

Community Survey Results

Draft Refreshed Community Strategy

July 2024

Survey Overview

Council requested feedback on the draft refreshed Community Strategy through a survey available on Council's Have Your Say website between 14 May and 10 June 2024.

Community members were asked to review the draft refreshed Community Strategy and then complete the short survey to provide their feedback on the draft strategy, as well as submit ideas of actions they could take to contribute to our strong community for inclusion in the final strategy.

This is a short summary of the survey findings.

Survey respondents

There were 437 responses into the survey during the four-week engagement period between 14 May to 10 June 2024.

Around 45 respondents (around 10%) provided minimal feedback into the survey. Most respondents had not been involved in earlier community engagement stages during the Community Strategy development (78%).

Of the 437 responses, 51% were from men and 39% from women (the remaining responses were from people who had another gender or didn't state their gender). Around 3% of responses were from First Nations people and 10% were from people with disability.

Survey participation rates were significantly higher for older adults than for middle-aged adults and young adults. Over half of survey respondents were aged 60 years or older (232 responses, 53%) and around one third were from middle-aged adults aged 35-59 years (166 responses, 38%). A small proportion of responses were from young adults aged up to 34 years (22 responses, 5%).

Figure 1. Demographics of survey respondents

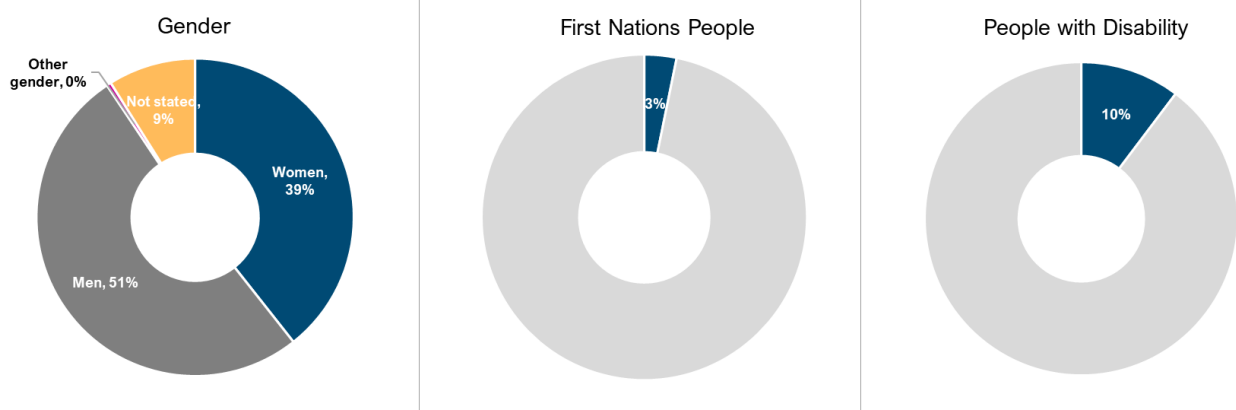
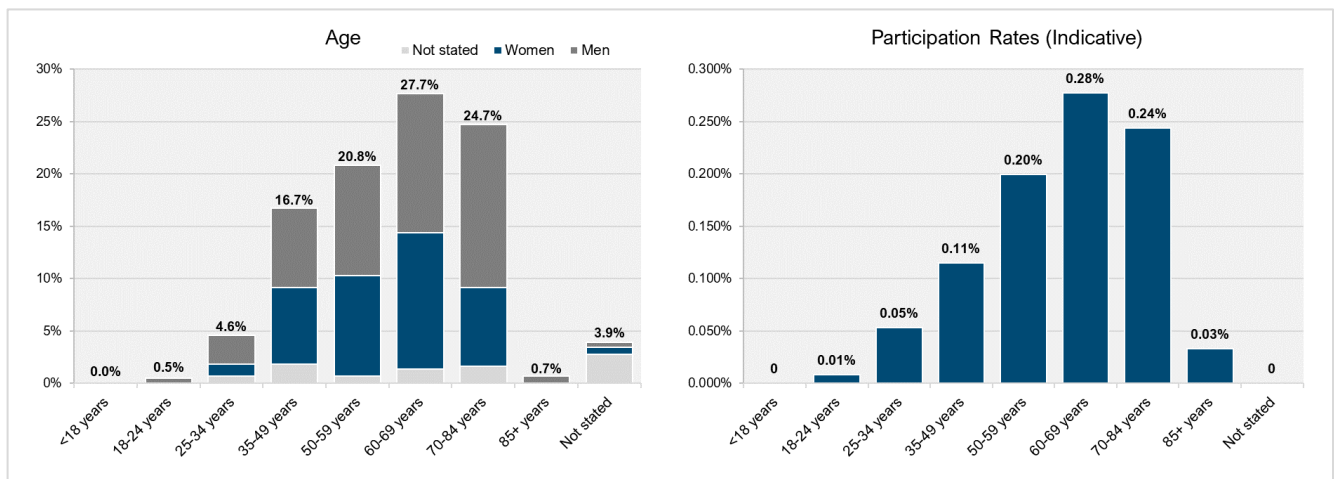


