

# Permanent Rainbow Crossing Engagement Summary Report



## PERMANENT RAINBOW CROSSING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY REPORT



MARCH 2023

**THE CITY WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE COMMUNITY WHO GENEROUSLY SHARED THEIR TIME  
AND FEEDBACK THROUGHOUT THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS.**

# Permanent Rainbow Crossing Engagement Summary Report



The permanent Rainbow Crossing consultation was open for feedback from 30 June, 2022 to 1 August 2022 and is now closed. Thank you to everyone who provided feedback, your contributions are valued and appreciated.

The community engagement was held to seek your feedback on the preferred location for a permanent rainbow crossing in the Geelong CBD. We asked you to consider your preferred crossing of the locations listed below, your preferred day of launch and about the importance of the installation being an actual road crossing or alternative options: -

- Malop Street crossing (central) – between Market Square & Westfield (signalised)
- Yarra Street underpass pedestrian crossing (signalised)
- Malop Street crossing – near Clare Street (signalised)
- Fenwick Street pedestrian crossing – near Johnstone Park (zebra crossing)
- Western Beach Road pedestrian crossing - Novotel (zebra crossing)
- Western Beach Road pedestrian crossing – Cunningham Pier (zebra crossing)
- Gheringhap Street pedestrian crossing – Deakin (zebra crossing).

Community feedback is a vital part of our planning. It helps us to make decisions to ensure the crossing is a vibrant and colourful representation of our region's support of the local rainbow community and continue to celebrate our local our LGBTQIA+ communities.

## HOW WE ENGAGED

The emphasis of the engagement with the community was to understand and acknowledge community views on the location of the permanent rainbow crossing. A number of potential locations were identified based on safety, visual amenity and feedback received from the local rainbow community.



**33 DAYS**

of online  
engagement



**1735**

Number of visits to  
the Have Your Say  
page



**689**

Contributions were  
received for the  
Location question



**415**

Surveys  
completed



**64**

People  
following the  
project

## DATA METHODOLOGY

The engagement was open to the whole community with an online platform provided with accessible capabilities. Hard copies of the survey were available upon request.

## ENGAGEMENT TOOL AND TECHNIQUES

The consultation was tailored to suit Covid-19 restrictions in place at the time, which resulted in online community engagement utilising the City's Have Your Say platform. A project specific engagement page was developed to seek feedback from our community which included two points of data collection:

1. Location question with seven locations identified as possible choices.
2. Survey seeking feedback on your preferred day of launch and about the importance of the installation being an actual road crossing or alternative options.

A range of engagement tools and techniques were used to provide different types of opportunities for stakeholders and community to have their say. The main tools and techniques are explained in further detail below.

### HOW WE ENGAGED

#### HAVE YOUR SAY ONLINE PORTAL [YOURSAY.GEELONGAUSTRALIA.COM.AU](https://yoursay.geelongaustralia.com.au)

An online HYS project page was designed to share relevant information to encourage community feedback. Hard copies of survey were available upon request.

#### WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

Open at any time during the public engagement period. Submissions could be provided by email or phone.

## COMMUNICATIONS

The engagement was widely promoted via social media on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, local print distributions and organisational electronic publications. All methods of communications directed the public to the Have Your Say webpage for submissions.

### SOCIAL MEDIA



**36,761**

Reach/Impressions

**3,252**

Actions (Clicks, reactions, shares, comments etc.)



**2**

print adverts  
in local  
newspapers

Registered members of the HYS platform were sent an email, advising that a new project matching their interest was open for feedback. The email reached 1,280 community members with a 7.58% click through rate.



1 Email Campaign Sent



1,280 Total Recipients



7.58% Click-through Rate

## WHO WE ENGAGED WITH

### PARTICIPATION

During (June 30, 2022, and August 1, 2022) more than 778 people engaged with the City about the location of a permanent rainbow crossing.

Community members were invited to share some demographic data with us, primarily through our HYS page. The following is a snapshot of these people

Suburbs were well dispersed across the region, reflecting the importance of the crossing as a permanent iconic site for the city.

Participants were asked if they identified as LBGTIQA+



Yes = 36.41%  
No = 34.91%  
Ally = 23.44%  
Prefer no to say = 5.24%

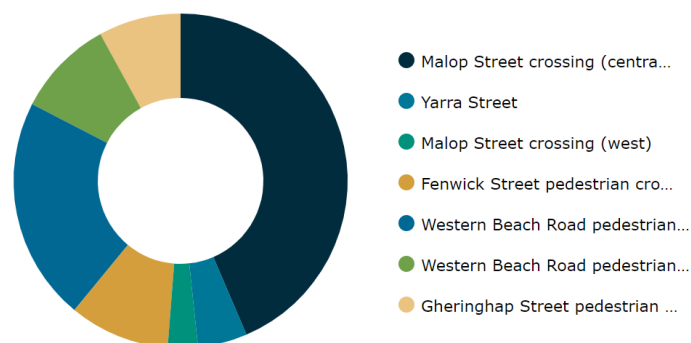
## WHAT WE HEARD

### OVERALL KEY FINDINGS

What did the data tell us?

