



PYRENEES FUTURES IN BEAUFORT: YOUR VIEWS

Over May and June 2017, Council ran a series of conversations with Beaufort's community to inform plans to guide urban change and development in the town. These conversations revolved around what people love about the town, characteristics that need to be preserved or built on, and what people want to see happen in the future.

We have worked with more than 100 people in a range of forums including:

- A dedicated community workshop.
- Outreach sessions with particular community groups and representatives.
- A drop-in session at the Beaufort Easter Market.
- A workshop with Beaufort Secondary College's Student Leadership Team.
- Workshops with service authorities, Council staff and development professionals.
- Surveys run online and in hard copy at the Community Resource Centre.

We thank you for getting involved in helping shape the future.

This summary breaks down what we've heard into a series of themes that we're drawing on to produce a Framework Plan to guide future planning policy and land use; and an Urban Design Framework that will guide how the town looks, feels and functions.

We have divided the themes into what people value, what opportunities people see, and vital issues that need to be addressed. Read on to find out more and for information on what's coming up as part of Pyrenees Futures in Beaufort.

For more information, please visit our Pyrenees Futures website at www.pyrenees.vic.gov.au/futures or contact Council's Planning Department on 5349 1100 or via futures@pyrenees.vic.gov.au





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Valued elements

These are the characteristics, places and things about Beaufort that people particularly prioritised.

Theme 1: Bigger town services with a small-town feel

People appreciate Beaufort's country charm, lifestyle and atmosphere; while having access to retail, health, education and other services that might be expected in larger communities.

- Need to retain population to preserve service base, and look towards servicing a population over 2,000.
- Beaufort is seen as a friendly town, supported by organisations and an urban form that encourages a level of social interaction in the town centre.
- Some would like Beaufort to think bigger and be more open to new ideas.
- The town should explore opportunities to provide housing for more families and older people, while being mindful of local character.
- There is a demand for blocks around 2-5ha, with scattered tree cover.

Theme 2: A town of trees

Trees play a special role in Beaufort: they define the town's character but also mark special places like the Avenue of Honour. They will be increasingly important in providing shelter and a more comfortable environment in the town centre in future.

- Deciduous tree canopy is not only vital to the town's sense of place: it provides shelter and cools the environment in summer.
- Defined avenues that already exist hint at potential "green fingers" extending into the town's fabric.
- People want to see more trees and more maintenance of existing trees.
- Trees are increasingly important in dealing with climate change and increasingly volatile weather.
- While Beaufort's town landscape is defined by exotic trees, links to native bushland in hills and on the town fringe are also important.

Theme 3: History and landscape

Beaufort's rich heritage is widely appreciated. This extends beyond the main street, to residential districts, community buildings and through the landscape. This heritage legacy fosters a sense of attachment between people and place, is an important part of Beaufort's charm and provides important social and economic opportunities for the future.

- The extent of this built heritage means that Council needs to review current heritage protection, particularly for places outside the immediate town centre.
- Camp Hill and Beaufort Lake are vital places for our community. They are visually important and provide opportunities in tourism, recreation and the formation of book-ends for the town (north and south).
- The Band Rotunda and War Memorial are also particularly valuable places that can form a stronger focus for activity.
- Beaufort is nestled in an amphitheatre of hills, particularly to the north and south. These ridgelines that surround the town are valuable and should be protected.
- Economic and social opportunities to highlight and share Beaufort's heritage should be explored in collaboration with community groups.
- Council and community can explore grant opportunities to assist with the maintenance of heritage assets.



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Priority issues and opportunities

Locals, visitors and people that work in the town recognise opportunities to further Beaufort's potential. Likewise, there are issues that need to be addressed - and sometimes it's hard to tell issues and opportunities apart. Either way, sound planning and urban design is vital in pursuing these priorities, many of which are interlinked.

Priority 1: Destination Beaufort

People want Beaufort to be seen as more than a highway stopover. This relates as much to the proposed highway bypass as a desire to explore opportunities to define the town's identity and make the town centre a more vibrant focus for activity.

- The idea of a destination can go beyond tourism - exploring niche opportunities in areas like training and research that the town might be able to focus on.
- More activity, interest and character in the town centre means more support for local business.
- Bring out the town's strengths in its arts scene and its status as a gateway to the Grampians/Pyrenees Ranges.

