

Nepean Boulevard Vision



Stage 1 Community Engagement Report





Summary

Frankston City Council is developing a long term plan for the transformation of Nepean Highway into a safe, attractive and vibrant Boulevard.

The Nepean Boulevard project will:



1. Establish a dynamic activated heart to the city



2. Connect the City's key tourism and community destinations



3. Promote and reflect civic pride



4. Foster new connections between City and Bay



5. Become a catalyst for economic rejuvenation



6. Encourage safe and enjoyable pedestrian use and active transport outcomes

The Nepean Boulevard project builds on the strategic direction developed through the Frankston Metropolitan Activity Centre (FMAC) Structure Plan, Frankston Integrated Transport Strategy and Victorian Government changes to create a safe road environment for pedestrians, bike riders and drivers.

Frankston City Council commenced community engagement on the Nepean Vision to assist with refining it through a Master Plan process in 2024. This report provides a summary of feedback collected through this first round of community engagement.



Community Engagement Approach



Between 25 May – 22 June 2023, we presented the initial Vision and artist impressions as the start of the conversation with our community. We invited community members to share their thoughts and feedback via an online survey to help shape the development of the Master Plan.

Engagement for the Vision was undertaken online only, and captured community sentiment which coincided with broader discussion around proposed changes along Nepean Highway and recommendations from the FMAC Structure Plan. A more comprehensive engagement program with more detailed plans will be delivered with the Draft Master Plan (Stage 2) during in 2024.

Stage 1 engagement activities included:

- Presenting a video on Engage Frankston as an overview of the proposed Vision for 3.7km of Nepean Highway from Mile Bridge in the north through the city centre to Olivers Hill Lookout in the south.
- Presenting before and after images on Engage Frankston for each of the three precincts: Southern, Central and Northern.
- An online survey inviting community members to share their thoughts and feedback

Stage 1 engagement was promoted to the community via:

- **Frankston City Council Facebook post** – 26 May 2023.
- **Frankston City News** – front page of May-June 2023 edition (delivered to 60,000 households)
- **Frankston City E-News** – feature article 16 May 2023 (delivered to ~3500 recipients)
- **Mini Frankston City online newsletter** – May 2023 (delivered to ~600 recipients)
- **Direct email notifications** to interested Engage Frankston members (425)
- **Frankston Environment Friends Network** report (June 2023).



Quick engagement stats

The Frankston Nepean Boulevard Vision Engage page:



Received
13
comments
in response to
Council's facebook
post during the
engagement period



30%
of visitors
reached
the page from
social media



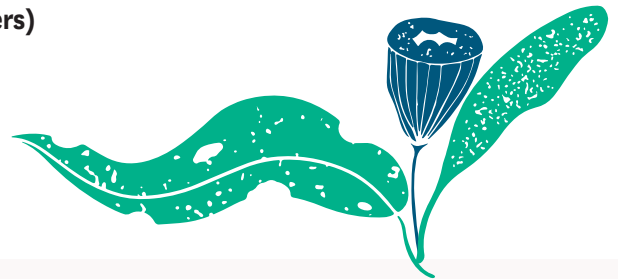
38%
of visitors reached
the page through
direct notification
methods (such as
emails, newsletters)



