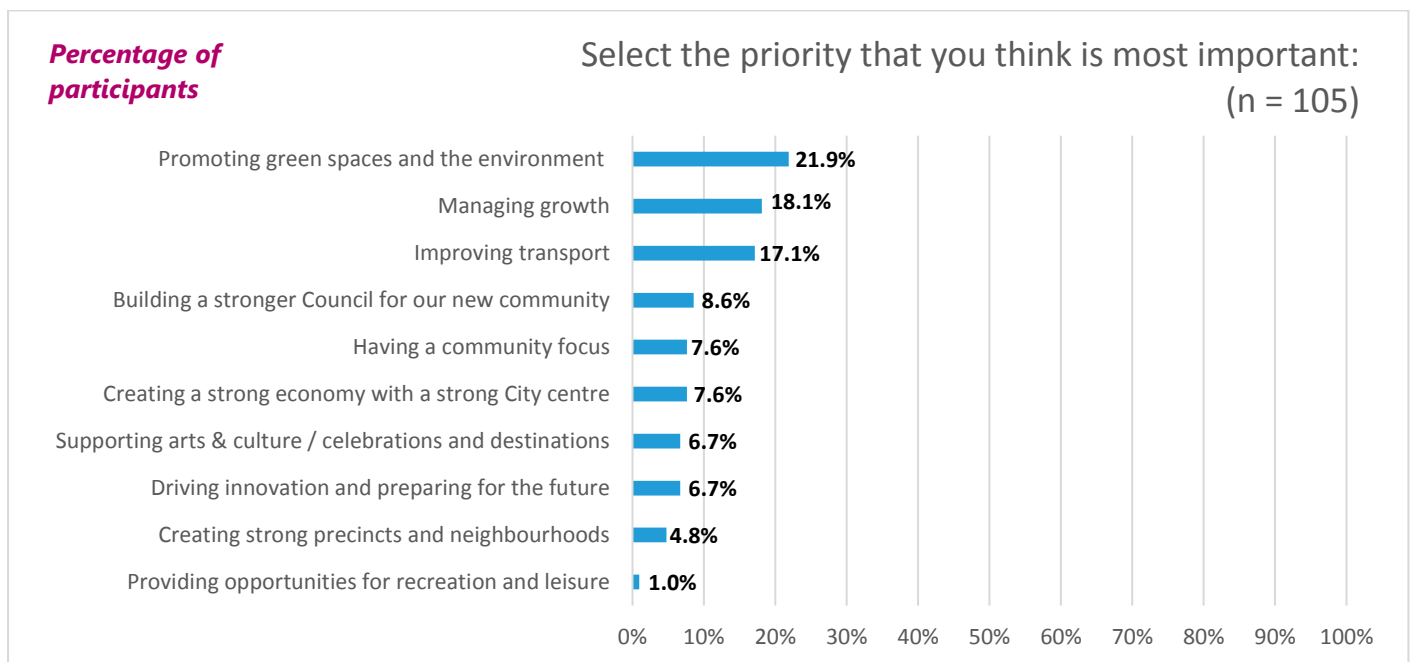


**Picture 6b: Full list of priorities**

### 21st Century Town Hall Meeting

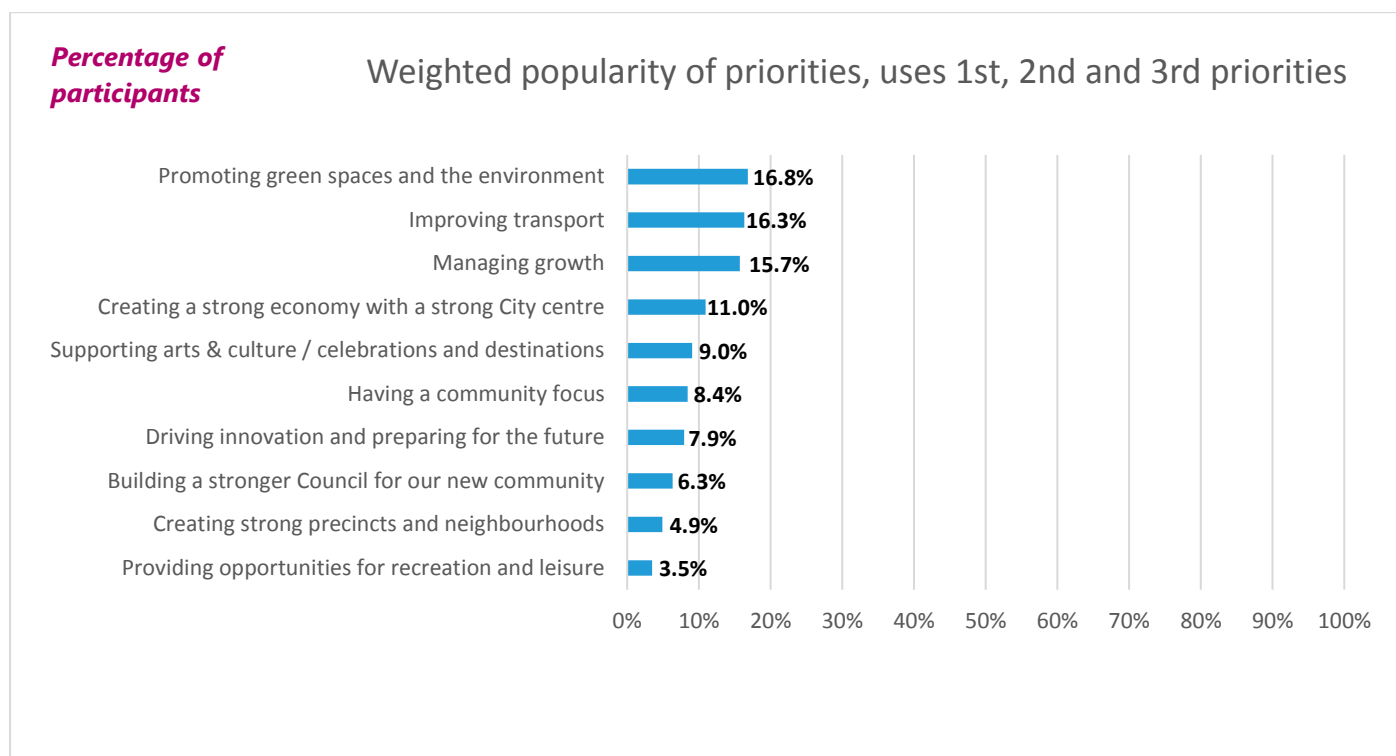
Council identified ten priorities based on their current operational plan and community strategic plan and the feedback collected during Stage One of the engagement process. Workshop participants discussed the ten priorities and then individually voted for the three they deemed to be most important.

