Directions from Young People Youth Strategy 2022-2025

Point Walter Sand Bar, Emily Raymond, 2021

Our vision is that young people are a visible, connected, and respected part of the City of Melville community

City of Melville

Acknowledgment of country/Nyungar statement

The City of Melville acknowledges the Bibbulmun people as the Traditional Owners of the land on which the City stands today and pays its respects to the Whadjuk people, and Elders both past and present.

City of Melville nagolik Bibbulmen Nyungar ally-maga milgebar gardukung naga boordjar-il narnga allidja yugow yeye wer ali kaanya Whadjack Nyungar wer netingar quadja wer burdik.

City of Melville acknowledges the people of many breasts Nyungar as the ancient owner of this land on which it stands today and pay respect to the Aboriginal people, elders past and present.
Marie Taylor Whadjuk
Balardong Nyungar Birdiyia

Thank you to young people in the City

The City of Melville thanks all of the young people who contributed to this Strategy by sharing their thoughts and ideas at workshops, via surveys, through postcards and artworks.

The City values the lived experience of young people. The design of the consultations with young people and the development of the vision, values, goals, and actions in this Strategy were especially shaped by eight young people who worked with the City as peer researchers. These young people spoke with hundreds of their peers and ensured that young people's voice was at the forefront of the Strategy development.

Figure 1: Peer researchers: back row—Georgia, Amy, Josh, Ollie, and front row—Tsige, Sarah, Tamara, Taleesha

All quotes included throughout this document are from local young people except when referenced otherwise.

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Message from the Mayor

I am delighted to present the City of Melville's Directions from Young People Strategy which sets out how we will work with young people to support their health, wellbeing, and connection to community.

There are approximately 18,000 young people aged 12 to 25 living in the City of Melville, all making significant contributions to our community through work, study, volunteering, social connections, friendships, mentoring and support roles with family.

As a local government, we connect with young people in many different ways and play a key role in fostering young people's sense of belonging and being accepted, welcomed and respected by the community.

The artworks featured in this Strategy are all by young people and beautifully illustrate how we can work with young people to make meaningful contributions to placemaking and sense of community.

This Strategy would not be possible without the more than 560 young people who provided feedback about the issues that matter most to them and how the City can best support them.

A special thank you to the eight peer researchers who helped design and guide our engagements and collect community input – your voices have helped identify our four key priority areas of Youth Focus, Wellbeing, Communication and Making a Difference.

As we work to implement the actions of the Strategy, we are committed to ensuring young people are a visible, connected and respected part of our community.

Mayor Hon. George Gear JP

Executive Summary

The City of Melville is excited to deliver our third iteration of the *Directions from Young People (DFYP) Youth Strategy*. *DFYP* was first launched in 2010 and over the years has guided the City in responding to the needs and aspirations of young people who live, work, study, volunteer and spend time in our community.

Over the lifetime of the previous Strategy (2018 to 2021), the City delivered a number of successful initiatives with young people including:

- An intensive focus on youth provision at the Willagee Library, resulting in strong youth engagement and youth development opportunities.
- PHAZE urban art project which has provided an opportunity for hundreds of young people to contribute to our places and to murals throughout the City.
- Active engagement with young people to design a mountain bike facility at Point Walter Reserve.
- Wilgee Mia—a partnership project with the Department of Education and Carey Training to deliver two civil construction courses in Willagee, resulting in the creation of a new community bush tucker garden and seating area.
- Dozens of youth events across the whole City including National Youth Week, wheeled play workshops at our skate parks, activities in parks and reserves, art workshops, murals and more!

The new *DFYP Youth Strategy 2022–2025* provides a four year strategic road map for how the City will deliver initiatives and plans in partnership with young people that support their health, wellbeing, and connection to community. This new strategy was developed by the Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (YACWA) who worked with the City throughout the project.

The City took a youth-led approach to the development of the Strategy by engaging eight young peer researchers to help us talk with young people. We spoke with nearly 600 young people aged 12 to 25 through surveys, workshops, a postcard campaign, and art competition, as well as parents and caregivers, organisations that work with young people and City staff. The Strategy development also involved a review of the City's current youth provision and current youth issues and trends.

Figure 2: Timeline of the Strategy development

March to May 2021	June to August 2021	September 2021	September to October 2021	October to November 2021	December 2021 to February 2022
Planning and desktop research	Community consultation	Findings and actions presented to Council	Draft *DFYP Youth Strategy 2022-2025* developed	Public comment on draft *DFYP Youth Strategy 2022-2025*	*DFYP Youth Strategy 2022-2025* Finalised and published

Our key findings have been grouped into four focus areas, with goals and actions outlined under each. These focus areas are:

1. Youth focus
2. Wellbeing
3. Communication
4. Making a difference

One of the most significant findings was that although young people aged 12 to 25 make up a significant proportion (17.2%) of the City's population; they are currently not a very visible part of the community. Young people told us that they wanted there to be more focus on youth culture and to feel included in council decision making.