Was visited
731
times throughout
the engagement
period



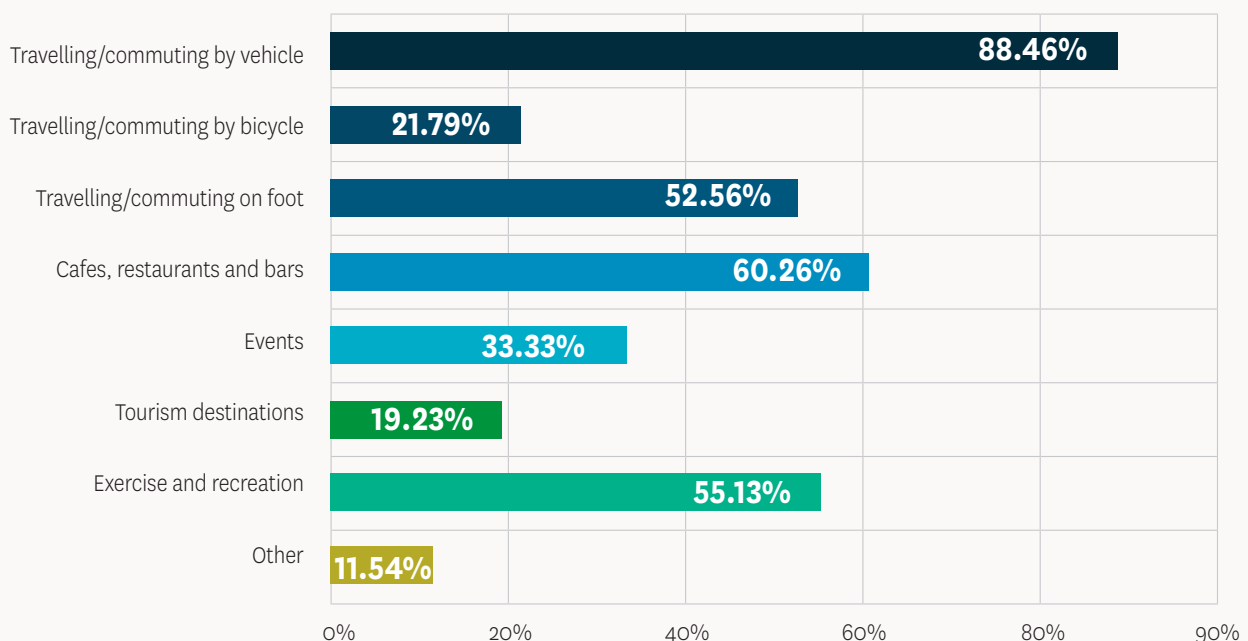
Received
78
contributions to the
online survey



Who did we hear from?

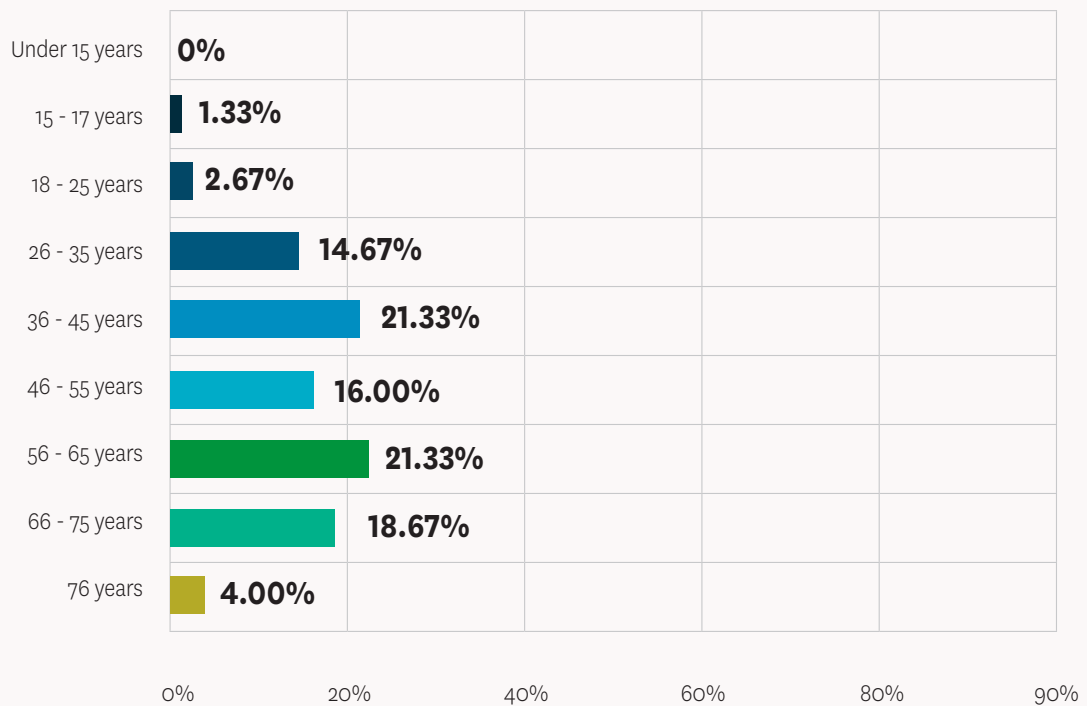
Contributors selected the following reasons for visiting Nepean Highway, with travelling/commuting by vehicle the most selected (by 88% of respondents) followed by Cafes, restaurants and bars (60%):