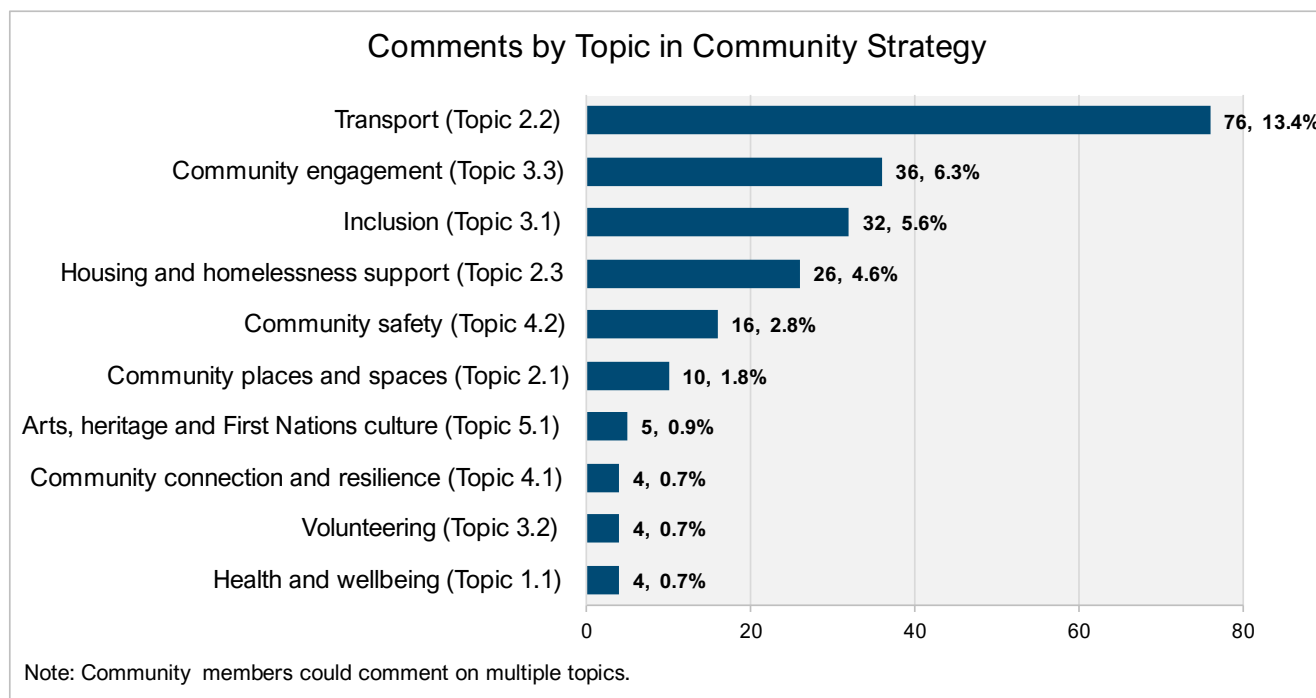
Figure 2. Age groups of survey respondents



Summary of key feedback themes on draft refreshed Community Strategy

Most comments that related to the Community Strategy topics were about transport, community engagement, inclusion, and housing and homelessness support.

Figure 3. Number of comments by Community Strategy topic



Transport

Transport continues to be an area of significant concern for many residents, including congestion, investment in road upgrades, expansion of public transport and improved active transport infrastructure. Approximately 13% of comments received were associated to the topic of transport. Comments related to:

- Expansion of public transport to reduce reliance on private vehicles – Residents commented on the need for improved public transport, including expansion of the network, more regular services and better coordination of connections.
- Upgrading road infrastructure to accommodate growing traffic - Residents highlighted that reducing traffic congestion and delivering road upgrade projects are a priority. Actions to enhance road safety, such as reducing speed limits on local roads, were also suggested.
- Developing active transport infrastructure to promote healthier, more sustainable travel options - Residents advocated for the expansion of the active transport network, including neighbourhood footpaths and active transport connections, as well as separated bike paths to improve safety.
- Making transport more affordable and accessible to all community members.

Community engagement

Approximately 6% of comments were associated with community views, community engagement and communication, and the need to undertake genuine, inclusive community engagement that influences decision-making and outcomes. Comments related to:

- Community feedback directly and transparently influencing Council decisions and actions - Residents called for community feedback to play a more decisive role in shaping Council decisions.
- Focus on inclusive community engagement – Including opportunities to participate in digital and non-digital engagement options. Residents also shared their views that there is a need for Council to better promote opportunities for the community to be involved in engagement.

Inclusion

Approximately 6% of comments were associated to the topic of inclusion. Comments related to:

- Fostering inclusivity for all in our region – With a focus on particular groups in our community, including young people, older people, people with disability, etc.
- Balancing practicality and economic feasibility of inclusive initiatives – Including calls for practical and actionable inclusivity strategies that are economically viable.
- Focus on ensuring that inclusivity does not lead to division and fosters cohesion – Some residents shared views that resources and initiatives should be directed and available to everyone and not particular groups within the community.