As shown below, the most popular top priority nominated by workshop participants was "Promoting green spaces and the environment" (21.9%), closely followed by "Managing growth" (18.1%) and "Improving transport" (17.1%). *Please note: Where  $n < 120$ , non-responses are excluded*



**Figure 6c: Keypad voting - most important priority**

Analysis of 2nd and 3rd priorities shows the same overall pattern for the most popular priorities. Promoting green spaces and the environment is still a narrow favourite and the top three priorities stand apart from the others.



**Figure 6d: Keypad voting - Priorities with weighted adjustments to all 1st, 2nd and 3rd priorities (1st = 3 points, 2nd = 2 points, 3rd = 1 point)**

Workshop participants commented on the top four priorities heavily.

The key points made on these priorities are outlined below:

#### **Improving transport**

- Improve the current services by:
  - Increasing connections
  - Extending hours of operation
- Ensure transport can adapt to an increasing population
- A strong transport system is required to achieve other priorities.

*'Improve services, light rail will assist, as it affects all other priorities'*



### **Promoting green spaces and the environment**

- Green spaces need to be preserved
- There is a strong need for green spaces that can be used for active and passive recreation
- Green spaces need to be spread out across the City.

*'Urgent rather than important, if environment is destroyed we won't get it back'*

### **Managing growth**

- Growth influences all other priorities
- Concerns about overdevelopment
- Usable, green spaces need to be retained.



*'Sits at the centre which influences everything else'*

### **Creating a strong economy with a strong city centre**

- Support and grow existing businesses while also attracting and encouraging new businesses
- Create local jobs.

*'Business, try new ones but also look after existing'*

Some workshop participants identified the following priorities as missing:

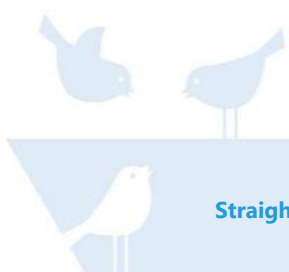
-  Safety (3 responses)
-  Heritage (2 responses).

## **Focus groups**

The priorities list was only tested with new and existing residents in the focus groups. They were given the list of priorities and asked to vote for their top three. The results are listed below.

**Table 6e: Focus group top three major projects - Social**

Overall rank	Priority item
1	Having a community focus
2	Supporting arts and culture/celebrations and destinations
3	Providing opportunities for recreation and leisure



There was some disagreement about the existing top three priorities from the first stage of consultation.

- Many of the focus group participants voiced concern over 'Building a stronger council for our new community' as ranking first. They felt that there was too much focus on the Council and giving Council more power, as opposed to giving attention and focus on the community members
- The second priority from the first stage 'Creating a strong economy with a strong city centre' was viewed as being an item which Council should be focused on anyway.
- 'Improving transport' was also seen as being a usual activity.

Focus group participants spoke a lot about the importance of bringing their community together and being able to celebrate what makes Parramatta unique. Their top three priority items reflect this attitude. There were many comments about everything being done 'for the people'.

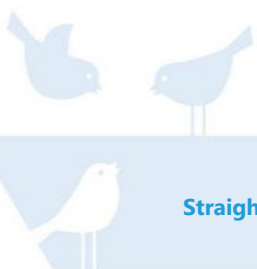
*'Putting people first'*

*'Community and bringing people together'*

*'Build places for people to meet'*

They spoke about putting care into each neighbourhood to foster connection and manage growth. They felt that these things were more important to focus on when sustaining a vision for the future of the area; the relationship between people and the strength of the community was pivotal.

Although most agreed that creating a strong economy and having a strong Council was somewhat important, many were of the view that strength indicates a need to work from the inside out. This view ultimately refers to strength and power to the people first and strength to institutions and precincts will naturally follow.



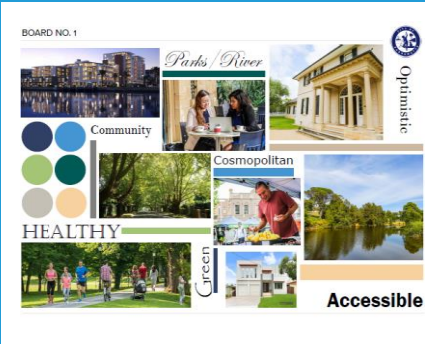
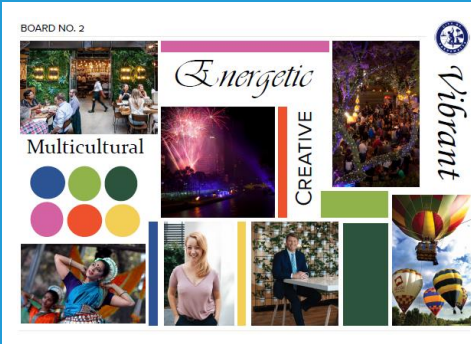
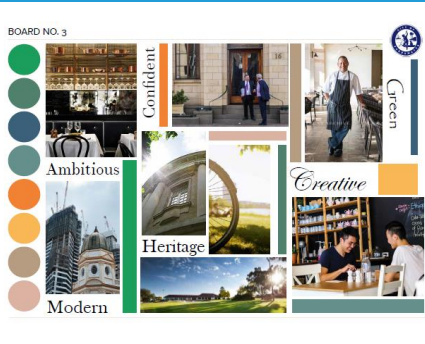
## 6.3. Visual identity

### 21st Century Town Hall Meeting

Three mood boards were presented at this session. These had been designed to encapsulate different identities for Parramatta which could be further developed to help create a verified, shared vision for the new Council.

Workshop participants placed a sticky dot on their favourite board. As shown below in Table 6f, Mood Board 1 was the most popular. There was intermittent interest in this activity and some participants did not like any of the boards, with one participant stating *'They are all wrong!'*.

**Table 6f: Town Hall Meeting mood board votes**




Mood board 1	Mood board 2	Mood board 3
		
Sticky dots (votes)	Sticky dots (votes)	Sticky dots (votes)
<b>57</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>17</b>
Representative comments	Representative comments	Representative comments
<p><i>'Like green and wellbeing'</i></p> <p><i>'Loved the healthy reference'</i></p> <p><i>'Too much emphasis on buildings – where is the intangible heritage'</i></p>	<p><i>'People drawn to how vibrant it is'</i></p> <p><i>'Warm colours – I like these'</i></p> <p><i>'Vibrant, full of life and energy'</i></p> <p><i>'Both Western and Eastern energy'</i></p>	<p><i>'Green living'</i></p> <p><i>'Ambitious (high rise building) – diversity of heritage and growth'</i></p> <p><i>'Boring version of mood board 1'</i></p>



## Focus groups

The three mood boards were only tested with the non-resident group.

**Table 6g: Focus group mood board votes**

Mood board 1	Mood board 2	Mood board 3
		
Overall votes	Overall votes	Overall votes
4	3	0

The first two mood boards were favoured by participants. There were a number of common desirable and undesirable components across both of these.

