

Consultation Report

Parklets in Moonee Valley

September 2022



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1 Summary

This report shares findings from a consultation on parklets that took place from 23 June until 24 July 2022. This consultation sought to understand the thoughts of the community to inform a possible extension to the parklet program in Moonee Valley as well as seeking feedback to guide policy development into the future.

The consultation utilised a range of engagement methods. A survey was available via Council's YourSay page during the consultation period, with quick polls relating specifically to the program extension available via the YourSay page, Facebook and Instagram. It is important to note that the quick poll tool was not a 'vote' for the extension of the parklet program; rather it provided an opportunity for community members to provide their feedback on the extension.

The results of the engagement highlight a range of views. Whilst there are differing views about the parklets evident in the community, the majority of respondents indicated that the existing 20 parklets currently located in Moonee Valley should remain in place until a future parklet program is developed. The majority of this feedback was gathered via quick poll tools, with the greatest difference noted with responses gathered on the Council YourSay quick poll compared with the Facebook and Instagram polls, with social media reflecting a more positive view on the extension.

In providing feedback on parklet policy development into the future, the majority of respondents strongly supported the development of a permanent parklet program for Moonee Valley. In supporting this program development, respondents highlighted increased street vibrancy and less cluttered footpaths as benefits. Impact on parking availability and lack of utilisation of parklets were highlighted by those who did not support a permanent parklet program.

Feedback also supported allowing parklets to be utilised by non-hospitality businesses. In addition, there was support voiced for 'public parklets' where community members can gather together without engaging with a business.

Overall, the consultation voiced support for an extension of the parklet program, supported the establishment of a permanent parklet program, and provided community feedback on the direction of future policy.

2 Introduction

In response to State Government-imposed indoor capacity limits applied to hospitality business during the COVID-19 pandemic, Council implemented a Parklet Program to allow businesses to extend their trading area into car parking spaces adjacent to their premises. This program was funded by the State Government and launched in September 2020. Following the success of the initial program, and due to ongoing restrictions, the program was extended for a further period. At the time of this report, there were 20 hospitality parklets located Moonee Valley.

This report shares the findings of the engagement that assessed the level of support for an additional parklet extension and the community's thoughts on the important aspects to guide a parklet policy into the future.

2.1 Key decisions and questions for engagement

The consultation aimed to assess the degree of community support for an extension of the parklet program and the community's thoughts on important aspects to guide a parklet policy into the future.

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of support for the extension through a quick poll on social media, a quick poll on the YourSay page, or through a slider scale in a survey.

In the survey respondents were also asked to indicate their level of agreement with the following statements to assist in guiding future policy development:

- Parklets create opportunities for positive community interactions and increased street vibrancy.
- Parklets across Moonee Valley should have a consistent look and feel.
- Businesses should be able to personalise their parklet infrastructure with different designs and colours.
- Parklets should only be permitted with the express support of neighbouring businesses.
- The Parklet Policy should provide for passive recreation (i.e. relaxation, meeting friends etc.) as well as trading purposes.
- Businesses should pay a fee for the use of public space provided.
- Parklets create an unfair trading environment.
- Parklets should only be provided where there are sufficient parking spaces (average vacancy higher than 20%).

3 Methodology

The consultation methodology included multiple opportunities for the community to participate through Facebook, Instagram and Council's YourSay community engagement platform. The consultation was promoted through social media, Council's website and also through eConnect – a regular newsletter that is sent to business owners in Moonee Valley.

The first phase of consultation focused on quick polls to gauge community support for extending the existing 20 parklets, whilst the survey focussed on community feedback to inform future program and policy development. Participants were not restricted from participating in quick polls on multiple platforms, and therefore results should be used with caution as an indication of views only.

3.1 Participation

The table below provides information about consultation participation.

Consultation	Promotion Details	Engagement Type	Participation
YourSay Survey	Social media, e-connect business newsletters	Aware participants (visited page)	883
		Engaged participants (contributed to quick poll 24-28 June)	547
		Engaged participants (contributed to survey)	294
Instagram	Shared as a promoted story @cityofmooneevalley	Aware Participants (Viewed story)	792
		Engaged Participants (Contributed to poll)	194
Facebook		Aware participants (viewed story)	N/A
		Engaged participants (contributed to poll)	301

3.1.1 Instagram

An Instagram quick poll was shared via promoted post for 24 hours with 792 people viewing the post. In addition to the poll, viewers were provided a range of parklet images as well as an explanation of what a parklet was.

194 people participated in the quick poll via Instagram with 73% being highly supportive of the temporary extension of existing parklets, 12% were somewhat supportive, 5% were not sure and 9% indicated that they do not support the extension.

3.1.2 Facebook

Posts regarding the parklet consultation were shared via Facebook in order to direct people to the YourSay platform. A quick poll was added to Facebook groups which Council is a participant and/or page administrator.

301 participants recorded their views from the following Facebook noticeboard groups:

- Avondale Heights Noticeboard
- Strathmore Noticeboard
- Moonee Valley Community Noticeboard
- Moonee Ponds, Flemington, Kensington, Essendon and Ascot Vale Businesses
- Keilor East, Avondale Heights, Niddrie, Airport West Community Hub