Our vision is that through the delivery of this Strategy young people are a visible, connected, and respected part of the City of Melville community.

Priority actions

There are a number of actions included this plan. The four key actions are listed below:

1. Explore the development of more dedicated youth spaces in the City
2. Establish a youth-focused communication channel
3. Appoint a Youth Steering Group or similar, comprised of local young people to oversee the delivery of the Strategy
4. Develop a whole of City Youth Engagement Toolkit

Why we developed a Youth Strategy

A Youth Strategy is an important document for a local government authority. It provides an opportunity to assess the current needs and goals of young members of the community and proactively address what role we can take in progressing these.

Young people are a unique demographic that need specific planning and consideration. The needs of young people are also dynamic—more than any other group, they change quickly, and young people are often the most impacted by societal shifts such as technology, the employment landscape, and more recently the COVID-19 pandemic. Young people also face a range of unique challenges, such as rising rates of mental ill-health, housing insecurity and unaffordability, high youth unemployment and underemployment, school and study stress, and they worry about big issues such as climate change, racism, and discrimination. Local government has a significant role to play in many of these things. The City of Melville takes a community development approach, and we aim to provide facilities, events, programs, and initiatives that empower young people to live their best lives.

This Strategy supports the City's vision of 'engaging with our diverse community to achieve an inclusive, vibrant and sustainable future' as laid out in the *Strategic Community Plan (SCP) 2020-2030*. It especially supports the community's aspirations of healthy lifestyles, and a sense of community. The SCP sets a direction that is inclusive of the whole community, including young people, however it is a high level document, with limited touch points for young people to see where they fit. In the development of this Strategy, young people said they wanted a document that contained tangible, meaningful, and clear actions. They also stressed that they wanted a strong focus on accountability, with the City being responsible for reporting to young people on what progress had been made towards the actions contained in the Strategy.

This Strategy is designed as a tool to be used by City staff to clearly see what actions need to be taken over the next four years to make progress for young people on areas that are important to them.

Snapshot of young people

- There are approximately 18,000 young people age aged 12 to 25 living in the City
- Young people make up 17.2% of the City's population
- The highest number of young people aged 12 to 17 live in Attadale
- The highest number of young people aged 18 to 25 live in Kardinya
- 24% of young people were born overseas
- 18% of young people speak a language other than English at home
- 14% are looking for work
- 11% are estimated to identify as LGBTIQA+
- 8% of young people live with disability
- 1.4% are First Nations young peoples

Fun fact!
Did you know that there are approximately the same amount of young people aged 12 to 25 living City of Melville as there is people aged 65 and over?

Consultation

How we talked with the community

Community consultation to develop the Youth Strategy was delivered from June to August 2021 and included:

- A print and online survey for young people aged 12 to 25
- An online survey for parents and caregivers
- Four youth workshops—three in partnership with organisations and one Young Changemaker event at AH Bracks Library
- A postcard campaign with the single question 'What is your one wild idea?'
- An art competition with the themes of places, memories, connection, and the future
- One on one conversations with organisations and services
- Two staff workshops

Information about development of the Strategy, including the opportunity to participate, was delivered to the community through multiple City channels, including the City's website, the City's Facebook and Instagram pages, the *Melville Matters* e-News and posters in City libraries, community centres and recreation centres. Other methods included direct engagement with local schools, Murdoch University, sporting organisations and community groups, social media

promotion on community Facebook pages, and promotion of the survey by the young peer researchers.

Who we talked with

To develop the Youth Strategy, we talked with **563 young people**. This included 489 through surveys, 65 at workshops, in-depth discussions with eight peer researchers and the submission of one art work. We also received 35 postcard submissions, which were from young people and community members.

- 49% were aged 12 to 17 and 51% were aged 18 to 25
- 64% female, 34% male and 2% non-binary or gender diverse
- 19% LGBTIQA+
- 19% living with a mental health difficulty
- 17% from a culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- 7% identified as living with disability
- 5% First Nations young peoples
- 5% young carers or young parents

- 71% lived in the City
- 66% spent leisure time in the City
- 36% went to schools in the City
- 36% worked in the City
- 8% volunteered in the City
- 4% went to TAFE/university in the City

We also talked with:

- 78 parents and caregivers
- 4 organisations that work with young people
- Over 20 City staff

How we developed the Strategy

To develop the Strategy we analysed data from all stakeholder groups and reviewed this alongside desktop research of existing youth trends, as well as the current initiatives the City is delivering for young people.

What we have developed is an action-based strategy across four focus areas. Each focus area has three sections:

1. **The evidence** - what we heard from the community and what our research told us.
2. **Our goals** - where we want to get to and what we want to achieve over the next four years.
3. **Our actions** - the specific projects, initiatives, or steps we will take to achieve those goals, with clear timeframes and measures of success.

This Strategy is supported by a *DFYP Youth Strategy 2022-2025 Background Paper* which contains all of the data used to develop this document. The paper enables staff to easily access the evidence they need to implement the Strategy.