1. Why do you visit Nepean Highway? (Select as many as apply)



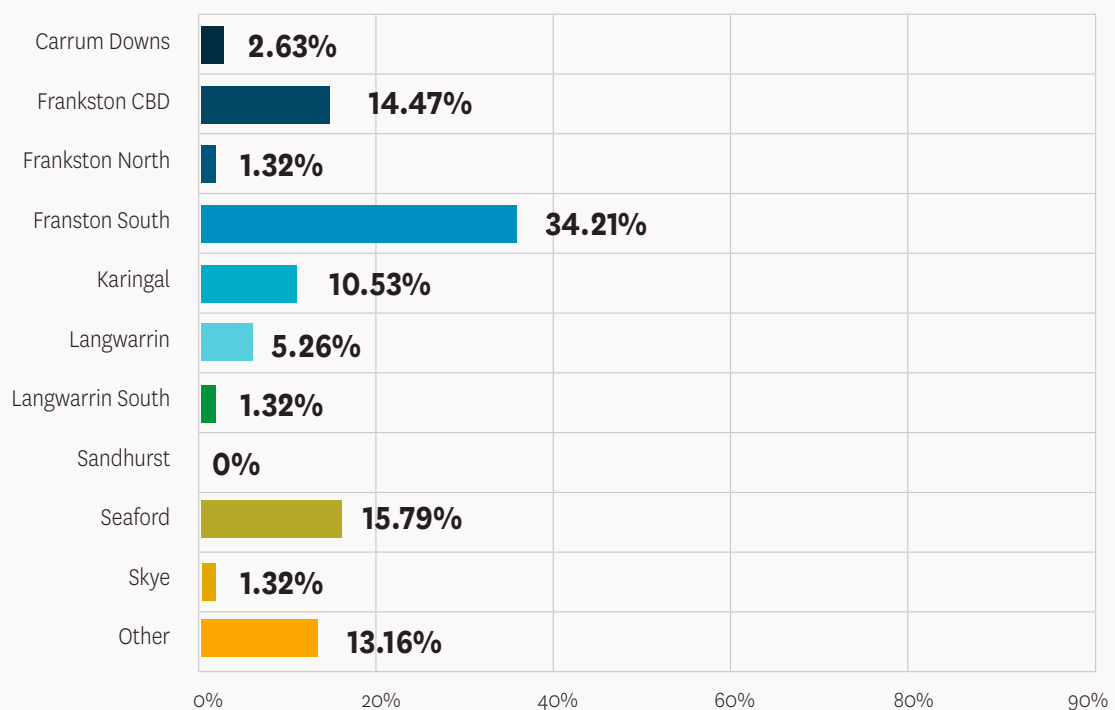
Contributors were from a diverse range of age groups, as follows:

What is your age group?



Contributors were from across the municipality (with the exception of Sandhurst). Understandably, suburbs which include sections of Nepean highway had the highest participation rates:

What suburb do you live in or spend the most time in?



Key Themes

The overall response to the Nepean Boulevard Vision was divided with people generally agreeing improvements were needed, respondents had different ideas about the suggested changes.



Activation and Revitalisation

- Support to improve the presentation and street activation through the central area, activating empty shop fronts, desire to deliver a destination, rather than a thoroughfare.
- Some concern over future development and building heights.



Landscape Improvements

- Support for landscape improvements to improve the appearance and enhanced canopy coverage with strong support to connect to the local environmental character context and include indigenous/native vegetation.



Pedestrian & Active Transport Connectivity

- Support to improve road safety for all road users, improve the connection to the foreshore and some support for the implementation of separated bicycle lanes.



Traffic and Car Parking

- General support for the lane reduction to deliver cycling infrastructure and improve pedestrian amenity, although some concern over traffic network impacts, speed reduction, reduction of car parking and provision of DDA accessible car parking at Olivers Hill Lookout.