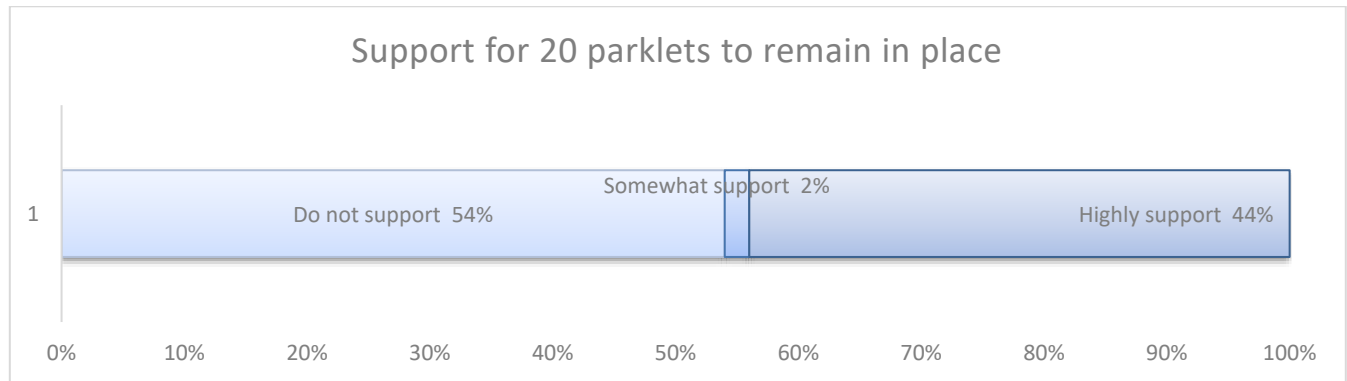
78% recorded that they were highly supportive of the existing 20 parklets remaining in place until the future program is clarified.

3.1.3 YourSay Quick Poll

547 website visitors responded using the quick poll tool via Council's YourSay page. The results were divided with 44% being highly supportive of the temporary extension of existing parklets and 54% indicating that they do not support the extension.

It is important to note that the quick poll tool is not a 'vote'. Almost all responses were submitted as unverified anonymous and results should be used with caution.

Figure 1 YourSay Quick Poll support for 20 parklets to remain in place

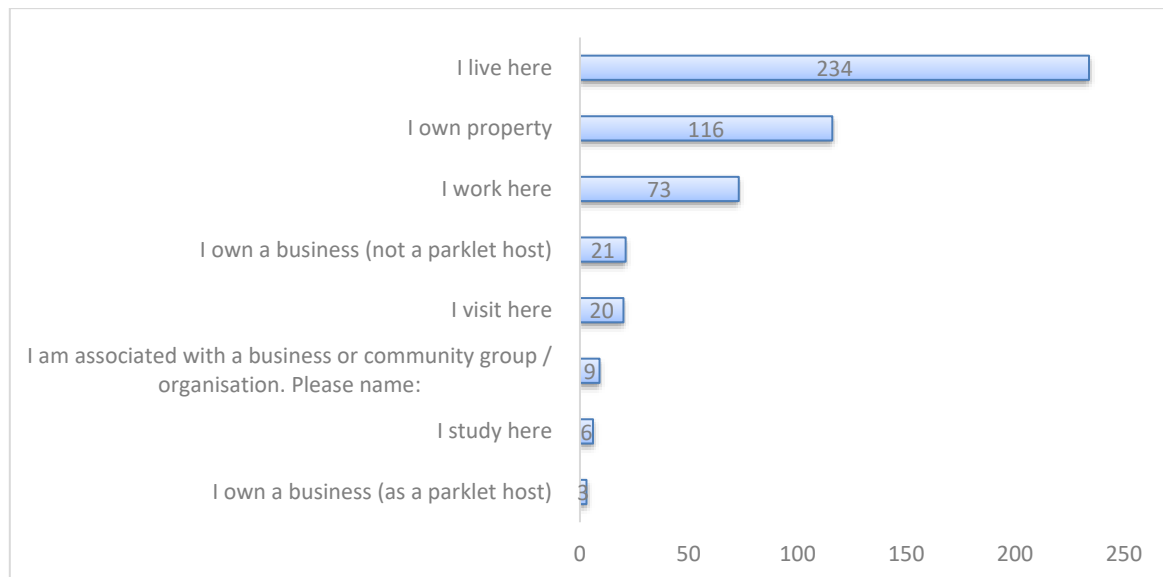


3.2 Survey respondent demographics

3.2.1 Connection with Moonee Valley

Survey respondents (482) were asked about their connections with Moonee Valley. Of the respondents, 234 indicated they were local residents.