Housing and homelessness support

Approximately 5% of comments were associated with housing and homelessness. Comments generally emphasised the need for more action on this issue. Comments related to:

- Need for more affordable and diverse housing options – Including suggestions for changing policies and legislation to improve housing diversity and availability to cater to different age groups and income levels.
- Concerns about homelessness – And reference to the urgent need for effective housing solutions and support for people experiencing homelessness.
- Mixed community reaction to Council's role in housing and homelessness and higher density housing and development.

Comments outside of scope

Approximately half of all the comments from survey respondents were general comments about Council, or comments that were not related to the scope of the Community Strategy, for example:

- Scope of Council services – That Council should focus on delivering essential services, such as waste management and road maintenance, with an emphasis on cost reduction.
- Council rates/fees – Concern that new action beyond essential services will increase rates and fees.
- Development and environmental sustainability (mostly outside the scope of the Community Strategy) – A desire to preserve the low-density urban form of the Sunshine Coast and opposition to high-rise

development (often expressed as not wanting to be the Gold Coast). Residents value the environment of the Sunshine Coast including the beaches and natural areas in the hinterland and share a strong desire for preserving natural environments and local character.

- Population growth (mostly outside the scope of the Community Strategy) – A reflection that population growth and tourism are causing issues and that the answer to this is to limit population growth, often relating to comments about traffic congestion and falling behind with infrastructure delivery.

General feedback on strategy

- More focus on implementation/specific action - Comments called for greater specificity, measurable outcomes and accountability, suggesting that Council should prioritise tangible action in areas such as transport and housing. The comments also suggested that the strategy should have clear, measurable actions with resourcing, timing and areas of responsibility.
- Need for clearer, more readable presentation of strategy – Including reduction in use of colour and images, review of readability and reduction in volume of content.

Personal action

Community members identified actions that they were doing, or will begin to do, to contribute to a strong Sunshine Coast community. Below is a selection of the actions identified. The actions have been grouped into the ten topics of the Community Strategy. All of these actions have been summarised to protect the privacy of community members, and to generalise the action so it can be considered as an action by others.

1.1 Health and wellbeing

- Live an active lifestyle, taking advantage of our amazing beaches, parks and reserves.
- Grow my own food and share it with my friends and neighbours.
- Encourage my children to participate in community sport so they can be active, meet other people and value community participation.
- Join with others to advocate for additional health services.

2.1 Community places and spaces

- Participate in the activities run at community places and spaces in our neighbourhood.
- Help a local sporting club or community group apply for grants to upgrade their sporting facility or meeting space.
- Join with others from our community to advocate for additional funding for community places and spaces.
- Report vandalism or suspicious behaviour around facilities.

2.2 Transport

- Reconsider when and how often I travel.
- Minimise my personal car travel.
- Use public transport more as the network starts to improve.
- Ride responsibly on shared paths so that pedestrians feel safe.
- Join with others from my community to advocate for more investment in our transport network.

2.3 Housing and homelessness support

- Volunteer to support people experiencing homelessness.
- Join with others from my community to advocate for more investment in social housing.
- Investigate renting out a spare room.
- Learn from people who have had an experience of homelessness.

3.1 Inclusion

- Provide a positive welcome to new residents in our neighbourhood.
- Treat other people with respect.

- Keep an open mind to new ideas and the future of the Sunshine Coast.
- Learn about people from different backgrounds by participating in events, activities and programs.
- Create opportunities for young people to be involved in the community.

3.2 Volunteering

- Help out a neighbour if they need support.
- Volunteer to help keep a local community group, sporting club or facility going.
- Pick up rubbish to maintain our community places and spaces.

3.3 Community engagement

- Participate in community engagement opportunities thoughtfully and respectfully.
- Share opportunities for community engagement with people I know and groups I'm involved in.
- Get involved in a local residents' association.
- Help a neighbour or friend participate, who might otherwise find it difficult.
- Vote responsibly in Council elections.
- Engage with my local Councillor to let them know about things that are needed in my community.

4.1 Community connection and resilience

- Build strong relationships with my neighbours.
- Join with others in my community to take meaningful action on shared challenges and opportunities.
- Hold a neighbourhood party to get to know my neighbours.
- Participate in local events and activities.
- Contribute to social media groups by suggesting positive, constructive actions that we could take together.
- Learn about different risks in my neighbourhood.
- Put together an emergency plan for my household to prepare and help deal with different scenarios.

4.2 Community safety

- Report criminal or suspicious activity to authorities.
- Get to know my neighbours and local community.
- Treat everyone the way I would like to be treated.
- Have a conversation with my mates about managing anger and respecting other people.
- Declare my home a violence-free zone.
- Be an active by-stander.

5.1 Arts, heritage and First Nations culture

- Learn about the Traditional Custodians of the land where I was born and where I live.
- Keep an eye out for local arts and cultural activities to participate in.
- Support arts groups as a participant or as a volunteer.
- Invite a friend to a cultural activity as an opportunity to do and learn new things together.
- Learn about the local history of my neighbourhood.