



Community Engagement Results Report- 2026/27 Budget and other documents

Background

From 30 April – 27 May Council placed the draft budget & associated documents on public display.

Participation Analysis

The Darebin community demonstrated strong engagement throughout the process, with 1,245 visits to the online *Your Say* page, 110 attendees at in-person pop-up sessions, and 168 budget submissions/feedback items received. Additionally, 30 submitters requested to present at the Hearing of Submissions Committee meeting.

Engagement / Communications Activity	Number of participants/ people engaged	Target group	Demographic information
Feedback Survey	168 submissions received in total: 137 via Have Your Say Darebin page 31 via email	Darebin City Council Residential/commercial residents	Darebin community members who live, work, own a business, study and visit our municipality
Your Say Darebin page	1,860 visits by 1,245 visitors	Darebin City Council Residential/commercial residents	Darebin community members who live, work, own a business, study and visit our municipality
3 X Community pop-ups in Reservoir, Thornbury and Preston	Pop-up #1 Spring street Reservoir: 60 Pop-up #2 Mayer Park Thornbury: 25 Pop-up #3 Preston Market: 25 Total people engaged at pop-ups= 110	All Darebin residents, particularly residents who would not normally engage with us online.	Pop-up #1 Spring street Reservoir: Pensioners, families, local residents, traders. Pop-up #2 Mayer Park Thornbury: Dog walkers, families, local residents, walkers. Pop-up #3 Preston Market: Local residents, traders, business owners, pensioners, multicultural people from across Darebin.
Darebin Community News article	Article regarding budget engagement included in Autumn 2026 DCN – delivered to all homes	All Darebin residents	All Darebin residents

Internal working document

Community Engagement – Results Report (updated 09 Jan 2025)

Printed Posters	30 x posters distributed to customer service locations, libraries, Council venues and community hubs	Darebin City Council Residential/commercial residents	Darebin community members
Translated poster	Poster including comms summary in 12 languages printed for pop-up sessions	Darebin City Council Residential/commercial residents	Darebin community members who speak a language other than English
Fact Sheets	Printed fact sheets about the 26/27 Budget	Darebin City Council Residential/commercial residents	Darebin community members
E-Newsletters	May editions: - Your Darebin - What's on for Families - Business enews 12,363 total recipients	Darebin City Council Residential/commercial residents	General community members Families Business owners
Social Media Posts	Mayor video on FB and IG + 4 social media posts on IG and FB	Darebin City Council Residential/commercial residents	Community members who follow DCC social media accounts

Engagement Results

Summary of submissions received

The submissions received have been organised into themes, and a breakdown of this categorisation is presented below.

Theme	No. of submissions	% of total submissions
Environment, Parks & Sustainability	84	50.0%
Leisure, Recreation & Community Services	14	8.3%
Other General Matters	10	5.9%
Sustainable Transport	48	28.6%
Supporting Business/Community Grants	2	1.2%
Culture, Equity & Inclusion	2	1.2%
City Planning, Approvals & Design	3	1.8%
Buildings & Facility Management	5	3.0%
Totals	168	100%

30 submitters requested to present at the Hearing of Submissions Committee meeting.

Summary of feedback received at the pop-ups

At each pop-up, community members were invited to write a single message to Council about the budget on a 'post it' note. Overall, the written comments indicate that participants were focused on practical, visible local issues that affect their everyday experience of Darebin.

Across the three pop-ups, many people raised concerns about the condition and maintenance of public spaces. Common issues included potholes, footpaths, street sweeping, graffiti, overgrown vegetation, lighting and public toilets. There was also a clear expectation that Council will continue to invest in parks, leisure centres, libraries, and arts and cultural facilities, while ensuring that existing assets are safe, clean and well maintained.

Several comments highlighted the importance of community safety, inclusion and accessibility. This included requests for improved lighting, safer park infrastructure, more accessible facilities, support for anti-racism initiatives, and services or spaces that better meet the needs of older people, culturally diverse communities, families, veterans, and people experiencing homelessness.

Some feedback was specific to locations. In Reservoir, comments focused on Reservoir Leisure Centre, Edwardes Lake Park, public toilets, and local amenity around shops and laneways.

In Thornbury, feedback centred on park upgrades, pavilion improvements, road maintenance, and the Merri/Crank Creek area.

In Preston, comments were broader in scope, with interest in High Street, Preston Market, arts and culture, libraries, street cleaning, footpaths, and planning for local business and activity centres.

While the number of written comments is relatively small, the feedback provides useful insight into the issues that were top of mind for participants during the pop-ups.

Recommendations

Council is required to adopt a Budget each financial year and will consider adoption of the budget on 30 June 2026, including consideration of all submissions.