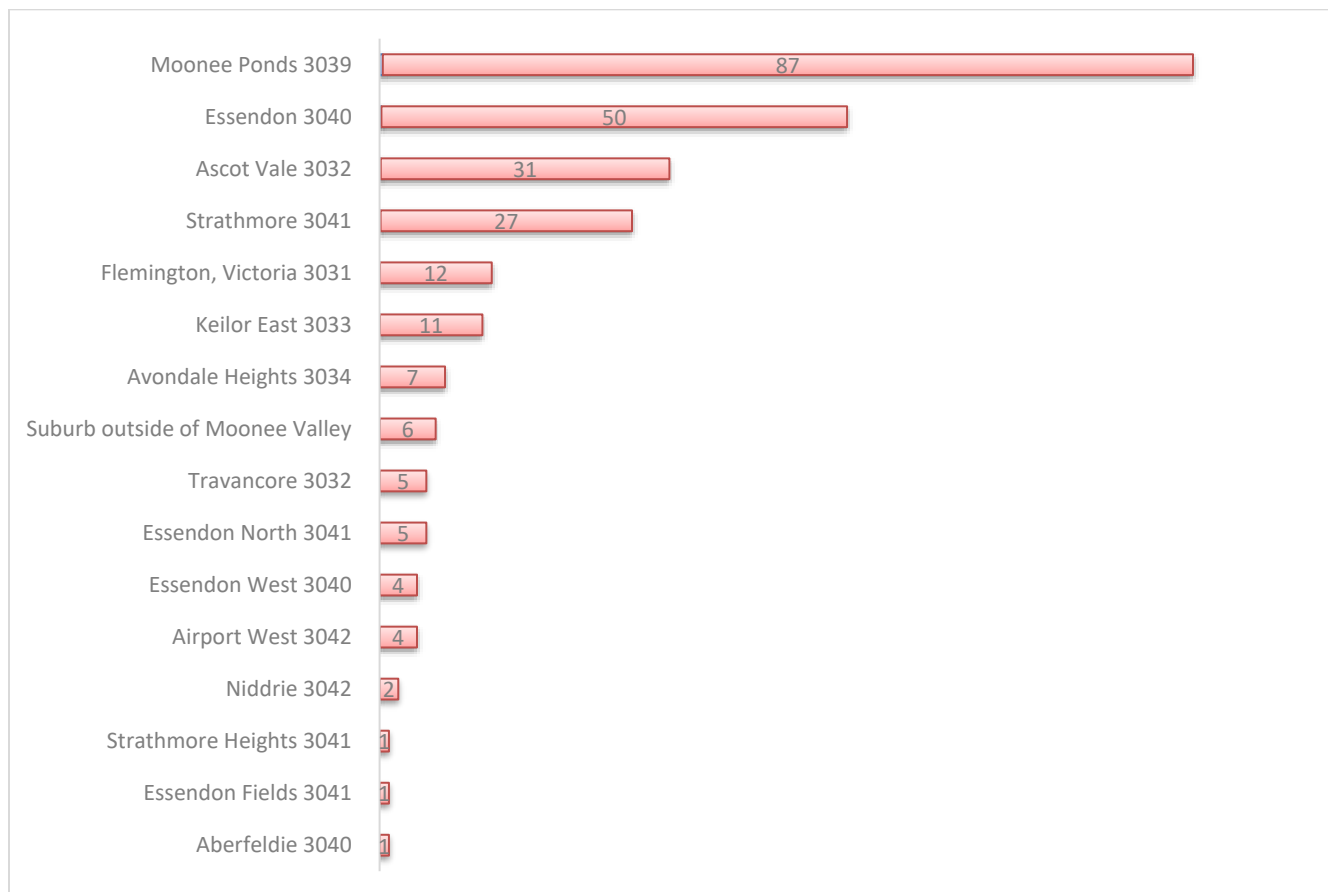
Figure 2 Connection with Moonee Valley



3.2.2 Suburb

Respondents (254) mainly lived within the Moonee Valley district with the majority of respondents from Moonee Ponds (87).

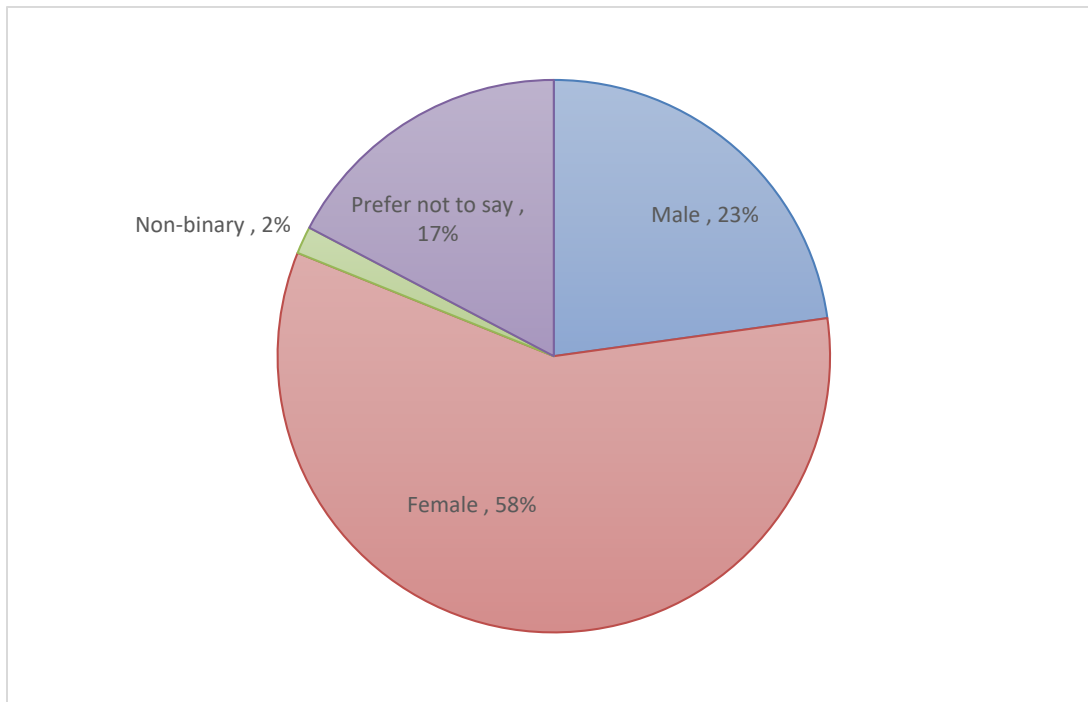
Figure 3 Suburb



3.2.3 Gender

Reponses were gathered from significantly more females (58%) than males (23%).