Positive elements:

- Natural pictures of outdoor landscape (if actual)
- Outdoor activities showing an active lifestyle
- Pictures of heritage and cultural buildings (if actual)
- Showing a range of different cultures
- Illustrating a range of different types of events
- Bright colour palette which reflects the diversity and vibrancy of the whole LGA

Less positive elements:

- Stock pictures of people, not culturally diverse enough, not engaged in any activity
- Pictures of standard apartment blocks, places and buildings which could be anywhere
- Not enough words or pictures which are specifically relevant to Parramatta or the suburbs within
- No reference to working class or indigenous heritage

There were no votes for the third mood board for the following reasons:

- Looks boring
- Could be Melbourne
- Not a lot of variation in the colours or the pictures
- Generally, not representative of the area

## 6.4. Major projects

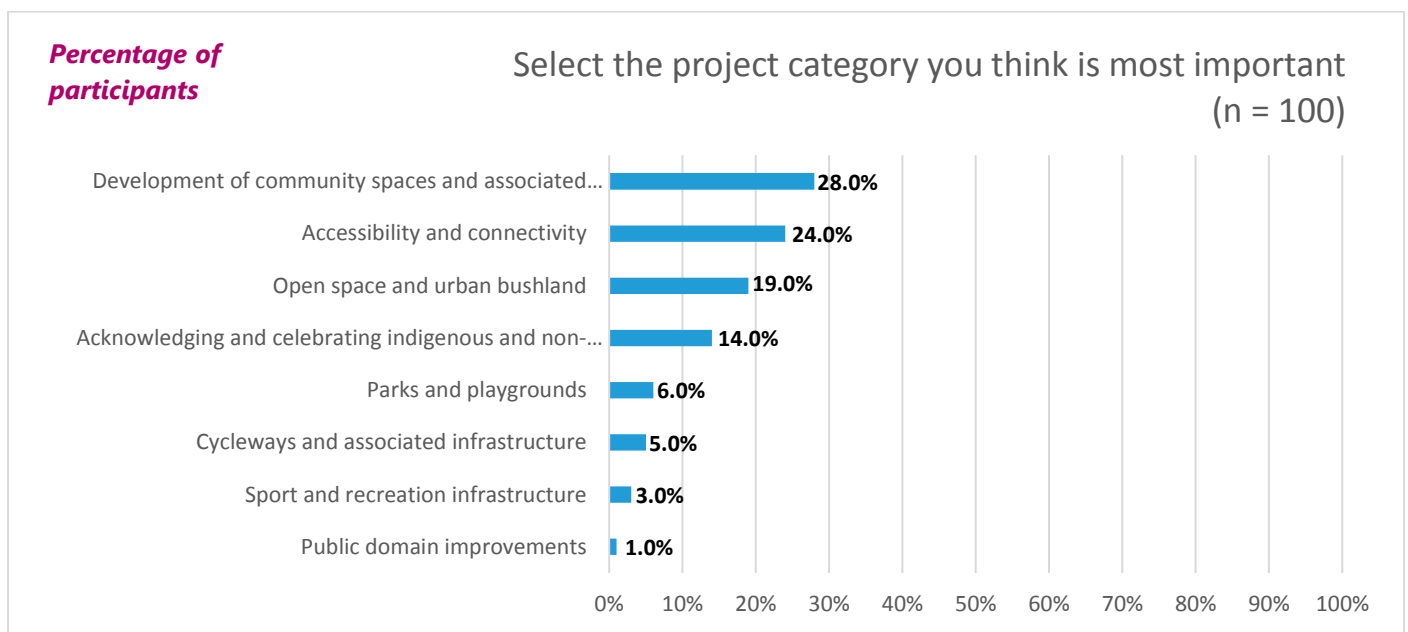
Council received over 173 project ideas for funding from the Stronger Communities Fund Grants. Project ideas were separated into the themes of 'Social' and 'Economic'. To help participants determine priorities within the workshop timeframe, categories describing projects were developed. Participants were asked to consider the types of projects and identify the categories they believed should be prioritised.

### Social

#### 21st Century Town Hall Meeting

'Social' project ideas were placed into eight categories by Council. Workshop participants were asked to discuss the importance of each category and to then vote for the project category they considered to be most important.

From the 'Social' list of project categories, "Development of community spaces and associated infrastructure" was the most popular (28.0%), followed by "Accessibility and connectivity" (24.0%) and "Open space and urban bushland" (19.0%). *Please note: Where n < 120, non-responses are excluded*



**Figure 6g: Keypad voting - Social project categories**

Workshop participants discussed all the 'Social' categories at their tables. Key points from the table discussions are summarised below.

- 1. Development of community spaces and associated infrastructure:** The use or development of spaces to provide social services, community interaction and/or education

This category was considered very important because it allows for community connections to develop and was seen to strengthen the sense of community. Multiple participants stated community spaces are increasingly needed to accommodate the growth in high density developments.

Representative comments:

👉 'Goes to the heart of prioritising people and creating strong communities'

👉 'With growth, community space is missing - needs to be promoted.'

- 2. Accessibility and connectivity:** Projects that improve access and connection to, from and between destinations such as public transport, town centres, parks and recreation facilities

Multiple participants deemed projects categorised under accessibility and connectivity to be important. Responses to this category identified people should be able to move around easily and transport needs to be accessible to all. Participants also stated it is important that this category of projects focusses on the long term and has a 'big picture' approach.

- 3. Open space and urban bushland:** The use of open space for community and/or environmental purposes

Participants stated this category is important as it promotes the protection of native flora and fauna. One participant stated 'Ecology is critical for the City', with other participants highlighting the importance of open space for individuals' wellbeing, the impact the river has on flooding and the importance of more trees for shade and ventilation.

- 4. Acknowledging and celebrating indigenous and non-indigenous heritage in the City of Parramatta:** Projects which acknowledge, celebrate and enhance Indigenous and non-indigenous heritage in the City of Parramatta

This category was considered important because Parramatta is unique and set apart by its rich history. Comments suggested Council does not currently recognise and celebrate the indigenous and non-indigenous heritage in the City of Parramatta to a sufficient level.

- 5. Parks and Playgrounds:** Creation of new public parks, improvements to existing parks and construction of playgrounds within parks

Some participants stated there is a need for more playgrounds, while others stated this category of projects has 'already been done [and Council] just need to maintain and keep clean'. It was also mentioned that this category of projects should 'not be at the expense of bushland'.

- 6. Cycleways and associated infrastructure:** Construction of cycle paths and related infrastructure such as bike racks, lighting, etc.

This category was considered important because it could help reduce the numbers of cars on the roads. Participants stated this category should focus on developing a network of tracks that link key locations and that cycleways should be made more accessible by being separated from road users.

- 7. Sport and recreation infrastructure:** Construction or use of infrastructure for sport and recreation

Few comments were made on this category, with one participant stating 'They are fine as they are and not as important as other [categories]'

- 8. Public domain improvements:** Improvements to public spaces such as town centres, squares, streets and paths

Multiple participants stated that projects under this category are 'already on the radar' and 'should be covered in the course of general Council activities'.



