

PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND SUBMISSIONS

26 MAY 2026



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SUBMITTER 1. CHRISTOPER EDGE

Subject: Lipson Drive

Relevant City Department: City Infrastructure

Executive Director James Stirton

Question 1:

The community of Lipson Drive Lara would like Council to confirm what has changed with the emergency management practices that will now enable Council to respond the next emergency with the main Lipson Drive drain which has otherwise proven inaccessible to council in the railway reserve?

Response:

Thank you for your question Christopher.

The City understands the community's concerns regarding the management of the Lipson Drive drain. This section of the drainage network is located within VicTrack managed land, where access constraints remain in place.

The City will continue to monitor conditions where access is permitted, undertake maintenance within its control, and respond to drainage incidents in line with its standard operational and emergency management frameworks.

In relation to emergency management practices, the City's approach remains unchanged in terms of its operational responsibilities and we will continue to:

- Monitor drainage conditions where access is permitted
- Undertake maintenance works within Council controlled land and assets
- Progress maintenance within the railway corridor where access approvals are obtained
- Respond to drainage incidents in accordance with Council's standard operational and emergency management frameworks

In emergency situations, the City will work with relevant external agencies, including VicTrack, to coordinate management. The ability to directly intervene within the railway reserve remains dependent on access approvals.

This area of the catchment is proactively maintained as part of an ongoing program, with a high level of service currently in place.

SUBMITTER 2. TRISH GANT

Subject: Council Question & Submission Time Policy

**Relevant City Department: Growth & Place
Corporate Services**

**Executive Director Jacquie Randles &
Troy Edwards**

Question 1:

Moorabool Street currently presents as a degraded, asphalt dominated transport zone in the heart of Geelong's CBD. The road surface is heavily worn, patched and visually inconsistent due to constant heavy bus traffic, creating an environment that is uninviting for pedestrians and entirely out of character with a modern city centre.

My question is: why is Council spending money on an art installation, including one large expensive work in the middle of the road, and pulling up sections of the existing roadway, before addressing the fundamental condition of the area itself particularly when there has been little meaningful consultation with surrounding businesses or the wider public? (Which is not in line with your new community engagement policy .) Wouldn't a more responsible priority be to first clean up and repair the CBD properly? Geelong currently has raised and damaged pavers, filthy laneways, widespread graffiti, inadequate public toilets, insufficient small public rubbish bins, and overflowing commercial bins.

The Moorabool Street bus interchange itself and shelters are damaged, visually unattractive, and no longer suitable as the centrepiece of our CBD. Shouldn't Council first focus on relocating and removing the interchange and the bus shelters and restoring Moorabool Street properly before investing in decorative treatments?

Response (Jacquie Randles):

Thank you Trish for your question regarding the Moorabool Street median strip and lighting project.

As you note, Moorabool Street is a significant street in Central Geelong that is needing investment to improve the street experience and safety for pedestrians. These works will enhance the street environment, including upgraded lighting for night safety, renewal of the median strip, and supporting electrical infrastructure. The inclusion of artwork and lighting is part of an integrated approach to improve amenity.

Current data shows the road surface is within service limits and will continue to be maintained accordingly. The City will continue its routine servicing, including graffiti and waste management.

The bus interchange and services are managed by the State Government. Through the Geelong Bus Review, the City has recommended investigation of alternative locations. Any relocation would be a longer-term outcome, so current works focus on short term improvements for Moorabool Street that can be achieved with the existing bus stop in place.

Question 2:

My second question is more general and relates to the purpose and effectiveness of public question time at Council meetings. Over the last five years I have raised a number of issues during question time. In many cases the responses have been brief, dismissive, or there has been little visible follow up afterwards. I have also attended meetings where members of the public asking questions appeared to be met with eye rolling, sniggering or dismissive behaviour from councillors, which I believe is inappropriate in a public forum and discourages community participation. My concern is that residents take the time to prepare and raise serious issues affecting the city, yet there appears to be no structured process for follow up, feedback, or ongoing communication about whether these concerns will ever be considered further. So my question is: going forward, can Council explain why there is often no meaningful follow up or feedback provided to the public after serious concerns are raised during question time, and what steps will Council take to improve accountability, communication, and the way members of the public are treated when participating in Council meetings?

Response (Troy Edwards):

Thank you for your question regarding the purpose and effectiveness of Public Question Time.