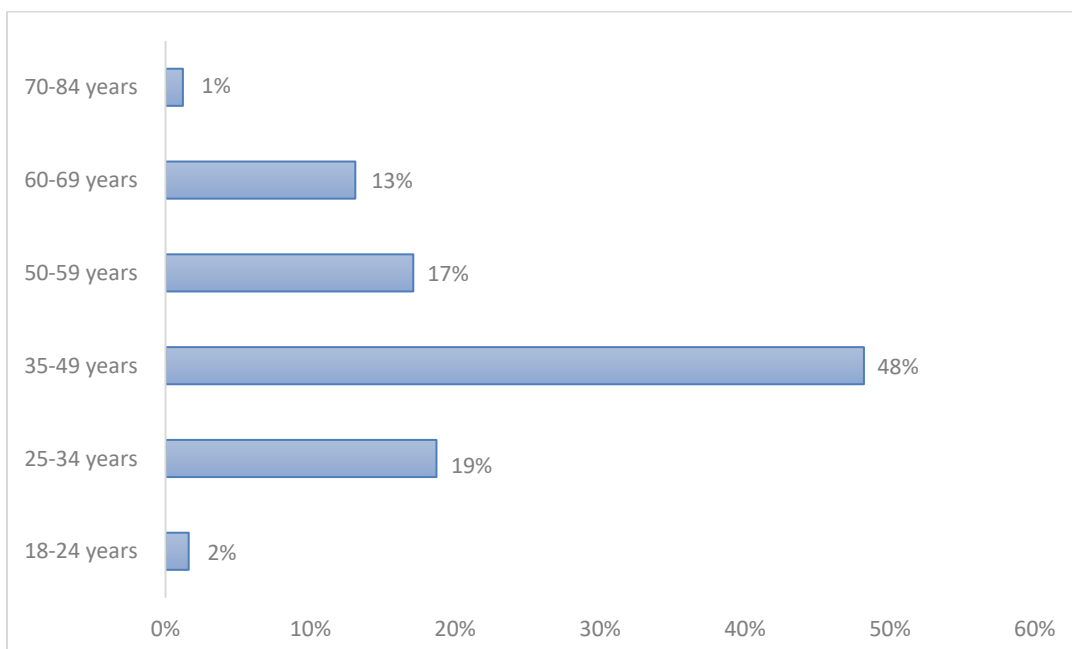
Figure 4 Respondent Gender



3.2.4 Age

The majority of respondents were 35-49 years of age (48%).

Figure 5 Respondent age group

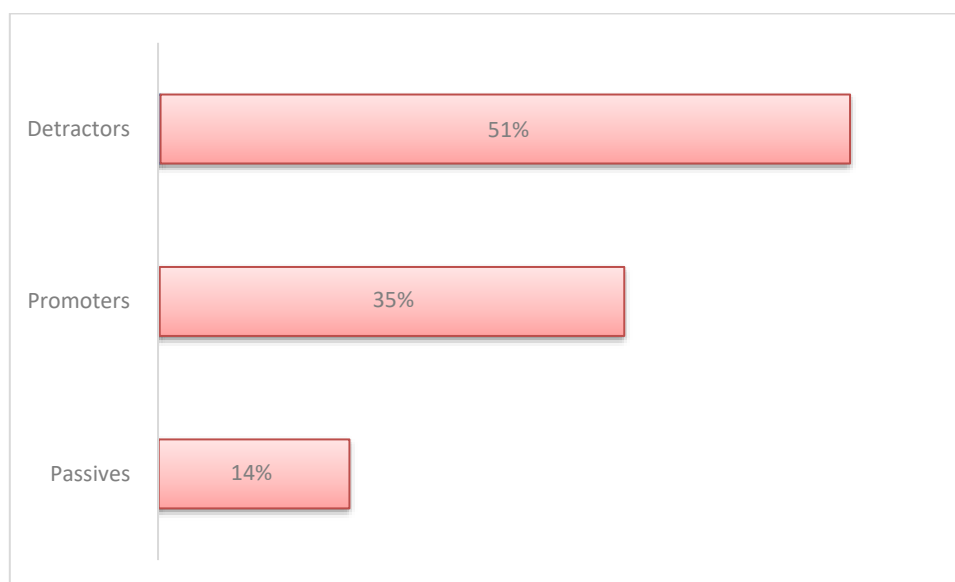


4 Findings

4.1 Likelihood for community members to recommend visiting a parklets to family or friends

Respondents (275) were asked to indicate how likely they were to recommend visiting a parklet to family or friends. The results showed that there are more detractors than promoters of parklets, with many individuals not recommending visiting a parklet to family or friends.

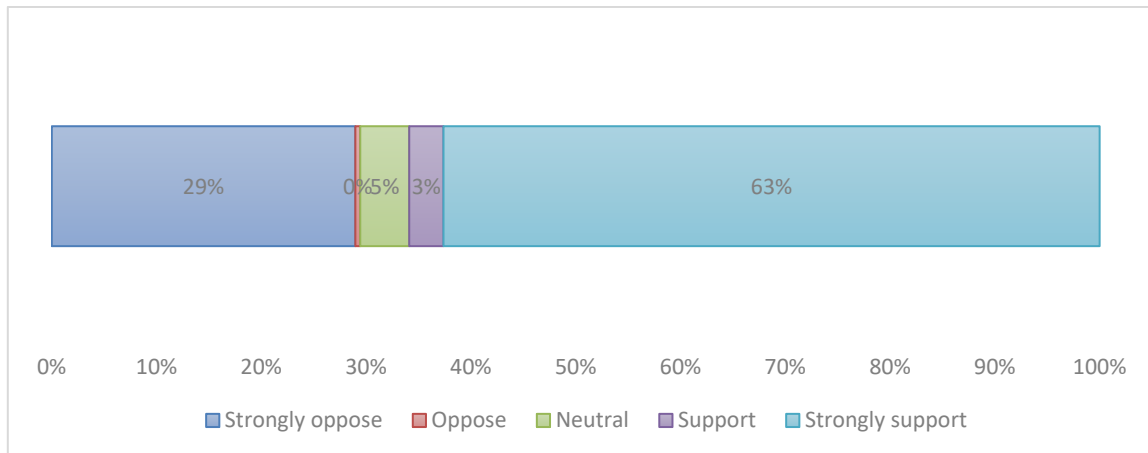
Figure 6 How likely respondent is to recommend visiting a parklet to family and friends



4.2 Community support for extension of 20 parklets currently in place

Respondents (214) were asked to what extent they supported Council allowing the existing 20 parklets to remain in place until such time that a formal application procedure is in place (estimated to be Feb 2023). The majority of respondents were highly supportive 63%.