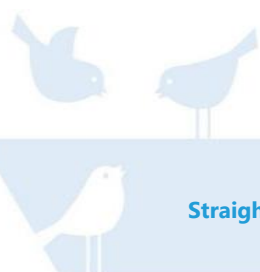
## Focus groups

All focus groups were asked to look over the list of major projects which related to the social theme. Under each category was a list of potential projects which fit under the main category. The two resident groups were asked to vote on which projects they felt were most important and all three groups were asked to comment and give their perspective on how this might affect their views of the area. Non-resident votes were not included in the rank, only relevant points from the discussion.

Across both resident groups, the top three major project categories were as follows:

Overall rank	Major projects - SOCIAL
1	Accessibility and connectivity
2	Acknowledging and celebrating indigenous and non-indigenous heritage in the City of Parramatta
3	Parks and playgrounds

- All groups said that accessibility and connectivity was a crucial project area. This was interpreted as creating an open and linked transport system that encompassed all forms of public and private transit. It also includes providing services to outer suburbs as the population of the LGA is expected to grow in general but particularly as the Parramatta CBD becomes a more popular place to work and visit.
- Heritage conservation and interpretation was seen as a significant part of the Parramatta area. Many felt that there was a lot of broad cultural and indigenous elements which were important to preserve and highlight. This included historical facts and stories which offered interesting places to visit for a family outing or for those naturally interested in local history. Having better advertised information around these things was seen to increase the sense of pride and place, bringing locals and those outside to area to visit.
- Parks and playgrounds was an equally popular choice for young families as well as adults. Those with children said that they would like more and safer places to take their kids to play and socialise with other kids and families. Older participants said that they wanted more green space in general and the idea of an 'adult park' was mentioned numerous times. These open, natural spaces play an important part in the community aspect of the growing area. Many said that the increasing number of apartment blocks will mean that many more children will need places to play and more adults will need spaces where they can walk to and relax. Adults need to play too and some suggestions were made around including places to swim, swing, BBQ, run or sit in nature.

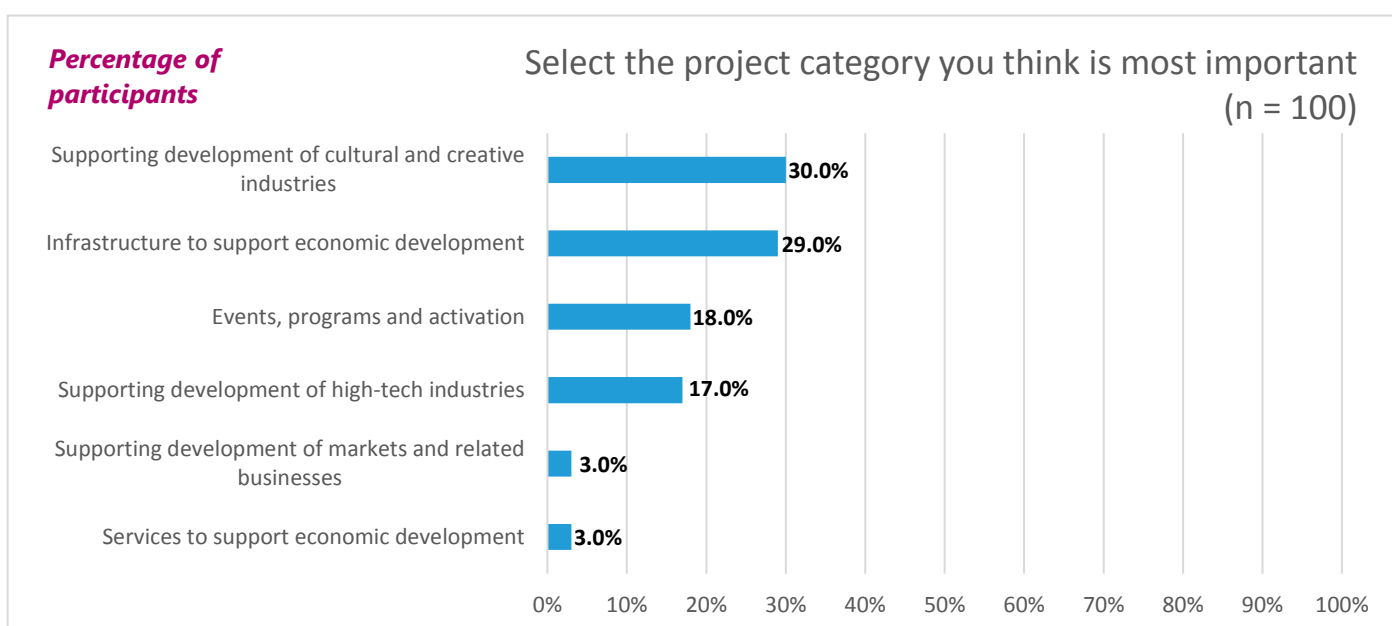


## Economic

### 21st Century Town Hall Meeting

'Economic' projects submitted for funding from the Stronger Communities Fund Grants were placed into six categories by Council.

Two project categories were significantly more popular than others: "Supporting development of cultural and creative industries" (30.0%) and "Infrastructure to support economic development" (29.0%). Other project categories with some support were "Events, programs and activation" (18.0%) and "Supporting development of high-tech industries" (17.0%). *Please note: Where n=<120, non-responses are excluded*



**Figure 6h: Keepad voting - Economic project categories**

Workshop participants discussed all the 'Economic' categories at their tables.

Discussions are summarised below.

- 1. Supporting development of cultural and creative industries:** Projects that provide services or infrastructure to support creativity and cultural endeavours

Participants strongly believed this category should be prioritised for funding because the arts currently struggle for funding and receive minimal support: 'The fund should cover things that aren't usually funded'. Participants stated these projects are important because they can create economic and social benefits, by attracting more people to Parramatta and developing community connections. Multiple participants liked the idea of developing 'a creative hub' in Parramatta and embracing the existing heritage through the cultural and creative industries.

- 2. Infrastructure to support economic development:** Projects that provide physical spaces, facilities and equipment that could be used by businesses and/or attract economic growth

Workshop participants had varying views on this category of projects. Key themes emerged from responses, including:

- Infrastructure is required to create jobs and support the economy
- Environmental sustainability is important
- Support businesses, specifically support new migrants to set up businesses.

- 3. Events, programs and activation:** Support or development of activities and events that promote visitation and/or community cohesion

Participants thought this category of projects was important because it helps attract people to the area. Participants acknowledged that there are already numerous events in the Parramatta CBD, however there was generally support for the events proposed and multiple participants stated that more events could occur in the outer suburbs. Projects under this category were seen to have both social and economic benefits, 'Community will directly benefit and engage with each other' and 'Stimulate the economy and get people to spend money'.