The Strategy

Our vision for young people

We identified three key themes that ran through all of our consultation with young people. The first was that young people wanted to be more **visible** with the City—with more spaces and programs specifically for young people and more celebration of youth culture. The secondly was that young people wanted to feel more **connected** with their community—we found that currently, only 24% report they feel connected. The third was that they wanted to feel **respected**—they told us that that the promotion of a positive image of young people was important, and youth ideas and skills should be valued and better utilised.

Our vision is that young people are a visible, connected, and respected part of the City of Melville community.

Our values

There are five core values which underpin this Strategy. Staff who deliver actions within this Strategy should reflect on these in their work with young people.

Inclusion. “Nothing about us, without us.” Involving young people in planning and decision making wherever possible is fundamental to the successful delivery of this Strategy and will ensure that the actions remain relevant, contemporary, and authentic.

Equity. This is a Strategy for *all* young people that live in or visit the City. To deliver equity of outcome, young people who face additional barriers or are marginalised need additional focus.

Accountability. Young people told us that it was important for them to see the City delivering on their commitments. Employing robust evaluation and providing clear communication back to young people is essential.

Evidence-based. To best meet young people’s needs, all decisions made should be evidence-based with staff referring to the *DFYP 2022-2025 Background Paper* as well as contemporary research where necessary.

Collaboration. Making the best use of resources and delivering coordinated initiatives requires regular exploration and strengthening of partnerships. This should include working in collaboration internally across City directorates and also externally with groups, organisations, and young people themselves.

Focus area 1: Youth focus

"A lot of the focus in Melville appears to be centered on the elderly and young families with young kids. It is good to see that the City is starting to take into account the other demographics that live in Melville."

The evidence

Having a sense of place and belonging is important for young people. As a demographic, those aged 12 to 17 are not yet able to vote, and those that can vote are least likely to. As such, young people's needs are rarely front and centre of any level of Government. Overwhelmingly, young people told us that they wanted the City to have a stronger youth focus, by offering spaces, activities and events that were specifically developed for and targeted at them. A review of the City's places and facilities indicated a limited number of spaces for young people to 'hang out' or youth-focused areas. Over half the parent's and caregiver's we spoke with considered a lack of places for young people to be a problem and four out of five thought the City should do something about this. There was significant support for a youth centre, or some sort of dedicated youth spaces. The preference was for the spaces to be close to public transport, accessible and integrative of both youth activities and support services.

> *"A youth centre, young people with different interests will have a place to come together for activities & events. It would also create a place for the youth to feel welcome & safe, and also build a community for young people in Melville."*

The City has five public libraries. One of these—Willagee Library, has over the last few years placed a significant focus on welcoming and supporting young people, providing space, and youth initiatives that nurtured the relationship. Libraries are an excellent opportunity for the City to engage with young people who need free, local places to connect with their friends and access resources. There were a range of suggestions for ways that the libraries could be upgraded or revitalised to encourage more young people to use them more including gaming areas, virtual reality (VR) set ups and study areas.

We asked young people what places they visited, and the mostly commonly cited were the shopping facilities Westfield Booragoon and Melville Plaza, Willagee Library and parks and reserves, with Point Walter, Tompkins Park and Bicton Baths mentioned frequently. Although Westfield Booragoon was well used by young people, there were some reports of problems with a small group of young people and also perception issues, with older people wrongly assuming young people gathering were going to cause problems. Westfield Booragoon was identified as an area for potential activation. Young people highly valued the open spaces, parks and reserves in the City and there was significant support for more facilities that enable young people to use outdoor spaces for mountain biking and other outdoor pursuits. The City currently has four skate parks, and one mountain bike facility proposed for

development at Point Walter Reserve. There were a high number of responses that supported the expansion of mountain bike facilities and more pump tracks.

> *"I would like to see the City of Melville build more basketball courts, bike trails and ultimately give more freedom to people."*

> *"Develop and take action on the Point Walter Mountain Biking facility."*

When it came to things to do, many young people wanted to see more youth-focused activities and events. Again, parents and caregivers identified a lack of things to do as one of the biggest issues for their children.

> *"Put in more things for teens please, I want more things to do with my friends!"*

Young people aged 18 to 25 were vocal about the City offering very little for this age group, with their preference being for events that had music, affordable food options and stalls. Young people said that these events should provide opportunities for young entrepreneurs to hone their talents and showcase their skills. Young people also wanted to see more cultural events that celebrated diversity, and that were inclusive by actively addressing things like racism.

> *"As an 'older' youth I feel like there is a lack of activities/events/services aimed at my age group (18-25). I feel like most events I see advertised for youth in the City are for school-aged youth. It would be great to see more events/programs aimed towards older youth who have left school and are studying or working."*

> *"I don't know of any youth focused events in the City and other events I wouldn't feel welcome at or would feel judged"*

Young people who were into skating, mountain biking and other outdoor pursuits were particularly keen on the competition aspect of events. A common thread when young people were talking about activities and events, was the need for them to be free or low cost, with one in three citing 'cost' as a barrier to them attending things they want to in the City. Location and transport were also barriers for a significant proportion of young people, with young people identifying many of the areas in the City as having poor public transport.