Next Steps

The outcomes of this engagement will inform the development of a Draft Master Plan for Nepean Boulevard and priority Early works implementation.

Council's next steps are to:

- Further consult with relevant Authorities. As Nepean Boulevard is a state arterial road and managed by the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP), Council is working with DTP through the Master Plan development.
- Share the Draft Master Plan for community feedback through further engagement in 2024.
- Commence Early works in 2024, subject to authority approvals including:
 - Feature and Levels Survey investigation
 - Greening the Boulevard plantings
 - Public Lighting improvements
 - Public Sculpture and Artwork
 - Wayfinding Signs



Summary of Engagement Outcomes



Q - Is there a particular area or aspect of the Nepean Highway that needs to be improved?

Improvements for Nepean Highway were supported (66 comments) with most support for improvements across all areas/ aspects of the Nepean Highway (all 3 precincts). Of the three precincts, the Central Precinct was identified as the area in most need for improvement, followed by the Southern and Northern Precincts.



Q - Responses to how strongly the initial Vision will improve the connections along and across Nepean Highway?

Support for the Vision and its potential to improve connections along Nepean Highway was mixed 48% of respondents identifying 'not at all strongly' and 52% of respondents responding either "strongly" (16.4%) or "very strongly" (37.3%).

Comments from the 'strong' & 'very strong' support related to the following feedback -

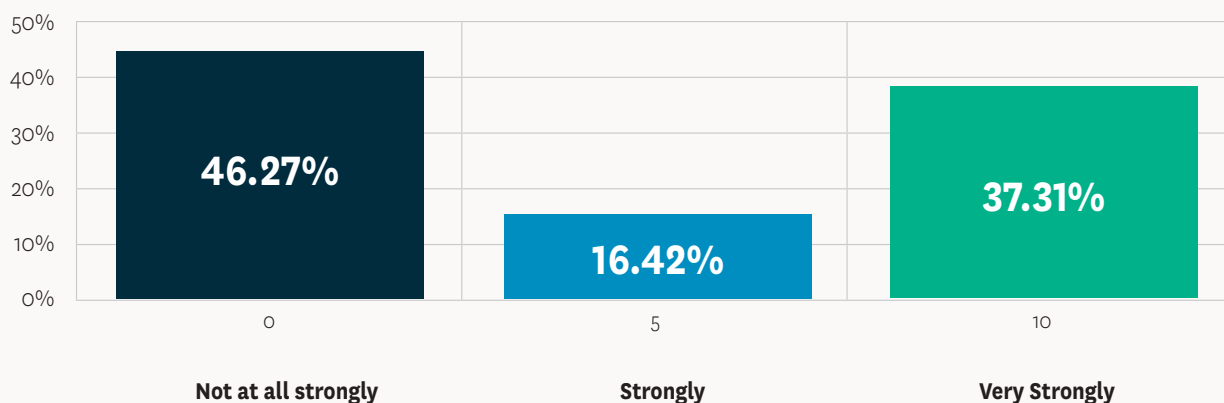
- It will improve the presentation of the city and move away from existing perceptions of Frankston, no current sense of place.
- Support activation and create a more inviting space to attract people to come and visit, Frankston as a destination.
- Improved connections for active transport, pedestrians and cyclists
- An opportunity to reference the local character and provide a unique experience for Frankston.
- Some concerns over future development, road network functionality and removal of car parking.

The themes associated with the 'not at all strongly' related to the following feedback -issues/concerns -

- Concerns around the future development in the city centre and building heights
- All abilities access at Olivers Hill, including vehicular access and car parking
- Protected bike lanes should be installed rather painted bike lanes
- It is not clear what the vision is proposing and concern for associated costs
- Concern over traffic congestion & reduced car parking in the future
- Need to activate Nepean Highway and promote building improvements and business activity
- Concern about use of exotic vegetation over native or indigenous vegetation



3. How strongly do you feel our initial vision ideas will provide improved connections along and across Nepean Highway?



Q - How strongly do you feel our initial vision will provide a vibrant and activated precinct that reinforces Frankston City's coastal character?