- 4. Supporting development of high-tech industries:** Technology driven projects that encourage innovation and/or digital experimentation

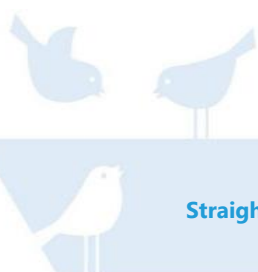
Some participants saw this category of projects as an opportunity to work closely with Western Sydney University in order to ensure Parramatta is innovative and future-focussed. It was also mentioned that this category could support the creation of jobs, especially for young people. Other participants thought this category was not as important as others, as it may not be Council's role and the costs of the projects could be prohibitive.

- 5. Supporting development of markets and related businesses:** Permanent or temporary markets or stalls that address a current retail gap or provide activation to the City

Few comments were made on this category. The comments made were positive, with participants supporting markets which allow for the creation of small businesses and local jobs. Participants also liked the idea of buying products from markets.

- 6. Services to support economic development:** Projects that assist, support and advise businesses and enable them to connect with markets and enhance economic growth

Very few participants discussed the importance of this category.



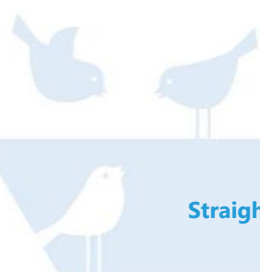
## Focus groups

The same approach was applied to major projects under the 'Economic theme'. All focus groups were asked to look over the list of potential projects under each category. The two resident groups were asked to vote on which projects they felt were most important and all three groups were asked to comment and give their perspective on how this might affect their views of the area. Non-resident votes were not included in the rank, only relevant points from the discussion.

Across both resident groups, the top three major project categories were as follows:

Overall rank	Major projects - ECONOMIC
1	Events, programs and activation
2	Supporting development of markets and related businesses
3	Supporting development of cultural and creative industries

- Participants unanimously agreed across all three groups that having events, programs and activities across the whole LGA was important. There was a desire to have more local events which were fun and relevant to all types of people and having these things in the local area was key. The locality ensured that time, effort and cost was saved travelling to the Sydney CBD but it also allowed for events to be unique to the City of Parramatta. This ties into the idea of local pride, keeping people in the area, close to their homes and having something to celebrate about where they lived. It also gives people something to do, brings the local community together and gives people an opportunity to connect with local businesses and social groups
- Supporting the development of markets/business and cultural and creative industries were closely related and tied to the above idea. This was about fostering places, people and ideas in the local area. Community members want to support each other and see what other locals are doing creatively and business-wise. Similarly, those who live outside the area say they look for reasons to come to Parramatta to give them a unique experience that they can't find elsewhere. Local markets for artists and fresh produce, local cinema, local musicians and places for these things to develop are things that participants think should be cultivated.



## 6.5. Other feedback

### 21st Century Town Hall Meeting

Participants were given the opportunity to express other opinions and concerns by writing them down and placing them in a box. These suggestions highlighted some key aspects that the community would like City of Parramatta Council to address:

- One of the main areas of concern is safety, particularly for women and children at night.
- Another area of concern for participants is transport, as they believe there is a demand for additional and more affordable parking, improved public transport services and facilities, and improved road infrastructure.
- The underlying culture of the City of Parramatta was said to be important, regarding the preservation of the area's history and distinctiveness and the creation of a vibrant community. There is also a demand for affordable community-based events such as Farmer's Markets and tours, which would also promote further community engagement within Parramatta.
- Another common theme was to establish a Parramatta Swimming Pool and introduce outdoor Gymnasiums in local parks. These facilities would compensate for loss of open space typically associated with low density housing, and serve as facilities for youth.
- A number of participants expressed concern for the current high-rise housing trends, as they believe it challenges the original character of the area. Finally, sustainability was also a common theme, with suggestions to improve recycling and e-waste collections, and create more green spaces.

### Focus groups

There is a strong sense of local pride and this was particularly evident during the focus group discussions. Residents have a clear sensitivity towards their local heritage and blossoming arts culture and said that these were important elements of fostering active connections within the community. Having a frequent and high-quality events and art scene was also stated as important in terms of attracting non-locals to the area, seen to contribute to increasing cultural diversity across Greater Sydney.

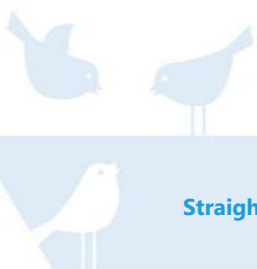
*'We need to celebrate Parramatta'*

*'It's good to spend money locally'*

*'This makes people get out. It gets the community out and experiencing different things'*

*'Young people want to play music, it stops them from hanging out on the street, we have so many talented musicians'*

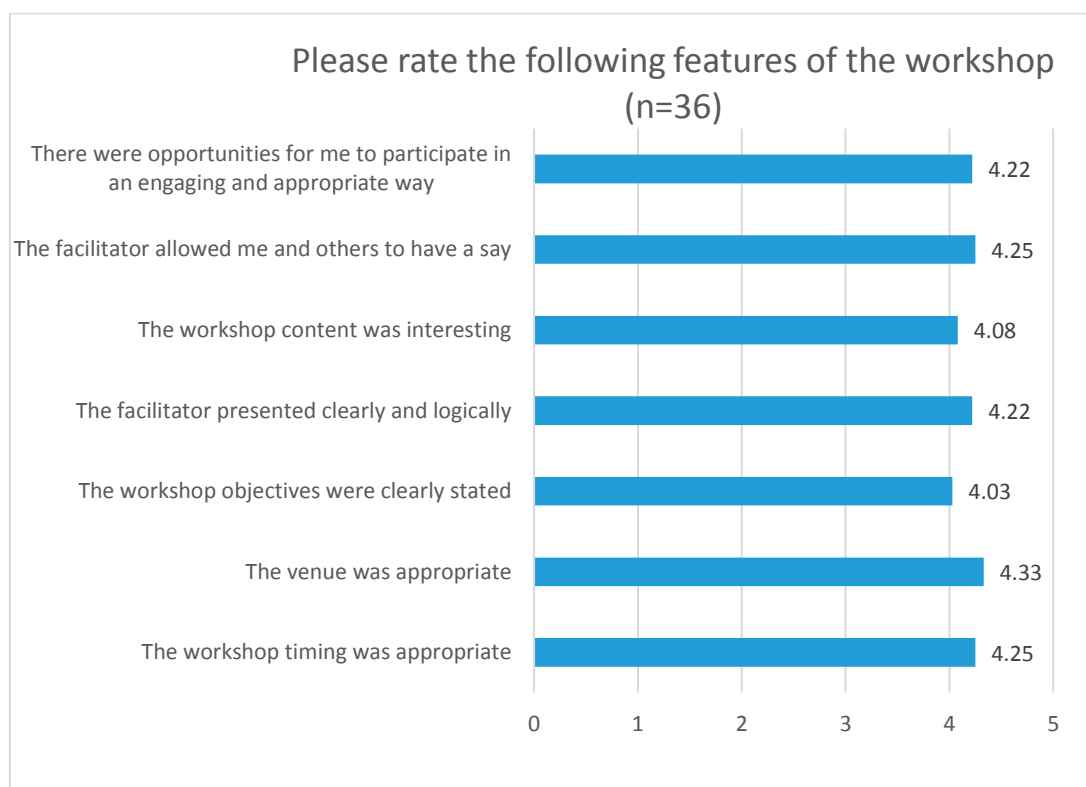
*'We need unique and quirky bars and restaurants like Surry Hills. Young people are more drawn to Parramatta because it is more affordable than the Sydney CBD'*



# 7. STAGE ONE WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

At the end of each workshop, individual feedback was obtained using an online survey to explore participant satisfaction with the workshop including suggestions about how the session might be improved.