> *"Engaging and interesting workshops and events in Melville that cater towards interests of young people, like sports such as skating, mountain biking and other sports/hobbies."*

Our goals

1. Young people can access and engage in variety of youth-friendly spaces in the City of Melville
2. Young people have the opportunity to participate in youth-focused programs, activities, and events in their areas of interest
3. Young people can contribute to the design and implementation of youth projects, events and facilities

Our actions

#	Action	2022	2023	2024	2025	What success looks like
1.1	Explore and trial the development of dedicated youth spaces in the City; including new facilities and outdoor spaces designed over the duration of the Strategy					• Exploration of a dedicated youth space is undertaken • City of Melville engages with young people when designing new spaces
1.2	Activate the City's outdoor spaces with initiatives that relate to active pursuits such as skateboarding, BMX, mountain biking, and parkour					• One 'active pursuits' initiative is delivered per quarter
1.3	Young people participate in the proposed Point Walter Mountain Bike Facility					• Point Walter Mountain Bike Facility is completed • Young people have been included in the project
1.4	Further develop the City's library, cultural facilities and programs to encourage young people to meaningfully engage with these spaces					• Increase in young people accessing programs in Libraries and Cultural Spaces
1.5	Develop a partnership with Westfield Booragoon shopping centre to encourage positive youth engagement in the space					• Partnership established • Centre staff report improved youth engagement (measured annually)
1.6	Review large-scale community events to ensure youth activities are included and promoted					• Increase in youth activities at community events • Increase in youth attendance at large-scale community events
1.7	Co-design and deliver an annual youth-focused event that displays local youth talent—explore a focus on a different demographic group each year, i.e. Pride, NAIDOC					• Annual youth event held • 100 young people attend, increasing annually • 75% satisfaction of young people attending event

1.8	Co-design and deliver more initiatives suitable for young people aged 18 to 25					• Two initiatives for young people 18 to 25 delivered per annum • 75% satisfaction of young people participating
1.9	Proactively look at opportunities to nurture and utilise young people's skills and talent for events, and other City work (i.e. young artists, young entrepreneurs, workshop facilitators)					• Register of youth skills and businesses is collated • Annual increase in young people supplying services to the City
1.10	Focus on minimising cost and transport barriers in all events and programming for young people					• Low cost/free programming delivered • Events delivered close to public transport options
1.11	Ensure that young people are included within the City's review of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) and Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)					• The specific needs of young people are included in the DAIP and the RAP
1.12	Establish an internal DFYP Youth Strategy working group that will meet twice a year to discuss progress on the Strategy and plan coordinated actions					• Internal working group created with representatives across the City's service areas • Internal working group meets twice yearly

Focus area 2: Wellbeing

"The City could be more inclusive and consider the wellbeing of others."

The evidence

Young people's wellbeing is impacted by a number of things. Many are universal needs like safety, shelter, and financial security, but other issues are felt more deeply by young people and/or have been exacerbated by the COVID pandemic. We asked young people which issues were most important to them, and they told us that the top four were climate change (50%), mental health (49%), body image (48%) and school or study stress (46%). Some issues did not impact young people evenly. School or study stress impacted young people of high school age at twice the rate (62%) of their older peers. Mental health was a more significant issue for young

people aged 18 and over (54%) and climbed up to 78% for young people who identified as LGBTIQA+. First Nations young peoples identified racism as the issue that impacted them the most (57%), but this was only identified as an issue for 16% of young people more broadly. Nearly half (47%) of young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD) identified both discrimination and culture/identity as an issue. Half of young people who identified as living with disability said that loneliness was an issue for them; compared to just 24% of their non-disabled peers.

Mental health has consistently been one of the top three issues for young people in Mission Australia's annual youth survey over recent years. The literature tells us that 17.5% of young people aged 12 to 24 have mild, moderate, or severe mental health issues and one in ten young people aged 16 to 24 have reported seriously considering ending their own life. COVID-19 has had a significant impact on young people's mental health with 91% reporting an impact on their mental health and stress levels during the pandemic. Early intervention and prevention is critical to supporting young people's mental health and needs a whole of community response, with local government having a role to play in working with services to easily reach out to young people in the area, or sign-posting young people to where they can receive support. We know that young people need to be able to access information quickly and typically on phones or devices. Apps such as the WA Youth Services Directory provide a one stop shop for young people to find out about youth services available to them.