Public Question Time is provided as an opportunity for members of the community to ask questions of Council. The process is governed by Council's Governance Rules, which outline how questions are submitted, considered and responded to. It is important to note that this forum is designed specifically for the asking and answering of questions, rather than as a mechanism for managing ongoing matters or complaints.

Council has established processes for follow-up, complaints and broader community engagement, which provide more appropriate avenues where detailed investigation, ongoing communication or formal feedback is required. If you feel that any of your previously submitted questions have not been adequately addressed, Council officers will be happy to contact you to discuss these further.

Where possible, questions are answered at the meeting. In some instances, where additional information is required or the matter is operational in nature, it may be referred to the relevant area for follow-up outside of the meeting. While not all matters raised through Public Question Time result in ongoing communication, Council officers do consider the issues raised and, where appropriate, use this information to inform service delivery and future work.

Council is committed to respectful and constructive engagement with the community.

Council acknowledges the importance of transparency and community confidence in this process. We will continue to reinforce good practice in providing clear responses and direct community members to the most appropriate channels to ensure their matters are properly considered and addressed.

SUBMITTER 3. ANN DANIELL

Subject: Differential Rates for Retirement Villages

**Relevant City Department: Corporate Services
Executive Director Troy Edwards**

Question 1:

My name is Ann Daniell and I reside at Geelong Grove Retirement Village. In recent times my Village has made a submission, with 145 signatures attached, to Geelong City Council for consideration of Differential Rates for Retirement Villages. You should be aware several other Retirement Villages have also petitioned the Council regarding the same subject. You should also be aware a number of people attended your last meeting to present submissions to Council. Council has responded to these various applications, letters, petitions and personal presentations. It has come to my attention that a generic letter has been sent to each and every entity with different dates, for example 13th, 20th, 30th April and 7th May, and with different signatories, for example Jennifer Blunt and Troy Edwards. My question is: Has Council given any serious consideration to these submissions?

Response:

The 2026–27 Budget is being finalised and will be presented for consideration at the June Council Meeting.

Over recent months, as Council has been preparing its budget, we have received both direct correspondence and petitions regarding differential rates, from both retirement villages and residents of retirement villages.

Council will continue to consider all relevant information, including community feedback, as part of its decision-making processes prior to the June Council Meeting.

This includes the question of differential rates for retirement villages in the context of Council's Rating and Revenue Strategy.

SUBMITTER 4. JULIE GARDINER

Subject: Planning & Environmental Impacts

**Relevant City Department: Growth & Place
Acting Executive Director Jacquie Randles**

Question 1:

The Council didn't make mention of our own personal impact with the demolition of the house next door along with our immediate neighbours to the exposure of Asbestos.

How is the Council overseeing demolition of entire houses and taking into consideration dangerous airborne asbestos for surrounding neighbours.

Our family and the surrounding neighbours have now been exposed to asbestos. As the Council would no doubt be aware asbestos is dangerous when disturbed and is recommended that licensed professionals removed this substance. Can this be tabled at the next meeting.

Response:

Thank you for the follow up question Julie. We appreciate you bringing this matter to Council's attention.

As far as responsibility for asbestos removal compliance as part of demolition works, this sits with WorkSafe Victoria. Any complaints or issues should be forwarded to WorkSafe. EPA Victoria regulates the transport, tracking, and lawful disposal of asbestos waste and its environmental impact.

SUBMITTER 5. STEPHEN WILLIAMS

Subject: Bellarine Rail Trail

**Relevant City Department: City Infrastructure
Executive Director James Stirton**

Question 1:

I am a member of Better Streets Geelong. We are an Australia wide coalition of community members and organisations who want to make our streets better. In this we consider ourselves to be closely aligned with Council's interests – we aspire to a thriving Geelong; a safe and healthy and diverse city that celebrates its natural environment and knows how to have fun. We congratulate the Council on installing an elevated priority crossing of the Bellarine Rail Trail at Wilsons Road. Anecdotal feedback from walkers and cyclists is that it has led to a demonstrable change in driver behaviour and a significantly safer experience for all active transport users. Building on this we would urge the Council to install similar crossings on other intersections along the Rail Trail. This would provide an opportunity for the Bellarine Rail Trail to complement the broader, and excellent, Kids Active Travel Program which has provided a model for making our city safer, healthier, and more connected with the natural environment. Secondly, we urge the Council to undertake a program of planting endemic flora along the full length of the Bellarine Rail Trail creating a natural corridor that would be beautiful, a haven for endemic wildlife, an encouragement for healthy activity, a place for the community to enjoy, and a pathway that attracts tourists (similar to the success of riding and waking trails in the Warburton region), with options for local entrepreneurs to establish small businesses of all