**For the preferred location question**, Malop Street crossing (central Geelong) was investigated as the preferred location (43.54%) along with Western Beach Road (Novotel) as the second community preference.

Due to the unsuitability of the aforementioned locations and based on advice from internal and external stakeholders, the City has now progressed with the Yarra Street location due to a myriad of reasons which have been explored at the end of this report.



LOCATION	PERCENT
Malop Street Crossing Central	43.54%
Yarra Street	4.79%
Malop Street Crossing (West)	2.90%
Fenwick Street Pedestrian Crossing	9.72%
Western Beach Road Pedestrian Crossing (Novotel)	21.63%
Western Beach Road Pedestrian Crossing	9.43%
Gheringhap Street Pedestrian Crossing	7.98

For the preferred location question, Malop Street crossing (central Geelong) was investigated as the preferred location (43.54%) along with Western Beach Road (Novotel) as the second community preference.

The City investigation found some emerging factors that meant these two top selected options, and some other road options on the list above, were actually unsuitable for an aggregate based crossing and based on advice from internal and external stakeholders, the City investigated the Yarra Street location as the most suitable location. (See the details about this in 'Next Steps' below.)

## SURVEY

There was a strong overall theme in the survey that a permanent rainbow crossing is a great initiative! Overarching sentiment of people feeling proud to be from Geelong and welcome this chance to celebrate the diversity that exists in our families and communities.

There were also some concerns from the feedback that Council's money could be spent better on other items such as roads, and that the crossing could be a distraction to drivers.

### Survey results are shown below: -

When asked if the crossing should be an actual road crossing or would you consider another installation. The feedback was quite overwhelming with "it should be a pedestrian crossing", followed by walkway, footpath, steps, and wall. As indicated in Figure 1.1 below.

2

Do you think it is important that this installation be an actual road crossing or would you also consider any of the following as possible rainbow installations? Required

Ranking | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 415 (100%)

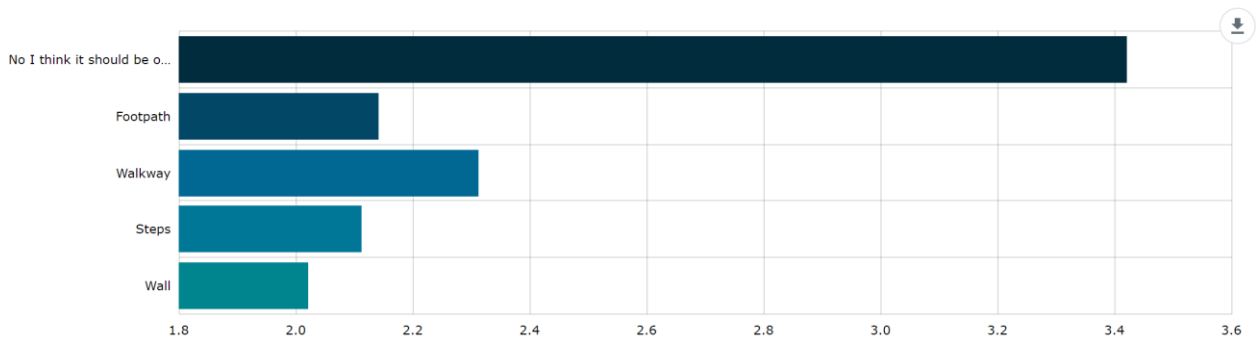


Figure 1.1

When participants were asked about the preferred day for an official launch, Rainbow Festival stood out at 44+%. Refer to Figure 1.2

3

The intention is to official launch the rainbow crossing on a significant day in 2023. Which of the following do you think would be most suitable for the launch?