> *"Better awareness surrounding existing aid—the help hotlines, numbers sheet we were given should be something every kids has/gets."*

> *"Spreading awareness to young people as well as the general community of these issues with an emphasis on their importance. Making mental health help more accessible, making sure more people (not just those who are dealing with issues) know where to go for help."*

Body image has also been in the top three issues of concern for young people in Mission Australia's annual youth survey for a number of years. Young people told us that peer pressure at high school is a big influence, but also said that they wanted to see more positive images of a range of bodies on billboards, gyms and shopping centres advertisements that can help young people build a realistic image of bodies. Young people said there were barriers to accessing gyms and thought that there was a role for City's sport and recreation services to play in supporting young people to improve their health and spread positive body images messages.

> *"Gyms are so expensive for young people"*

A challenge for young people in the City of Melville is that for the size of the local government area, it is acutely lacking in youth support services, such as mental health services, housing and homelessness services, youth employment agencies and/or services

or support groups for demographics with particular needs, such as First Nations young peoples, LGBTIQA+ young people, CALD young people and young people with disabilities. The City's website currently has youth-focused educational resources with links to paid digital content as well as a link to a social resource directory, however the directory is not live or easy to use, contains out of date material and is rarely accessed.

> *"There is currently no cheap places you can go to in Melville to get help with managing mental illnesses. No place to meet people going through similar circumstances who understand what going through/support each other"*

Youth unemployment in WA was at critical levels before the pandemic with young people facing increasing instability and casualisation of their work. Mitigation measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic in WA have disproportionately impacted young people's work with many of the hardest hit industries—hospitality, retail, and the arts—employing high numbers of young people. At the peak of the outbreak in 2020, 23% of all jobs lost in WA affected 15-to-19-year olds. The transition for young people from full-time education to the world of work is increasingly uncertain. Recent research by the Foundation for Young Australians (FYA) tells us that half of Australia's 25-year-olds are unable to secure full-time employment, despite 60% holding post-school qualifications. Things that help include an education that builds enterprise skills, being able to undertake paid work experience and finding employment in a growing sector. In the City of Melville, nearly 14% of young people are looking for full-time or part-time work, though this statistic should be interpreted with caution as it was collected at the last census (2016) before the impact of the pandemic. A quarter of young people told us that unemployment or underemployment was a challenge for them and many felt this was an area the City could support with.

> *"The council should be more open to having young people, most council jobs require years of previous experience"*

> *"More employment for training for young people as we are moving forward with our studies we also need to prepare for life and start getting involve with the community—if there [was] more employment near the area it would be easy"*

> *"Council could start up a grant program that gives money/support to youth looking to start up a new business in the COM area"*

Our goals

1. Young people have more options to access information or support for their health and wellbeing in the City
2. A greater number of support services or organisations visit or operate in the City
3. Young people have opportunities to build skills and create networks that lead to improved employment prospects

Our actions

#	Action	2022	2023	2024	2025	What success looks like
2.1	Incorporate life skills/employment skills (i.e. resume building, job interviews, industry exposure) into youth programming for young people aged 15 and up	■	■	■	■	• Two life skills sessions held per year • 75% of young people report a skill increase as a result of attending
2.2	Continue providing opportunities for young people to gain job ready experience at the City through internships, placements, volunteering and paid employment opportunities	■	■	■	■	• City placements offered for young people annually
2.3	Explore partnerships with youth-focused health and wellbeing providers to deliver more programs and services in the area, including at suitable events		■			• New partnerships are established with youth service providers
2.4	Explore a dedicated initiative for LGBTIQA+ young people, including investigating partnership with an external service or neighbouring LGA's			■	■	• Exploration undertaken
2.5	Set up and promote study spaces in City libraries after school and during exam periods, inclusive of positive messaging on managing study stress, through posters, books and occasional speakers	■	■	■	■	• Study spaces promoted • Libraries report % increased youth usage
2.6	Provide information to young people about where to access support services on youth related material, i.e. the WA Youth Services Directory	■				• Information promoted on more youth materials
2.7	Explore ways to increase young people's access to the City's LeisureFit Centres, including through cost reduction	■				• Exploration undertaken • Increase in young people accessing the City's LeisureFit Centres
2.8	Continue to progress the City toward Child-Safe accreditation through the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations framework	■	■	■	■	• Child-Safe accreditation achieved • Child-Safe training delivered to City staff
2.9	Continue to participate in the Melville, Cockburn and Fremantle youth network to keep abreast of issues and explore opportunities for collaboration	■	■	■	■	• Quarterly participation in the network

Focus area 3: Communication

"I think the city of Melville is doing a lot already... the problem is communication and how to let people know what is happening when and where." (Parent/caregiver)

Evidence

Rapidly evolving technology and online media is a fixture of most young peoples' lives. This provides exciting new opportunities to engage with young people, however unless organisations stay abreast of current trends, communication channels and the way young people consume information, communication strategies quickly become outdated and fail to hit the mark. Young people report that they can often tell when older people are trying to communicate in 'youth-friendly' ways but don't get it quite right. It is integral that young people are continuously involved developing youth-focused communication methods and content and selecting appropriate channels and ways to communicate with their peers.