36 participants provided feedback. Overall there was a very high level of satisfaction with the workshop process.



The average ratings for all the statements was 4.2 in a 5-point rating scale where 5 equalled 'strongly agree' and 1 'strongly disagree'. The scores ranged from 4.0 –4.3, with the majority of scores 4.2 and above.

## What did you value most about tonight's workshop?

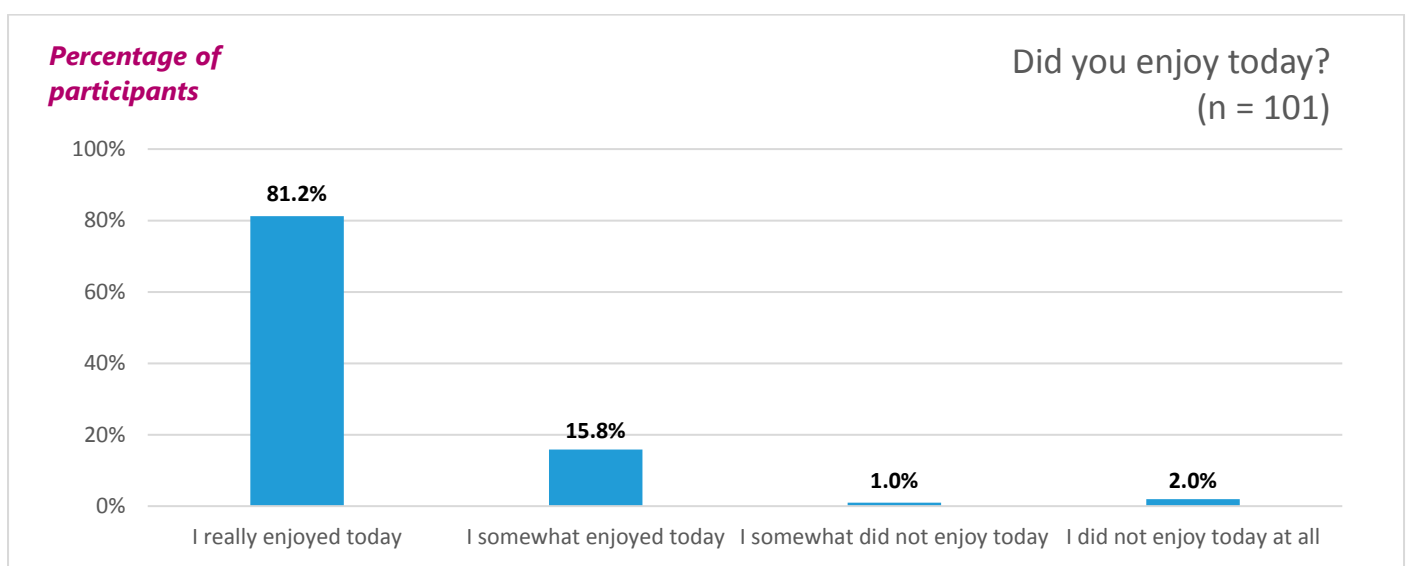
- 👉 *'It was interesting to see people, from such a diverse range of backgrounds, and their varying opinions and priorities.'*
- 👉 *'It was good to meet interesting people and to have a say.'*
- 👉 *'The input and the interesting viewpoints expressed by everyone. My only concern is any proposed outcome will be pigeonholed and our efforts will count for zilch!!!'*



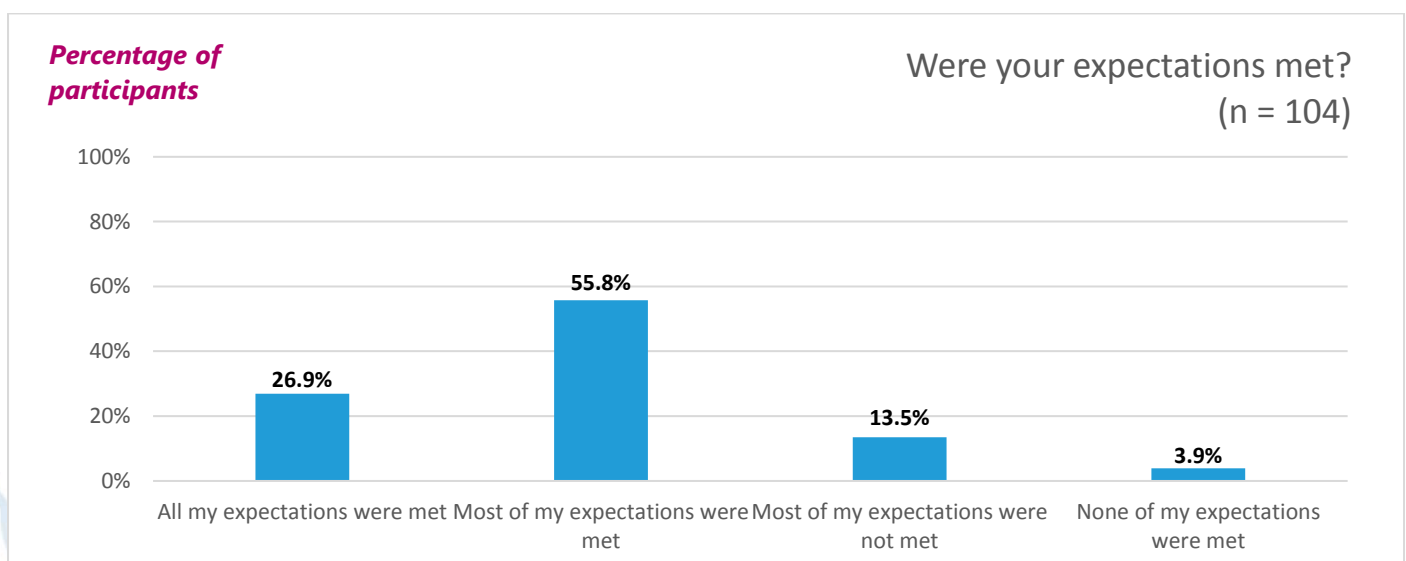
# 8. STAGE TWO PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