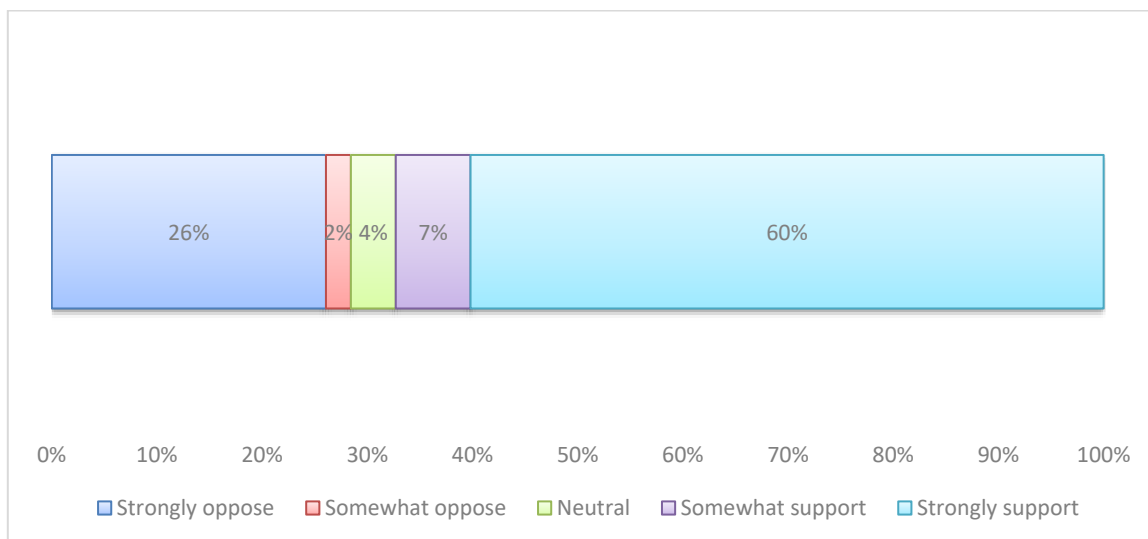
Figure 7 Community support for extension of current 20 parklets



4.3 Community support for permanent parklet program

Respondents (211) were asked to what extent they support a formal parklet program for traders into the future, with 60% of respondents strongly supporting this direction.

Figure 8 Community support for permanent parklet program



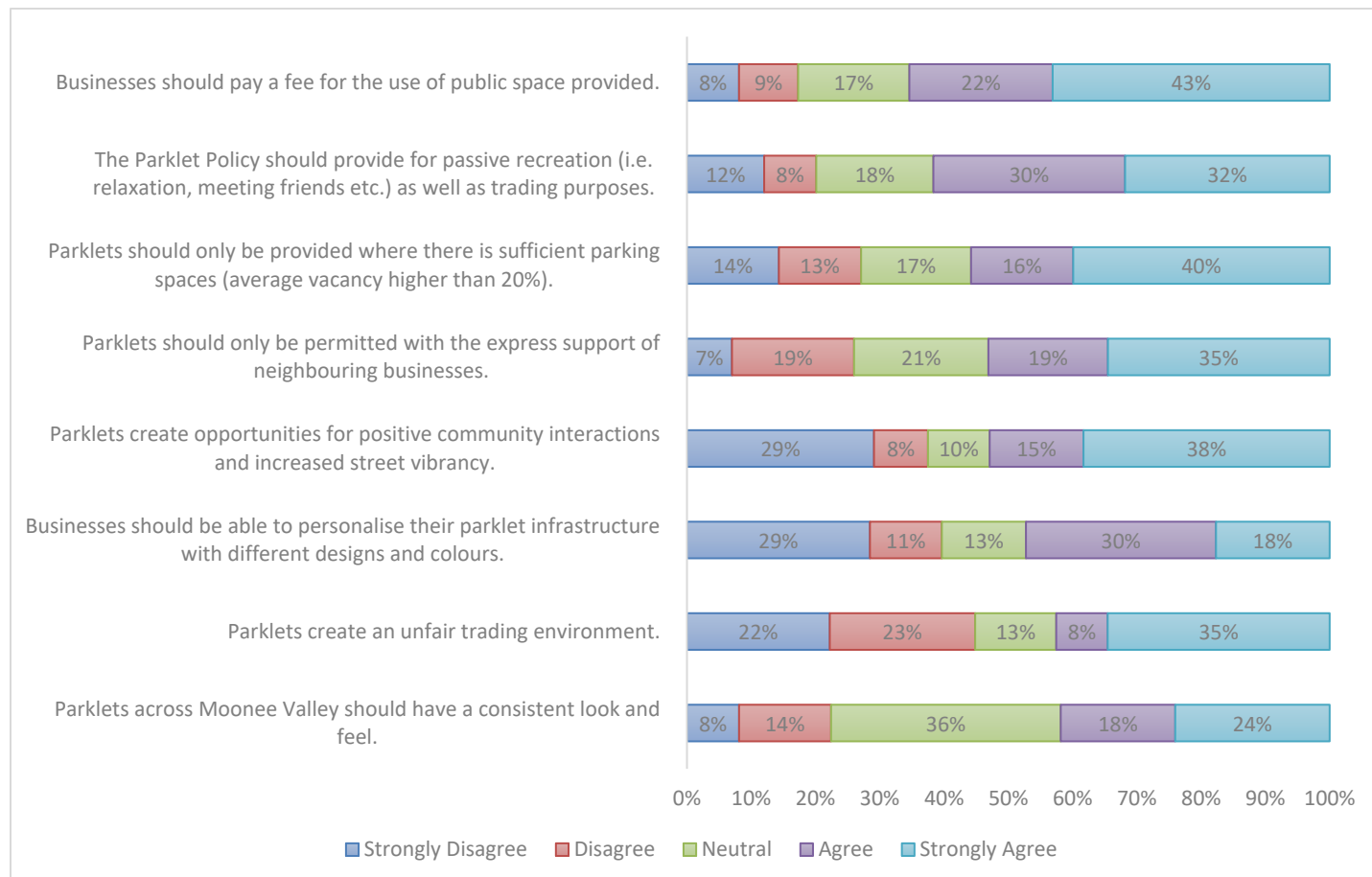
4.4 Community support for policy guiding statements