> *"[They] might not understand the subtleties of communicating in this way so opening an employment pathway for local young people to create this content will allow it to be relevant."*

There was a consensus across stakeholder groups that there is quite poor communication between young people and the City of Melville. Young people told us that the biggest barrier to them attending City programs, services and events was that they just don't know about them (51%). This was reflected in information from parents and caregivers with 53% saying that this was the biggest barrier for their children.

Signaling inclusivity in communications is really important to young people—young people from minority demographics need to know that they are welcome and wanted. Young people talked about using photos of real people that represent the diversity of the City of Melville, and/or graphic images of people that are trending, including imagery of all body types, ethnic and racial backgrounds, with disability and LGBTIQA+ inclusiveness actively promoted. They also encouraged the City to offer tools that make it easy and quick for young people to find out more information or book places at events and programs, such as QR codes or web links. Phone numbers and email addresses on documents are rarely used by young people to reach out and make contact. Young people talked about the need for the City to build a reputation and following, that it wouldn't happen overnight, but that the City should regularly connect at activities, events, and programs.

> *"Don't use generic stock images of people who don't live in the [City]"*

"Be openly anti-racist/ableist/homophobic/transphobic etc. and ensure people in marginalised communities (and young people) know they are welcome at events/facilities"

The places and platforms that young people go to or use to find out information is age and interest dependent. Young people aged 18 to 25 are more likely to be on Facebook, with 55% reporting that they found out information via this platform, however far fewer are using the City's Facebook page (21%). Young people aged 12 to 17 only use Facebook in a limited capacity to find out about information (17%) and are even less likely to use the City's own page (5%). However this demographic do get information from posters and flyers (40%) with this being the most popular method of finding out about things outside of friends and family for this age group. For young people aged 12 to 17, parents/caregivers are a significant source of information—and when we asked parents/caregivers how they found out about information, 49% reported they use the City's Facebook platform, and more said they used local community Facebook pages (56%). The most popular way for parents/caregivers to find out information however was school newsletters (64%).

When we asked about how the City could better reach out to young people, engaging with schools was a popular suggestion, with young people favouring more face to face engagement such as chatting with them in breaks or presentations at assemblies or form / home rooms. Connecting with young people where they are at, and through other organisations that collaborate with them such as sporting clubs, faith-based groups, guide, and scout groups is a good strategy, however none of these groups engaged at all during the development of the Strategy, suggesting that stronger connections need to be built. Most of these groups are run by volunteers and giving something such as free training that supports capacity building to those groups, i.e. mental health first aid, how to engage with young people, diversity training and so on, is a good way to build that relationship.

"They can drop into schools once a year and ask young people how they can support us"

"I think there should be more contact from the City with schools. If you're keen on more youth involvement an easy access to young people is through schools and usually youths are more keen to respond when school is involved."

Finally, many young people told us that they didn't really understand what local government was responsible for, who City staff or elected members were, or what they did. When we asked young people if they had ever provided feedback, complained, or shared their opinion with the City, most had not. When we asked them why, the majority said it was because they had no reason to provide feedback or complain, however 21% said it was because they didn't know what the City was responsible for and the same proportion stated that they didn't know how to complain, provide feedback, or share their opinion with the City. Many of those young people wanted to see better communication of major council decisions, especially those that had an impact on young people.

"People should know how they operate. Would be nice to know what they do. They would benefit more from letting people know what they are. Be more inclined to get involved if there was greater inclusion from the council and greater transparency around voting and what they do"

"I don't know who's in council, I don't know who to vote for and what voting for you would help with"

"Transparency - as young people no idea what decisions are made and about the council and how they operate."

Our goals

1. Young people are easily able to find out what activities, events, programs, and initiatives the City is offering
2. The City is more connected with groups and organisations that work with young people
3. Young people have an improved understanding of what the City of Melville does

Our actions

#	Action	2022	2023	2024	2025	What success looks like
3.1	Create a City youth specific social media channel in collaboration with young people					• Social media channel is established • Young people contribute directly to content
3.2	Develop a plan to build the youth social media channel following including signing young people up at events, polls, competitions, and youth driven content					• Increase in following of 100 young people per annum
3.3	Build a database of young people (phone/email) that can be regularly contacted about events and opportunities					• Database established • 100+ young people are added per annum
3.4	Develop a distinct branding style for youth related initiatives that include appropriate images/graphics, QR codes, inclusive language and a focus on diversity					• Youth branding developed
3.5	Work with local community Facebook pages to build a connection that enables the promotion of youth-related events					• Increase in promotion of City youth initiatives on local community Facebook pages
3.6	Establish an annual meeting with each local secondary school to build the relationship, check					• Annual meetings occur • Increase in promotion of City

	best point of contact for requesting promotion of youth initiatives, and opportunities for engagement with students					youth initiatives through schools
3.7	Explore the establishment of two training and networking sessions per annum for groups, clubs, organisations that work with young people to build their capacity and skills and the City's connection					• Two training sessions delivered per annum • 75% of attendees report a skill increase and/or better connection to the City and networks as a result of attending
3.8	In collaboration with young people, identify strategies to better communicate what the City does to a youth audience, including how they can provide feedback or make complaints and how to contact a councillor					• Feedback mechanisms established
3.9	Develop and circulate an annual report to young people on the progress of this Strategy					• Annual report delivered

Focus area 4: Making a difference

"Knowing I'm contributing to something bigger than myself is often enough of a motivation for me. As long as I have an opportunity to contribute meaningfully, then I'm always keen to help."

