

# GOAL: A DELIBERATIVE CITY

Melbourne will be a leader in using participatory, consultative and innovative approaches to decision-making. The diverse voices of Melbourne will be heard. New information technologies will be used to help citizens engage with local governance processes.

A deliberative city is a city where people are encouraged to participate in civic activities, decision-making and information sharing. Communities are involved in how services that affect them are designed and delivered and feel empowered to be agents of their own lives.

The City of Melbourne recognises that our community is a great source of knowledge and expertise – of those who choose to live in our municipality, and those who work, socialise and play here. This collective asset can be harnessed to help find solutions to local problems as well as complex city challenges. Collaborative approaches to problem solving enhance community ownership over decisions and deliver long term, sustainable solutions. This in turn creates greater community resilience and wellbeing.

Deliberative decision-making can occur through various channels and in various settings – from community meetings and citizen’s juries to storytelling, online engagement tools and conversations on social media. People engage with civic life in different ways depending on a number of factors, such as age, background, socioeconomic status and ability. We need to be responsive to this broad spectrum of needs and provide sophisticated and varied opportunities to engage with the community in meaningful ways. We also need to ensure the voices of the vulnerable or marginalised, including children, older persons and the homeless, are heard.

More than 60 per cent of City of Melbourne residents over 18 years of age participate in citizen engagement activities and this is increasing over time (City of Melbourne 2014 and 2015). The rise in social media and online platforms as forums for political discourse alongside growing public expectation to be informed and listened

to by their government means that we need to embrace technological innovation and engage with communities online.

Fast and responsive information sharing allows people to engage in conversations about broader political or social issues and enables two-way conversations with decision-makers. We need to be cognisant of both opportunities and challenges in order to be relevant and responsive to our community.

In some situations, it makes sense for the City of Melbourne to take a back seat and allow community members to take the lead in finding solutions that best suit their needs. There will also be times when we can play an important facilitative role in helping the community define and achieve its own aspirations.

As a local government, we strive for high levels of transparency and accountability in everything that we do. We share information through our open data platform, which currently makes more than 100 datasets on land use and employment, our parks and environment, parking, accessibility, and community services accessible to the public. By sharing our data, we can help improve public services, and support social and economic innovation.

The City of Melbourne can be an example of transparency by fostering citizen collaboration and innovation through open data, and encouraging other organisations to do the same.



Looking ahead, we will encourage community participation and strive for greater integrity and accessibility of data, to ensure Melbourne continues to evolve as a deliberative city that:

- Empowers people to participate in designing services, decision-making and problem solving in ways that are meaningful to them.
- Embraces technological innovation in information sharing and engagement, delivering online systems that enable collaborative and community-driven solutions to city problems.
- Works across business, research, community and government sectors to achieve innovation in the provision and application of city data.

Given this, the City of Melbourne’s specific focus over the next four years can be summarised by the following outcomes and priorities.

## THE OUTCOMES WE WILL WORK TOWARDS IN 2017-21

- People participate in co-creating Melbourne's future.\*
- We are transparent and accountable to our community.
- City of Melbourne's open data platform is available for public use.

\* Also a health and wellbeing priority.

## How we'll measure success

Our key indicator is in bold text.

### CITY OF MELBOURNE INDICATORS

- **The level of community satisfaction with Council's community consultation and engagement.**
- The number of people who participated in City of Melbourne engagement initiatives.
- The percentage of decisions by the Council that are made public.
- The total number of datasets available on the City of Melbourne's open data platform – City of Melbourne owned and owned by other organisations.
- The average number of dataset views on the City of Melbourne's open data platform each month.

### MUNICIPAL INDICATOR

- The percentage of people surveyed who have participated in specific engagement activities to address city issues, including through the use of digital technology.

## What we'll do in 2017-21

WE WILL PROVIDE	RELATED FM 2026 PRIORITIES
Opportunities for all members of the community to participate in civic decision-making.*	7.1 Lead in participatory democracy
A network of physical and digital spaces for ratepayers and city users to collaborate using new technologies to solve city problems.*	7.2 Empower local communities 7.3 A collaborative city 8.2 An online city
Continued leadership on transparency in local government.	7.1 Lead in participatory democracy
Access to open municipal data and insights with appropriate privacy protection.	7.5 Open up government data 8.5 Use data to make a better city
WE WILL PARTNER TO	RELATED FM 2026 PRIORITIES
Introduce a city data platform that can be contributed to, and used by, other government agencies, universities, businesses, non-profit organisations and individuals.	7.4 Enable citizen engagement with new technologies
WE WILL ADVOCATE FOR	RELATED FM 2026 PRIORITIES
Other organisations to adopt an open data policy to support their participation in a city data platform.	7.5 Open up government data 7.3 A collaborative city 8.5 Use data to make a better city

\* Also a health and wellbeing priority.