Support for the Vision and its potential to provide a vibrant precinct and reinforce Frankston City's coastal character was mixed 48.5% of respondents identifying 'not at all strongly' and 51.5% of respondents responding either "strongly" (15.2%) or "very strongly" (36.4%).

Reasons from the 'strong' & 'very strong' support related to the following feedback –

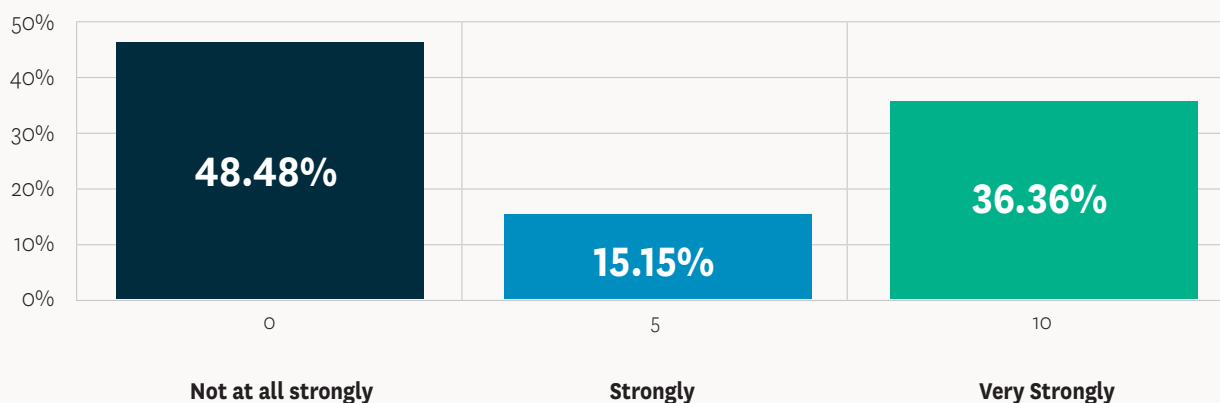
- The desire for activation and outdoor dining, making people wanting to visit.
- Acknowledge the local context and connecting to the local environment, promoting the use of native and indigenous plants, supporting local fauna and embedding cultural components
- Beautification will help address the existing image of Frankston and changing people's perspectives

- Support safer and easier access to the beach, makes it more inviting
- Make it clear the positives of the reduced speed limit - "Right now, the low speed limit actually makes me notice how ugly Nepean Hwy is. I wouldn't find this so bad once it's all beautiful and something to look at"
- The plans provide potential amenity and experience that other locations currently provide
- The Nepean Boulevard has been announced previously

Reasons from the 'not strongly at all' & 'very strong' support related to the following feedback –

- Impacts on vehicular traffic and car parking
- Use of exotic plant species rather than indigenous species
- More needs to be done to revitalise the area and address dilapidated buildings
- Impacts by proposed building heights and the impact to solar access

5. How strongly do you feel our initial vision will provide a vibrant and activated precinct that reinforces Frankston City's coastal character?



Q - How strongly do you feel our initial vision is bold and will transform Nepean Highway?

Support for the Vision and its potential to transform Nepean Highway was supported by the majority of respondents (57.4%), responding either “very strongly” (44.3%) or “strongly” (13.1%), and 42.6% of respondents identified ‘not at all strongly’.

Reasons from the ‘strong’ & ‘very strong’ support related to the following feedback –