Evidence

Making a difference is important to a lot of young people. Over recent years, young people have been integral to instigating and leading large-scale global movements, on topics like climate change, racial justice, and gender inequality. Increasingly, Government entities and organisations are recognising these youth-led movements as a force for change and starting to use their resources and reach to elevate the voices of young people and provide support through access to spaces, funding, structures, processes, and platforms. This sense of social justice and giving back to the community was reflected in the conversations that we had with young people during this consultation. Young people wanted both support for advocacy work that they were already doing, but also more opportunities to give back to their community on topics that were important to them through the City, such as environmental sustainability. Stakeholders also discussed opportunities for intergenerational engagement and volunteering to build community connection and understanding and promote positive images of young people, their skills, and talents.

"I think not only young people should be helped and informed, but adults should also be informed of racial inequality and social injustice. When I go to protests or forums that promote change it is mostly filled with people from my generation. Maybe just support existing activist campaigns"

"Young people involved in environmental and climate change projects"

"Have more volunteering options and places to be sociable with people similar ages to you in the area"

Some young people also wanted to make a difference through being involved in City planning and decision making. There is a growing understanding of the benefits of involving young people in the design and delivery of spaces, facilities, programs, and initiatives—this is typically called 'co-design.' Government is increasingly adopting this approach as 'best practice' with a recognition that to do this work well, there needs to be a variety of mechanisms employed for young people to engage with, and that young people need support, training, and often reimbursement for their time. The most common co-design pitfall is when an organisation jumps into direct engagement with young people but has not yet done the internal work around what types of plans and decisions young people can be involved in and how they can be involved in these.

"Ensure young people are meaningfully included in decision-making processes and have influence over the design of initiatives that impact them. The City should put effort into continually engaging young people"

The mechanisms used to engage with young people need to be varied so as to facilitate participation by diverse young people. They should include opportunities for in-depth engagement and also micro touchpoints. We asked young people how they would like to help inform things that the City of Melville did—the two most popular responses were online surveys (74%) and polls on the City website or social media (49%). For a lot of young people, they want to be asked their opinion, but they only have a few minutes, and so quick polls or, asking them to respond yes/no or vote enables them to do this. It also builds broad youth connection with the City.

"I always answer Instagram polls"

"Young people enjoy answering social media poll's as well as creating content in a medium that young people enjoy such as creating TikTok and memes"

There was also a group of young people who wanted to be part of ongoing and in-depth participation in council decision making. The peer-researcher method adopted in the development of this Strategy was highly successful, with the young people involved not only achieving outstanding results in talking with their peers and getting a diversity of voices involved, but also in maintaining engagement with the project and developing their knowledge and skills. A Youth Steering Group comprised of eight to ten young people, recruited

for diversity will keep the roll out of this Strategy youth-informed and the City held accountable. This group will meet monthly and provide ideas for key actions. As this group will be directly assisting the City to improve our work, and be contributing their lived experience, this role will be recompensed via an honorarium.

> *"I never understood how powerful youth talking to you is before joining a [Youth Advisory Group] and having my opinions taken seriously."*

> *"I would love to be a part of groups like this one that is in charge of making the strategy"*

Finally, a critical element of good youth engagement is establishing internal organisational mechanisms. Over the duration of this Strategy, youth engagement needs to be delivered by City staff across a number of directorates and those staff need support and tools to be able to do this work. To support this, a Youth Engagement Toolkit will be developed to guide staff with this work.

Our goals

1. Young people volunteer their time in areas of interest and on issues that important to them
2. Young people are meaningfully involved in City planning and decision making
3. City staff have increased knowledge and skills to involve young people in their work

Our actions

#	Action	2022	2023	2024	2025	What success looks like
4.1	Foster a culture of youth volunteering and contributing to the community, through involvement in environmental and other projects					• Increase in youth volunteering documented
4.2	Explore opportunities for intergenerational volunteering, i.e. youth helping seniors with technology					• Exploration undertaken
4.3	Review and rescope the Youth Development Fund with a focus on supporting youth-led projects and programs relate to issues and trends identified in this Strategy					• Review undertaken • Assessment criteria developed in line with Strategy goals
4.4	Ensure that the City's community funding opportunities are appropriately promoted to a youth audience and are accessible for young people to apply for					• Youth applicants are proportionately represented in the grants program