## 8.1. 21st Century Workshop

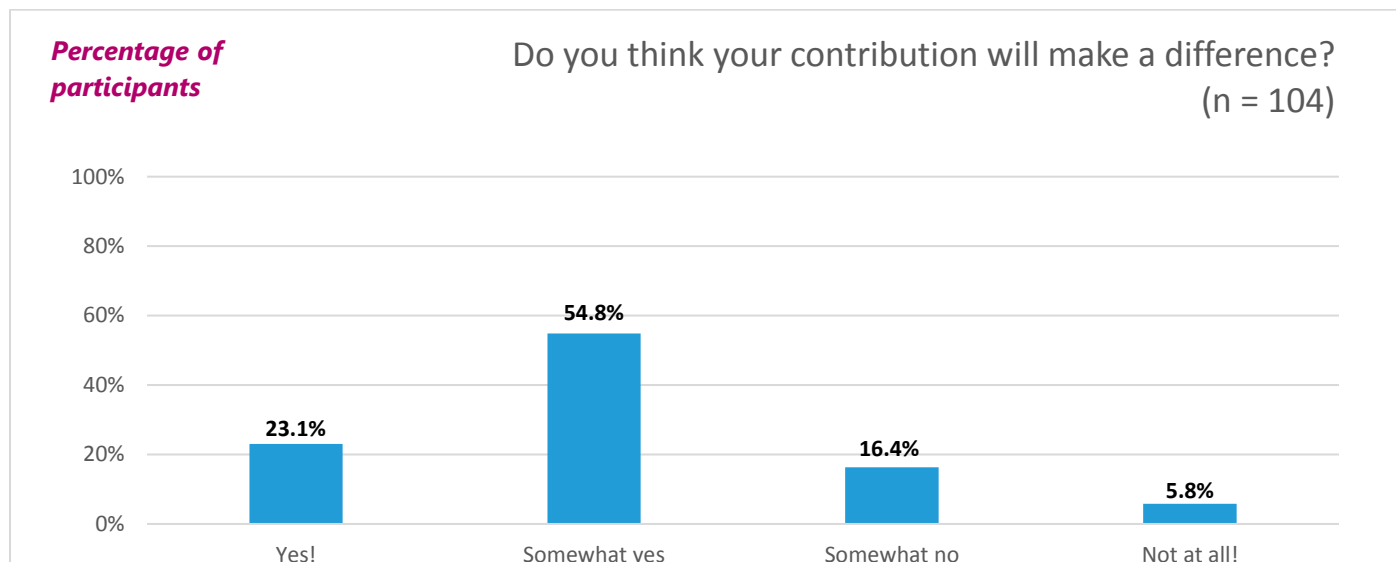
Overall participants enjoyed the event, with 81.2% "really enjoying" it, and 15.8% "somewhat enjoying" it, a total of 97% having a positive assessment. *Please note: Where n=<120, non-responses are excluded*



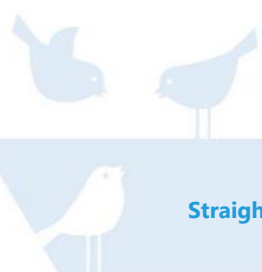
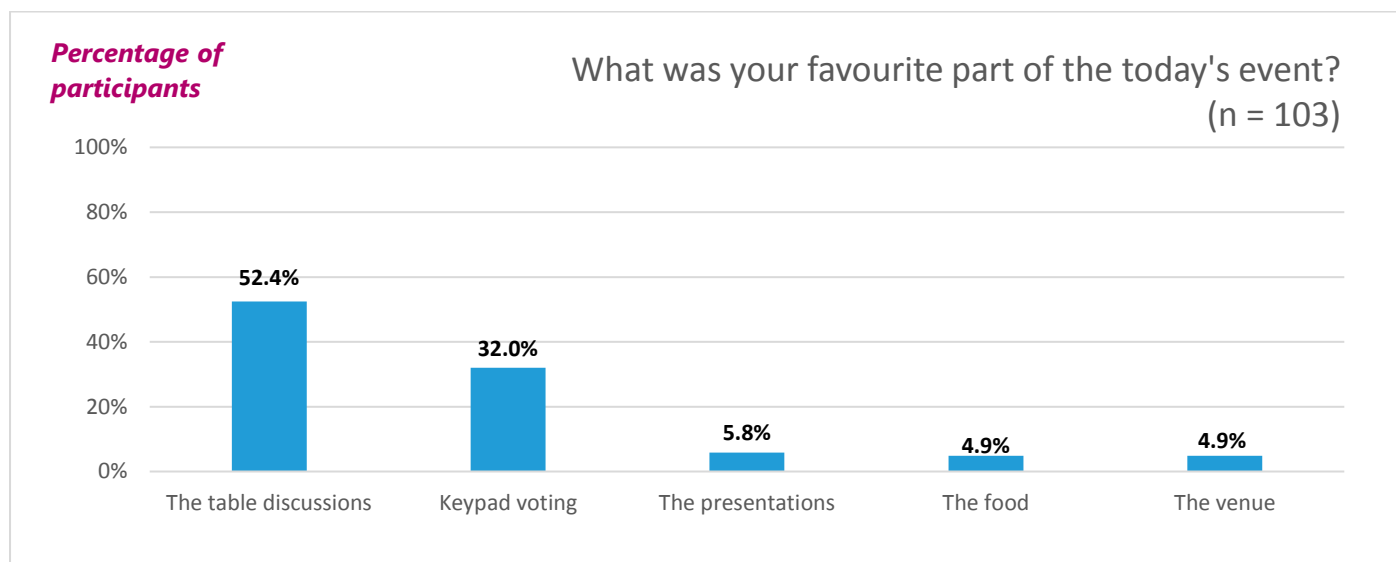
Overall, the event met most expectations of most participants, with over half stating that most of their expectations were met (55.8%). A little over a quarter stated that all of their expectations were met (26.9%), with only a small minority saying their expectations were substantially not met. *Please note: Where n=<120, non-responses are excluded*



Overall most participants felt that their contribution would make a difference, with over half saying "somewhat yes" to this question (54.8%). The next most popular answer was "yes!" (23.1%). Altogether, around a fifth of participants (22.8%) answered "somewhat no" or "not at all". *Please note: Where n < 120, non-responses are excluded*