Respondents (258-261) were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a number of statements to assist in guiding future policy development. Of survey respondents:

- Greater than 65% agree or strongly agree that business should pay a fee for the use of public space provided

- Greater than 60% agree or strongly agree that the Parklet Policy should provide for passive recreation such as relaxation, meeting friends etc. in addition to trading purposes
- Greater than 55% agree or strongly agree that parklets should only be provided in areas where there is sufficient parking
- Greater than 53% agree or strongly agree that parklets should only be permitted with the express support of neighbouring businesses
- Greater than 52% agree or strongly agree that parklets create opportunities for positive community interactions and increased street vibrancy
- Greater than 47% agree or strongly agree that businesses should be able to personalise their parklet infrastructure with different designs and colours
- Greater than 42% agree or strongly agree that parklets create an unfair trading environment
- Greater than 41% agree or strongly agree that parklets across Moonee Valley should have a consistent look and feel.

Figure 9 Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements



4.5 Community sentiment regarding parklet size

Community members were asked to indicate their thoughts on the maximum size of parklets. Of the 260 respondents, 34% indicating a parklet should be a maximum of one car park with 27% indicating a maximum size of two car parks. A number of those who indicated 'other' suggested that the maximum size of a parklet should be dependent on the space, whilst 21 people indicated that there should be no parklets at all.

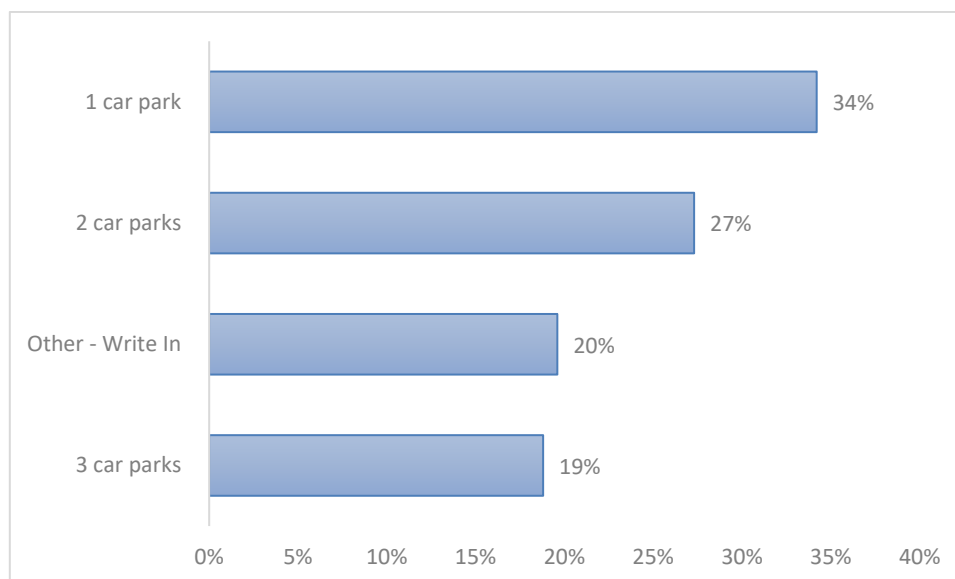
For those that selected 'other' and wrote in comments the responses mainly suggested that parklet size should be dependent on the specific location.

Based on business frontage and car park utilisation

Depends on the area. Places where there's minimal parking already should be minimised to one.

Moonee valley has extremely restricted parking as is by adding these areas you maybe increasing trade space but are also limiting parking resources.

Figure 10 Maximum size of parklet



4.6 Community sentiment regarding parklet timeframe

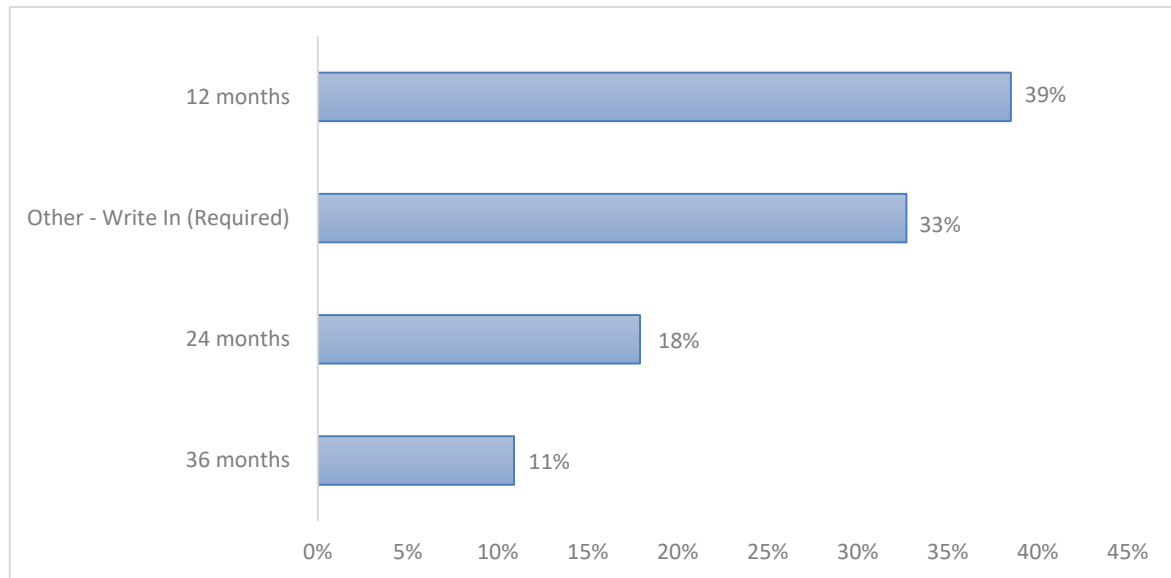
Community members were asked to indicate their thoughts on the length of time a parklet should be permitted to stay in place with permission from Council. Of the 257 respondents, 38% indicated that they supported a 12-month permitted period, whilst almost 18% supported a two-year permitted period. A number of those who indicated 'other' suggested various options between 1-6 months to allow for a seasonal parklet program, whilst 23 stated that they would prefer there be no parklet program at all.