4.5	Develop a Youth Engagement Toolkit that all City staff can use to guide youth engagement					• Toolkit finalised • Toolkit is used by City staff to inform planning/decision making
4.6	Deliver annual training to staff on the Youth Engagement Toolkit					• Annual training delivered • Staff report increase in youth engagement in their service area
4.7	Recruit and maintain a Youth Steering Group or similar to oversee the delivery of this Strategy					• Eight to ten young residents participate • Diversity of young people represented • 75% satisfaction with group assessed annually
4.8	Ensure young people are involved with the development and implementation of the City's Climate Action Plan or similar strategies, including the establishment of any community reference groups regarding this action					• Young people are involved with the development and implementation of a Climate Action Plan • Young people are included in Climate Action reference group(s) and engagements

Delivering the Strategy

The *DFYP Youth Strategy 2022-2025* will be overseen and primarily delivered by the City's Community Development team, with input by other directorates on a number of actions.

Central to the delivery of the Strategy will be the oversight by a Youth Steering Group. This group will be comprised of eight to ten young people who will meet monthly to provide input the direction of many of the actions and guidance and feedback on their delivery.

The City will also establish an internal DFYP Youth Strategy working group that will meet twice a year to discuss progress on the Strategy and plan coordinated actions.

There are key projects identified within the Strategy that lend themselves to grants opportunities either in their entirety or to establish the initiative, and a range of funding opportunities should be explored over Strategy's duration.

The Strategy will be reviewed annually, with measures of success evaluated and a one-page youth-friendly annual report developed and communicated to young people.

To discuss the Strategy further or provide feedback on the actions outlined, please contact the City of Melville via:

- Phone (08) 9364 0666
- E-mail melinfo@melville.wa.gov.au
- Visit 10 Almondbury Road, Booragoon, opening hours 8:30am-5pm Monday to Friday
- Post Locked Bag 1, Booragoon WA 6954

About the words we use

CALD. This acronym stands for culturally and linguistically diverse people. It refers to the many Australia communities that originally came from different countries and have different cultures and languages to both First Nations peoples and Australians who have been here for multiple generations. The term isn't typically used for those people who come from another country but don't face systemic racism or language barriers.

Co-design. Co-design is about engaging with the consumers or users of places, products, and services in the design process from the start to end.

Disability.
The Youth Disability Advocacy Network (YDAN) is WA's peak body for young people with disability. YDAN define disability as being inclusive of young people who self-identify as facing barriers due to disability. Barriers can be physical, like buildings not having accessible toilets. Or they can be caused by people's attitudes to difference, like assuming that people with disability can't do certain things. This definition aligns with the Social Model of Disability which asserts that disability is created by barriers that exist in society, rather than by an impairment or difference experienced by the individual.

First Nations.
First Nations recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the sovereign people of this land; further it recognises various language groups as separate and unique sovereign nations. The legal definition of First Nations peoples in Australia utilised by Government and policy currently relies on a three-part definition including: A person of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent; a person who identifies as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and; a person who is accepted as such by the community in which they live. This legal definition can however be harmful to the diverse identities of First Nations peoples, as it is limited in exploring alternate key considerations including Connection to Country (an individual's ancestral lands and seas), Connection to mob (or First Nations communities, as First Nations communities are culturally collectivist), and Connection to Ancestors (this is not confined to one's family lineage, rather encompasses First Nations spirituality and the interconnectedness of plants, animals, landforms and celestial bodies). This definition of First Nations is offered by the First Nations-led not-for-profit Common Ground.

LGBTIQA+. This is an evolving acronym which stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning and asexual. There are many other terms that people use to describe their experiences of sexuality or gender which is represented by the plus. This is the acronym currently used by the Youth Pride Network (YPN) which is WA's peak body for LGBTIQA+ young people aged 12 to 25.

Young people. For the purpose of this Strategy, the definition of 'young people' is those aged 12 to 25. The definition of the age range of a 'young person' varies. For example, the WA Department of Communities uses the age range 10 to 25 in *Beyond 2020—Youth Action Plan 2020-2022*. The Youth Affairs Council of WA (YACWA) is the State's peak body for young people and youth affairs, and they use the age range 12 to 25.

Youth vs young people. When referring to a group of people in the age 12 to 25 age bracket, the preferred term is ‘young people’ rather than ‘youth’ or ‘youths’, unless talking about a place, event or document related to young people, such as youth centre or youth strategy. The term ‘youths’ as it relates to a group of young people has long standing negative connotations, i.e. ‘the group of youths are causing problems’ or that ‘gang of youths’. As such there has been a gradual move away from this terminology.

Thanks for letting me have my opinion heard

Whoever is reading this, I hope you have a great day :) :)

Build some new dardy stuff to make this survey do us well.

Thanks for the opportunity to hear us out.

I as a young person appreciate the City of Melville for committing to help young people

Your efforts to support youths are appreciated!

I feel happy and safe living within the City of Melville

Thank you and keep up the amazing dedication to young people in the community

A lot of the focus in Melville appears to be centered on the elderly and young families with young kids. It is good to see that the City is starting to take into account the other demographics that live in Melville.