Response:

The City acknowledges and appreciates the positive feedback regarding the elevated priority crossing at Wilsons Road, which was delivered with support from the Department of Transport and Planning's Black Spot Program. Early observations and anecdotal evidence indicate improved driver behaviour and enhanced safety for pedestrians and cyclists, supporting Council's commitment to active transport and safer road environments.

Requests for similar treatments along the Bellarine Rail Trail are assessed through the City's capital project prioritisation framework, ensuring limited funding is directed to projects that deliver the greatest safety, connectivity, and community benefit. At present, the City does not have additional rail trail crossing locations on its project register, however Council is willing to work with the community identify and assess additional opportunities. The City operates within constrained budgets and actively pursues external grant funding for projects of this nature, with community advocacy playing an important role.

The City welcomes input from community groups on specific sites for assessment. Requests can be submitted by contacting 5252 5272, where a Traffic Engineer will review locations for inclusion in future planning and prioritisation.

The City has also undertaken significant planting programs to beautify and strengthen the wildlife corridor since the Urban Forest Strategy.

The current draft Urban Forest Strategy is reviewing and mapping sites such as the Bellarine Rail Trail for inclusion in partnered planting programs. This work will mature once the Urban Forest Strategy has been adopted and will identify the gaps that require planting to create a contiguous wildlife corridor.

SUBMITTER 6. CLAIRE SHAW

Subject: Kardinia Aquatic Centre

Relevant City Department: City Life

Acting Executive Director Anthony Basford

Question 1:

can Council explain whether the financial assessment of Kardinia Aquatic Centre includes a full 12-month analysis incorporating summer revenue, peak seasonal attendance, and whole-of-network aquatic service delivery, or whether current operational decisions are being disproportionately influenced by winter operating costs alone based only on KAC and; impacted by the Ledger Distortion with revenue tied to members point of purchase of their membership instead of the centre swam at potentially distorting and providing unreliable patron usage for specific sites. Example - patrons currently using KAC from Drysdale who have not purchased their membership at KAC sees the revenue tied to the other aquatic site. Given aquatic centres operate on seasonal demand cycles and function as part of an integrated municipal network rather than isolated commercial assets, how has Council assessed KAC's contribution to demand for geographic accessibility to KAC's 50 m lap pool, lap swimming capacity, community health outcomes, and peak demand management across the entire aquatic portfolio?

Response:

Hi Claire, thank you for your questions.

As previously informed, the financial assessment of Kardinia Aquatic Centre considers the facilities' financial position including seasonal revenue, detailed attendance data for whole of facility use and individual lane use, along with postcode analysis of user profiles. These data points are also considered for the consolidated Swim Sport and Leisure network.

Question2:

Question 2 - what assessment has Council undertaken regarding the operational and community impacts of reduced public swimming access hours at KAC, including overcrowding, reduced lane availability, swimmer safety concerns, and displacement of users to other facilities? Further, can Council clarify whether there is a long-term strategic intention to reduce services at KAC further and prior to completion of any transparent public review regarding the future role of the facility within Council's aquatic network?

Response:

During four days of the April school holiday period I acknowledge there was temporary disruption to public lane availability in the FINA 50m pool during the morning sessions due to increased swimming squad access. We recognise the impact this had on regular swimmers and in future we will ensure a more appropriate balance between group bookings and public access.

Recent lane usage analysis across April and May 2026 from 7.30am – 8.15am once the swimming squads have finished, shows an average number of swimmers per lane of 1.45 to 1.7 swimmers, which is considered low demand and does not compromise swimmer safety.

The future operation of Kardinia will be informed by user demand and council's annual budget process which includes transparent community consultation. There is no long term strategic intention to reduce services at Kardinia.

SUBMITTER 7. MARK CARPER

Subject: Global Investment & the Arts

**Relevant City Department: Growth & Place
Acting Executive Director Jacquie Randles**

Question 1:

I'm going to submit another statement on how we can improve our cities position for global investments by promoting civic pride and using the arts community.

Response (Mayor):

Thank you Mark and your statement is noted by Council.