For those who selected 'other' and provided comments the responses mostly related to a shorter 'seasonal' option for parklets.

6 months. Not worth having parklets over the winter months.

Should be seasonal review, as most have little or no patronage over the winter months early than 12 months when the parklet causes conflict amongst traders or has causes a traffic or safety incident or when there is a change in circumstances under which parklet was originally approved

Figure 11 Parklet permitted timeframe



4.7 Community feedback on elements that support parklets

Respondents were asked to describe the elements that best support parklets in local communities. They were informed that their feedback could relate to local street features or localised programs that build street vibrancy.

The most common responses related to the vibrancy that parklets build in local streets. Respondents noticed that parklets provided an opportunity to spend more time in public spaces and to meet with others, strengthening community connections. It was noted that parklets should not be restricted to hospitality/trading businesses only. There were also comments suggesting that parklets helped to encourage walking.

The name "parklets" says it - more people space without impacting footpaths. It makes sense for hospitality but should also allow casual gatherings and not be restricted to customers only. The spaces should also be open to clubs and groups to hold mini meetings and information sessions or volunteer driven activities - aka "parklet" activities.

Parklets help to make local streets more pleasant places for people, and help to encourage more walkable communities.

Some respondents felt that the parklet program negatively effects other traders and communities. This is demonstrated by comments such as;

They look do not blend in with local surroundings, rubbish plies up around them, not collected, parking access to surrounding businesses severely impacted and it is seen to be favoriting only selected businesses/cafes.

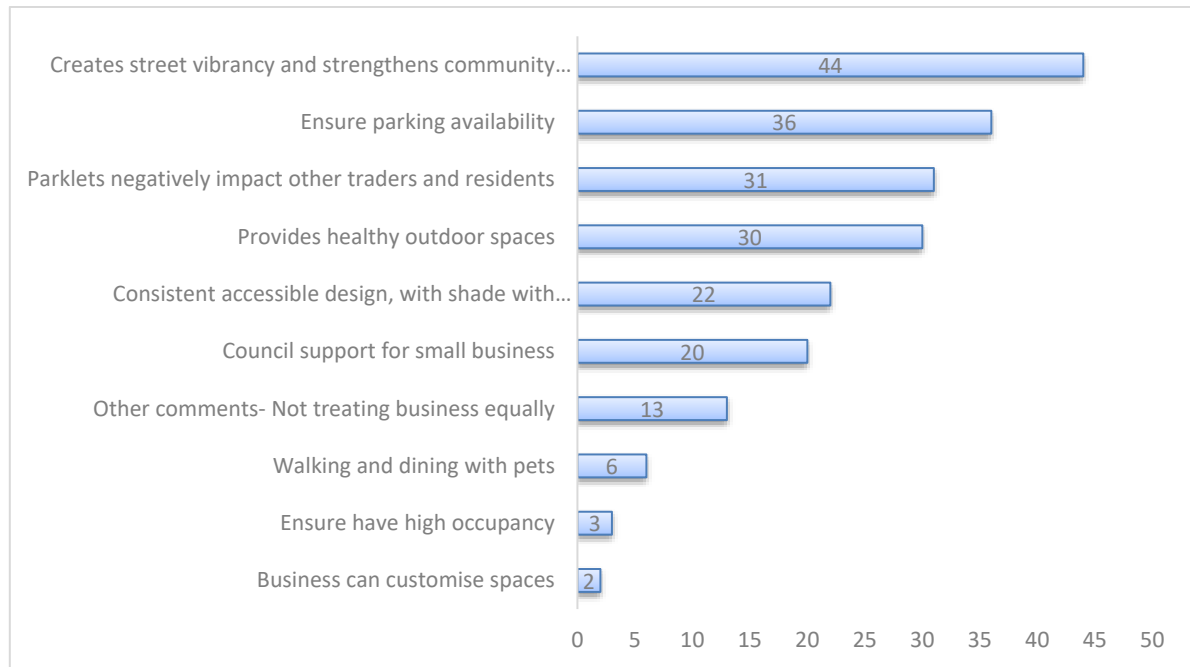
Other comments included reference to less cluttering of pathways and encouraging further greening of parklet spaces as demonstrated in the response below.

Parklets decrease footpath congestion and allow better movement, especially for disabled. They create atmosphere and encourage people to explore locally.

Break up masses of concrete/asphalt etc and make the area more visually appealing. Parklets could be bookended by natural drainage and trees (like on Union Rd), creating more greenery and tree canopy (shade in summer)

Parklets should not just be restricted to outdoor dining.