Multi Choice | Skipped: 22 | Answered: 393 (94.7%)

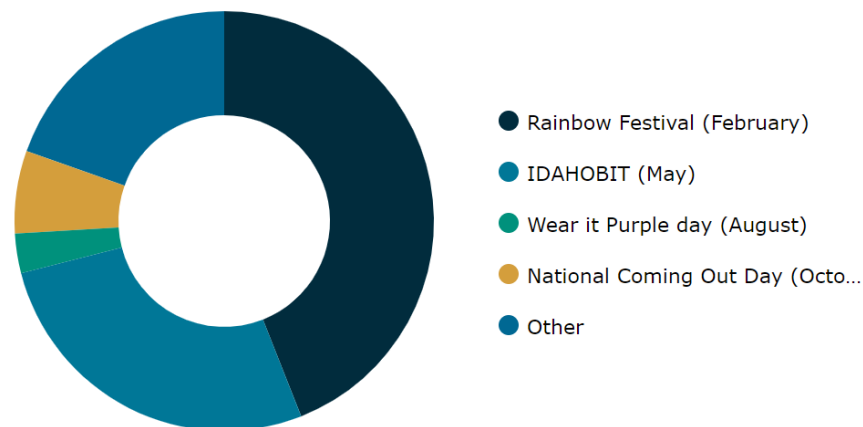


Figure 1.2

Sentiment in our community about the rainbow crossing was varied, specifically with large sections of community sharing strong support for the crossing (or multiple crossings), and then another segment of our community questioning the need for a rainbow crossing at all.

When asked if they had anything else to share about the proposed crossings, the sentiment of the formal feedback ranged from 49.5% positive, 6.3% mixed, 6.7% neutral, and 37.5% negative, while its also important to note the sentiment on Facebook comments varied with themes from the 451 Facebook comments showed that some community members are concerned of the cost to the rate payer and the greater need to fix local infrastructure like roads and footpaths.

Positive comments highlighted that the community loved this idea, wanted more than one, such a great initiative to support the LGBTQIA+ community.



Of the mixed & neutral comments received majority supported the crossing but suggested another location, different design, and why only one crossing etc.

The concerns that were raised in the negative comments were may confuse drivers, safety issues for drivers and pedestrians, not necessary and could cause separation between the community.



## What you told us - Verbatim comments



***"Yes, let's make all crossings Rainbow in Geelong! They are both beautiful and celebrate inclusion!"***

***"If it's to be on a road, preference would be a signalised crossing. It will be challenging to get a rainbow crossing on the zebra crossing line marking due to the contrast required with the existing line marking".***

***"It would be great to see this in Geelong as it would make us more inclusive of the LGBTQ+ and gender diverse community, as a person in that community I would feel proud".***

***"Gender wokeness and ideology has gone too far. I disagree with this proposal".***

***"This is a very important step to take to show inclusion in our District! Well done".***

***"I think this is not needed. How about actually spending tax payers dollars fixing the many many pot holes in the roads first".***

***"May confuse drivers being a crossing, as the white stripes a symbolic of giving way to pedestrians, unlike the rainbow flag. Could the flag be painted in a prominent position somewhere on the ground along the eastern beach waterfront area, maybe near the merry-***

***"Money should be spend on much more important thing than implementing and upkeeping of this. All it does is drive a bigger divide and another people".***

***"I am a Geelong rate payer of 6 properties. I do not want my rate contributions spent in this way. Road painting except for zebra***

[WWW.GEELONGAUSTRALIA.COM.AU](http://WWW.GEELONGAUSTRALIA.COM.AU)

***"Thank you. I think this will give people courage to be their true selves. Our diversity as a community strengthens us and deserves to be celebrated.***

*“I would love to see this in Geelong”.*

## CONCLUSION

The key purpose of seeking community input is to ensure the permanent rainbow crossing location and installation reflects the needs and aspirations of the community.

The feedback collected through the engagement process identified a number of recurring themes as well as perspectives.

The project team reviewed and considered all feedback and key themes in preparation of the final location.

## THANK YOU

The City would again like to thank those who contributed to this project.

## NEXT STEPS

Since the outcome of the community engagement, the City has been working through a range of options to deliver the Rainbow Crossing.

What we have learnt since, is that there are some emerging issues which has meant we have had to rule out some of the original choices of crossings that were included in the consultation.

Some of the issues included:

- Some surfaces such as bluestone do not allow paint products to stick and then the Rainbow Crossing then would not be permanent.
- Some paint products cannot cope with heavy loads of vehicles crossing on them. This would mean the crossing over a short amount of time would peel and become faded with daily traffic.



- The condition of the road means some roads are due for replacing which would mean these roads (including the crossing) need redoing in the near future.
- There were some safety concerns for pedestrians on some crossings as outlined from the feedback we received in the survey. We need to amend the original plans to keep both pedestrians and vehicles safe.

The City has assessed going forward the best option is the Yarra Street Crossing location. It addresses safety concerns and a suitable product has been tested to ensure the Rainbow Crossing has a long life. The City's LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee has been consulted about this option and has their support.

The City appreciates the patience of the community who want to see this Rainbow Crossing come to fruition. We aim to have it installed at the end of the year.