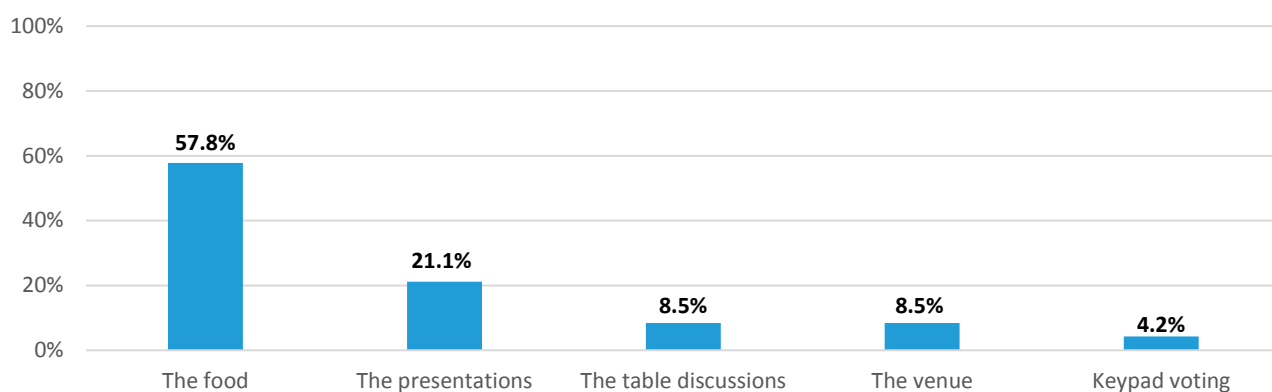


Overall the table discussions and keypad voting were the most popular components of the day's event, whilst the food and the presentations came in for the most criticism. *Please note: Where n < 120, non-responses are excluded*



**Percentage of participants**

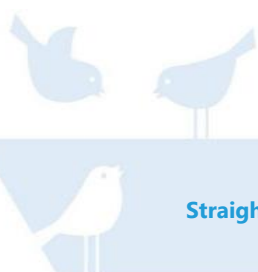
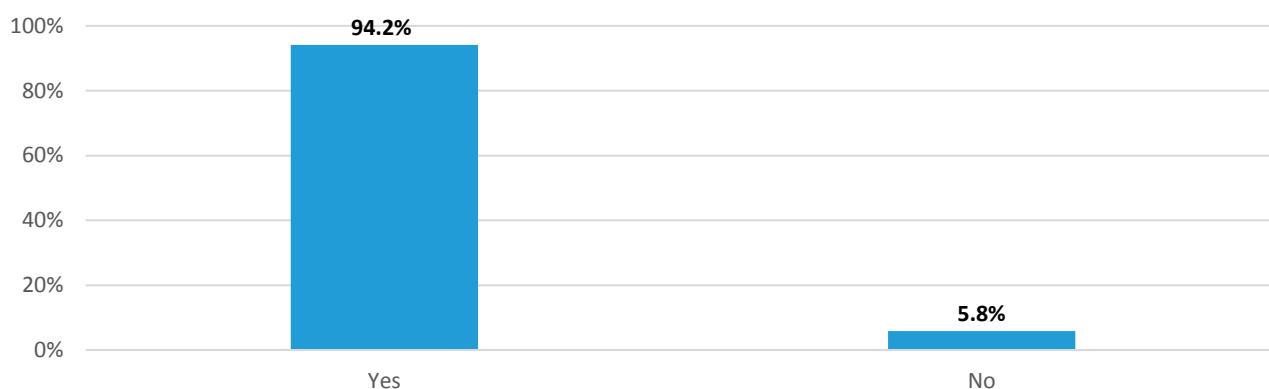
What was your least favourite part of today's event?  
(n = 71)



The overwhelming majority of participants would both participate in a similar event and encourage others to do so (94.2% for both questions). *Please note: Where n < 120, non-responses are excluded*

**Percentage of participants**

Would you encourage others to participate in a similar event?  
(n = 103)



## 9. CONCLUSION

Through a robust consultation process designed by Straight Talk with support from the City, 1,241 community members provided feedback on a future vision for the new Parramatta LGA.

Throughout the first and second phase of the consultation, participants indicated optimism regarding the future of the new Parramatta LGA. They saw the area as being a second city hub, similar to the Sydney CBD but with its own unique sense of place and identity. This sense of place was rooted in the particular history, buildings and events of each local area. Many community members say that Parramatta and their local area have a lot of potential and offer a vibrant and exciting home in a multicultural and diverse city.

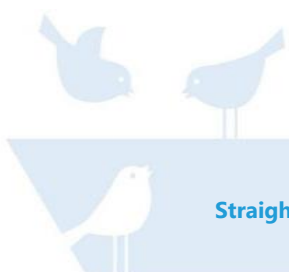
The broad sentiment from all participants was that each suburb within the new City of Parramatta LGA has a unique identity which should be respected and developed by its community members. Both residents and non-residents indicated that while they do feel connected and familiar with the Parramatta CBD, they would still like to have events and services which reflect the needs and interests of the whole LGA. Some spontaneous ideas that were mentioned during individual and group discussions as being of interest were: having more access to artistic and creative events, as well as more local events like food or street festivals; or leisure and family activities which were not located in the Parramatta CBD, but rather spread across suburbs within the LGA.

CALD community members and representatives from the Chinese, Korean and Arabic communities indicated similar perceptions and priorities for the City as the other residents and stakeholder groups. Having a sense of pride of culture and being able to share that with others is important. It is also crucial to have opportunities to express cultural and creative interests as a way to present those ideas to the world and also to foster collaborative projects within the local community.

The first stage of consultation uncovered a high level of awareness around the services that Council provided. Key services that community members have more frequent contact with were obviously more top of mind than others. Services for seniors and children were less known as these are usually dealt with on a private, individual level. There were comments that more information would be welcome on what the City actually provides here.

Community members also frequently emphasised the importance of creating more public/green space and transport options. This ties into the future vision for the City of Parramatta as a smart city, designed to recognise the needs of a growing population, in terms of their health, social and employment aspirations.

Based on the outcomes of the second stage of consultation, overall, the community is voicing strong opinions around the development of community spaces, connectivity and culture. Preferences for major projects were centred on their ability to provide the means for the community to connect with one another. Public spaces, transport and historical reverence were all viewed as priorities for the future. This view was strongly supported in focus group discussions.



It is important to note that there are some differences between the feedback at the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Town Hall Meeting and the focus groups. These relate mainly to the priorities for project categories, where the Town Hall Meeting participants supported heritage and environment more strongly than the focus groups. While generally, discussions in the focus groups tended to concentrate more on developing local events and activities.

In all likelihood, this is a reflection on participants at the Town Hall Meeting having either participated in an engagement activity or having responded to an advertisement. The expectation is that they already had some interest or motivation in taking part because they are involved in their local community or are active around one or more issues, similar to the stakeholders at the same event.

Participants at the focus groups, on the other hand, were randomly selected and motivated to attend by the payment of a stipend, so their opinions are more likely to reflect those of everyday people who have other priorities in life apart from engaging with Council.

Both perspectives are valid and valuable and provide the City with a well-rounded understanding of what is important to the people of Parramatta.