Figure 12 Support for parklet policy statements



5 Appendices

5.1 Parklet YourSay page



Home / Parklets in Moonee Valley

Parklets in Moonee Valley

[f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [e](#)

Thank you to the 275 community members who provided their feedback about parklets in Moonee Valley. The information will be used to inform future parklet policy.

In response to State Government-imposed indoor capacity limits applied to hospitality business during the COVID-19 pandemic, Council implemented a [Parklet Program](#) to allow businesses to extend their trading area into car parking spaces adjacent to their premises.

A parklet is a car parking bay repurposed to create space for people to gather or for businesses to extend their trading.

There are currently 20 hospitality parklets in Moonee Valley that were established during a trial responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Council is working on a long-term policy solution to parklets in Moonee Valley which would allow for businesses to formally apply for a parklet.

Council's Summer Parklet Program, funded by State Government, was launched in September 2020. Following the success of this program, and continuing pandemic restrictions, an Autumn Parklet Program (also State Government funded) was then launched in March 2021. The programs were established as a trial, with an initial end-date of mid 2021. Due to the success of both parklet programs, and ongoing pandemic restrictions, an extension of parklets was considered. An assessment of all parklets was undertaken, including:

- Feedback received directly to Council e.g., feedback from host businesses, neighbouring businesses, and residents.
- Observation data collected by Council on parklet usage and street activity.
- Survey results from surrounding businesses and residents – regarding the proposal of a 12-month time extension – solicited by a 50-meter radius letter drop.

The [Parklet Program](#) was established as a trial and Council is now seeking feedback about the program. We want to hear the thoughts of our community to inform the possible program extension as well as policy guiding the program into the future.

Stages

-  **Consultation**
21 June -
Community
consultation is open
for contributions.
-  **Consultation Closes**
24 July
-  **Consultation
Results inform
future policy**
August 2022

Who's Listening

Malcolm Ward

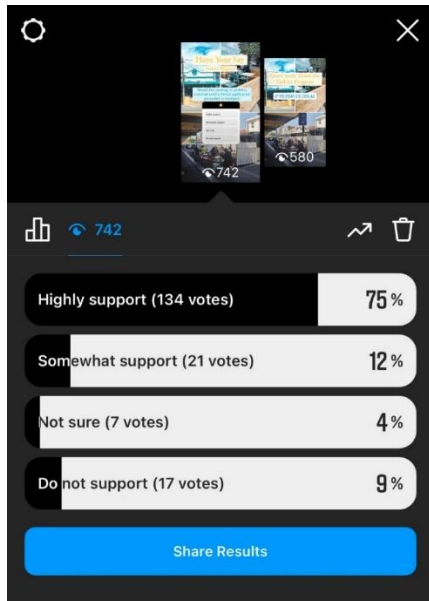
Coordinator Economic
Development

Phone 9243 8866

Email business@mvcc.vic.gov.au



5.2 Instagram Quick Poll



5.3 Facebook



5.4 Survey tool

Policy Principles

- 1) How likely are you to recommend visiting a Parklet to your family and friends?
- 2) To what extent do you support Council allowing the existing 20 parklets to remain in place until such time that a formal application procedure is in place? (Estimated to be early/mid 2023).
- 3) To what extent do you support Council formalising parklets as an option for traders into the future?
- 4) Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Parklets create opportunities for positive community interactions and increased street vibrancy.	()	()	()	()	()
Parklets across Moonee Valley should have a consistent look and feel.	()	()	()	()	()
Businesses should be able to personalise their parklet infrastructure with different designs and colours.	()	()	()	()	()
Parklets should only be permitted with the express support of neighbouring businesses.	()	()	()	()	()
The Parklet Policy should provide for passive recreation (i.e. relaxation, meeting friends	()	()	()	()	()

etc.) as well as trading purposes.					
Businesses should pay a fee for the use of public space provided.	()	()	()	()	()
Parklets create an unfair trading environment.	()	()	()	()	()
Parklets should only be provided where there are sufficient parking spaces (average vacancy higher than 20%).	()	()	()	()	()

5) Parklets should be a maximum of:

- a. 1 car park
- b. 2 car parks
- c. 3 car parks
- d. Other – write in

6) Permission to have a parklet should be reviewed by Council every:

- a. 12 months
- b. 24 months
- c. 36 months
- d. Other – write in

7) Describe the elements that best support parklets in local communities. This may relate to local street features or localised programs that build street vibrancy.

8) What is most important for Moonee Valley City Council to understand when developing a parklet policy?

About you

9) What is your connection to Moonee Valley?

☐ I live here

☐ I work here

☐ I study here

☐ I visit here

☐ I own property

☐ I own a business

☐ I host a parklet

☐ I am associated with a community group / organisation. Please name:

10) Suburb

☐ Aberfeldie 3040

☐ Airport West 3042

☐ Ascot Vale 3032

☐ Avondale Heights 3034

☐ Essendon 3040

☐ Essendon Fields 3041

☐ Essendon North 3041

☐ Essendon West 3040

☐ Flemington, Victoria 3031

☐ Keilor East 3033

☐ Moonee Ponds 3039

☐ Niddrie 3042

☐ Strathmore 3041

☐ Strathmore Heights 3041

☐ Travancore 3032

☐ Suburb outside of Moonee Valley

11) Gender

☐ Male

☐ Female

☐ Non-binary

☐ Prefer not to say

12) Age Group

☐ Under 18 years

☐ 18-24 years

☐ 25-34 years

☐ 35-49 years

☐ 50-59 years

☐ 60-69 years

☐ 70-84 years

☐ 85+ years

13) Do you identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander?

☐ Aboriginal

☐ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

☐ Torres Strait Islander

☐ Neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait
Islander