Priority 2: Places to stay, play and enjoy

Beaufort is a place where people like to stop and chat. There is a strong demand for more small spaces for people to sit, chat and play across the urban fabric - for all ages.

- These spaces do not have to be expensive or involve heavy infrastructure, but should have an element of fun and sociability.
- Planning should identify sites and small spaces that can be brought to life in a cost-effective way. Beaufort's town centre has many such under-utilised spaces.
- New estates or housing areas should be designed with access to public spaces and green areas in mind, as well as being connected to the town centre.

Priority 3: An arty town

Beaufort's growing arts scene continues to become more vibrant, and can play an important role in bringing more life to public places and making Beaufort a destination in its own right.

- Public art should be incorporated into the landscape through murals, sculptures and bollards in the appropriate locations.

- The arts scene is making a growing contribution to community life and the economy.

Priority 4: Activating key sites

Beaufort has a number of under-utilised spaces with great potential to be vibrant centres of activity.

- The railway station precinct provides particular opportunities for performing arts and community activity, as well as a future northern gateway to town
- The main street includes many blank or underused spaces that should be brought to life.
- Better pedestrian movement is vital to the main street's function, and more opportunities should be explored for alfresco dining and outdoor activity - particularly in view of the bypass.
- The old Beaufort Primary School site presents an important infill opportunity that needs to be well-managed. Many people are interested in preserving the oldest buildings on site.
- An open space corridor along Garibaldi Creek presents an important opportunity to improve the waterway's health and provide an attractive pedestrian corridor linking Camp Hill with Beaufort Lake in the longer term.





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Priority 5: Life after Five

Beaufort's town centre can be a happening place by day, but in the late afternoon and evening it can be hard to access services, go out for a meal or find things to do.

- People want to be able to access hospitality, entertainment and (to a lesser extent) shopping that remains open after 5pm and on weekends.
- This extends to locals and visitors.

Priority 6: Wayfinding and walkability

Parts of Beaufort are easy to walk around, but there is a need to further develop pedestrian links and ensure the town is easy to navigate.

- Keep the town centre's compactness and form, but focus on better links to community facilities and attractions and fostering links through blocks.
- Form Garibaldi Creek as an open space/walkability corridor.
- Ensure new housing areas have pedestrian/cycling links to the town centre.

Priority 7: Defining and beautifying gateways

Beaufort's entrances help define its sense of place. Each is unique and has a particular rural characteristic that can be brought out. A potential bypass brings forward the need to plan for a new northern approach.

- Western and eastern entrances need beautification through tree planting (including screening of unsightly properties).
- Tree planting could help build a consistent theme along Beaufort's approaches.

Priority 8: Water cycle management

Beaufort is located on a floodplain and has a number of highly modified creeks running through it. Improving the natural function of creek corridors and looking at how fresh water and wastewater are managed is important.

- Treatment plant's future needs to be considered in conjunction with Central Highlands Water - particularly in light of a potential bypass.
- Highly modified creek corridors exacerbate flooding risk. Garibaldi Creek in particular should be revitalized as an open space corridor that can better cater for surge flows.

Priority 9: Appropriate growth to keep services intact

While Beaufort provides services for a wider catchment, well-planned population growth is seen as important in ensuring the town has a critical mass to retain and potentially expand its mix of services and facilities.

Future housing might include:

- Well-designed in-fill development and smaller-lot housing for older residents that is designed to respect the town's character.
- Conventionally-sized (700m²-1000m²) residential lots in new subdivisions that are well-connected to the town centre
- Larger lifestyle blocks (2ha-5ha) with scattered tree cover that retain a level of connection to the town centre.

What's next?

Thanks to everyone who has been involved in Pyrenees Futures so far in Beaufort.

-Council's planning staff are working with consultants Hansen Partnership on a draft plan for community exhibition later in 2017. You will have the opportunity to make further submissions and comments then.

-Did we get it right? If there is anything you would like to add that is not included in this summary, please e-mail futures@pyrenees.vic.gov.au or contact Council's Planning staff on 5349 1100.