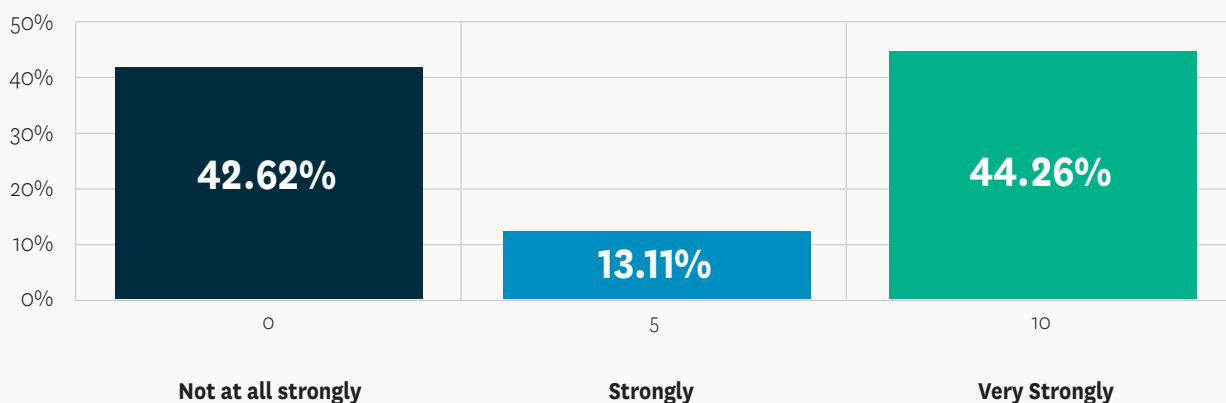
- Beautifying the Nepean Highway streetscape, landscape and buildings as well as enhancing the wonderful sights of Frankston namely Kananook Creek, the foreshore and Olivers Hill will forever change the face of Frankston for the better.
- There has been limited investment in Nepean Highway for decades and attention is needed to improve this address, it will be a place to stop and enjoy.

Reasons from the ‘not strongly at all’ & ‘very strong’ support related to the following feedback –

- Impacts on traffic and car parking and future building development
- Impacts on car parking and all abilities access at Olivers Hill Lookout
- Need to address activation and amenity of empty shop fronts
- Improvements seem modest with landscape improvements and crossings



7. How strongly do you feel our initial vision is bold and will transform Nepean Highway?



Other feedback/comments received



“ Make sure it can be delivered and maintained. ”

Will ongoing maintenance be considered in the development of the Master Plan?

Yes, ongoing maintenance will be considered.

“ Make sure it is Frankston’s plan and not a replica of other places. ”

How will the Master Plan consider the local context and deliver a unique outcome for Frankston?

Local context and history (European and First Nations) will be considered during the development of the Master Plan with opportunities explored to incorporate interpretive elements with appropriate themes and narratives into the design.

Will the proposed changes impact the road network?

Traffic analysis will be undertaken to assess impacts on the road network through the design process.

Will accessible car parking be provided at Olivers Hill Lookout?

Options will be explored to enhance the public realm and maintain some car parking at the Olivers Hill Lookout including provision for DDA car parking. Current road safety standards will be considered in the development of the options

“ Do you plan to advocate for funding from the state/federal governments for better crossing solutions? I would love to see this work all complemented by a seamless pedestrian connection between the city and the beach. ”

How will the project be funded?

Nepean Boulevard is a top Advocacy Project for Council, Council will commence delivery of some early works in 2024 and will advocate for contributions from both State and Federal Governments to assist in the delivery of the project.

“ Yes, start as soon as possible, so it becomes a community expectation, and allocate funding in your LTIP. ”

“ Wondering if it will happen and how long it will take? ”

“ Perhaps target a particular precinct first that we know will be successful to buy confidence from local residents. ”

When will works commence and how long will they take?

Planning and scoping is underway to deliver identified early works to enhance the appearance and amenity of Nepean Boulevard.

An Action Plan will be developed through the Master Plan process that will identify and prioritise the projects and their associated costing. The projects will be delivered as funding becomes available.

“ I wouldn’t like to see really tall buildings overshadowing the road. I think the residential / commercial buildings need to be kept short so the afternoon sun still hits the road, and to prevent the street becoming a wind tunnel like the back side of the peninsula centre. ”

“ Council needs to control the building development along the Highway. ”

How will this project consider future building development impact the Nepean Boulevard?

Building heights and future development in the City Centre is guided by the Frankston Metropolitan Structure Plan (2023).

The Nepean Boulevard Master Plan will provide a functional road layout and framework that can be considered in any future development.

Just requesting for the Overton road/Nepean highway intersection to be signalised and more pedestrian crossings along the highway.

TBC

“ Please no palm trees!!!! ”

“indigenous trees and shrubs should be planted instead of introduced species. ”

What plant species will be used in the project?

A range of plant species will be used in the project and consider the local environmental context and integrate with the specific environmental conditions.

