

Moreton Says Pulse #3 Survey Report

- Local neighbourhood identity
- Planning for new higher density housing
- Relationship with Council

Revised 19/09/2022 to include "...or the region's coastal edges" omitted as an example of higher density location from the published report, page 13.

**MORETON
SAYS...**



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Voconiq and Moreton Bay Regional Council would like to acknowledge and thank the many community members from across the region and beyond that participated in the Moreton Says Pulse 3 survey – your voices matter and are making a positive impact on how council makes decisions and conducts its work.

Voconiq acknowledges that the Moreton Says project is funded by Moreton Bay Regional Council.

CITATION

Voconiq (2022). Moreton Says Pulse #3 survey report. Voconiq, Australia.

INTRODUCTION

Moreton Says is designed to bring the voices of community members from across the Moreton Bay Region into Council's planning and decision-making. It involves a series of region-wide surveys to better understand and keep track of the things that matter most to the communities in the region.

The third Pulse survey of the series was open to Moreton Bay residents, visitors and those that work in the region, with data collected between the 11 July and 8 August 2022.

In this survey we asked communities for input on:

- what gives their neighbourhood character and identity
- what's important in planning new higher density housing
- their relationship with Council.

The results from this survey will help Council to:

- understand what is important to value in planning and decision-making now and in the future
- ensure higher density housing, which is a necessary part of planning, reflects community perspectives
- understand how well Council's engagement activities are connecting with communities.

ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Council delivered an extensive communication and engagement campaign to encourage community members to participate in the third Pulse survey. This involved social media, paper copies of the survey in Council libraries, and six community 'pop-ups' at events and markets across the region throughout the data collection period. Additionally, flyers were distributed to community members and project banners and corflute signs were positioned around the region. All community members who registered with Voconiq for previous Moreton Says surveys were invited back for the third Pulse survey via email.

3,200 community members from across the region participated in the survey. This is a large, statistically robust sample. For most groups in the sample (e.g. by gender, geographic area, age) there are more than 60 people in each group, allowing meaningful comparisons to be made.

In addition, the demographic profile of participants in this survey closely reflects that of the previous Moreton Says surveys. A consistent demographic profile allows stable and meaningful comparisons between this and past Moreton Says surveys.

Participation by location:

10.4%	Bribie Island and surrounds
9.1%	Caboolture and surrounds
4.7%	Dayboro and surrounds
7.8%	Hills District
11.7%	Narangba and surrounds
10.1%	North Lakes and surrounds
4.8%	Redcliffe Peninsula
4.9%	Samford Valley
9.4%	Strathpine and surrounds
5.7%	Woodford-D'Aguilar and surrounds
1.1%	Not recorded

Table 1. Participation by location

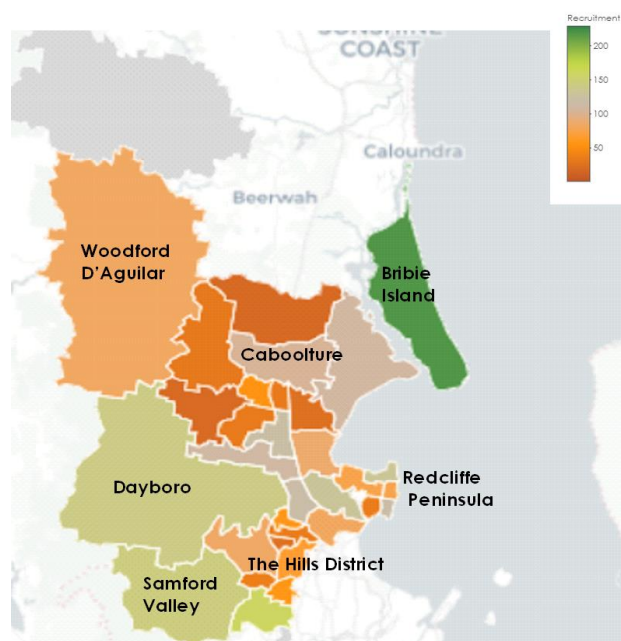


Figure 1. Participation in third Pulse by statistical area across the Moreton Bay Region, with selective reference labels.

Demographic profile of the sample

The third Pulse sample was diverse and robust, reflecting a similar participant demographic profile as in previous Moreton Says surveys:

- 58.1% of participants identified as female, 39.8% as male, 1.3% preferred not to say, 0.4% preferred to self-describe, and 0.4% identified as non-binary
- Each age bracket was represented in the sample; however, 15-24 and 25-34 age brackets were underrepresented by between 7-14%. The 45+ age brackets were overrepresented by between 4-7%, relative to the region's population
- 8.5% of participants indicated they were living with a disability, 2.6% were a carer/support worker, 2.7% preferred not to say if they had a disability and 86.2% reported they did not have a disability
- 1.8% of participants indicated they were of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage and 95.1% indicated they were not
- 94.5% of participants indicated English was their first language, 4.9% English was not their first language and 0.6% preferred not to say
- 95% of participants indicated they were a resident of the Moreton Bay Region, 4.4% lived somewhere else and 0.6% preferred not to say.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The third Pulse results are below. There were three focus topics in this survey:

1. Local neighbourhood and regional identity
2. Planning new higher density housing
3. Community relationship with Council.

1. Local neighbourhood and regional identity

As population grows, maintaining the identity and character of the Moreton Bay Region and its neighbourhoods is important to community members. Previous Moreton Says surveys have shown that community members have mixed feelings about new development to accommodate a growing population.

To better understand how Council may shape its planning in line with community interests, participants were asked what they like most about the identity of their neighbourhood and to respond to questions about the characteristics and qualities of their neighbourhood.

Neighbourhood identity

Community connection to place is an important part of community identity. Participants were asked to choose up to five characteristics they like most about the identity of their neighbourhood. The most selected characteristics overall were:

- leafy green character (60%)
- connections to bushland and/or waterways (60%)
- parks and recreation places (54%)
- friendly streets for riding bikes and walking (41%).

See Figure 2 for the responses for all characteristics.

When examining these responses by geographic area, people in more urban areas and people in more rural areas differed in ways that were consistent with their location and presumed reason for living in those areas. Those in areas such as the Hills District, Caboolture and surrounds, and Strathpine and surrounds highly valued leafy streets, bushland connections, parks and friendly streets for walking and biking. Those in more rural areas such as Woodford-D-Aguilar and surrounds, Dayboro and surrounds, and Samford Valley prioritised rural living and views and connections to open green hills more highly.

Participants have displayed a strong desire to maintain these aspects of their community and are wary of whether Council plans are consistent with preserving these qualities. To this end, when asked the extent to which community members were satisfied with Council's handling of planning for the future needs of the region, 44% were dissatisfied, 34% were neutral in their response and 21% were satisfied. Residents of Dayboro and surrounds (51%) and Caboolture and surrounds (50%) indicated higher levels of dissatisfaction than with the average level overall of 44%.

Thinking about where you live, what do you like most about the identity of your neighbourhood?

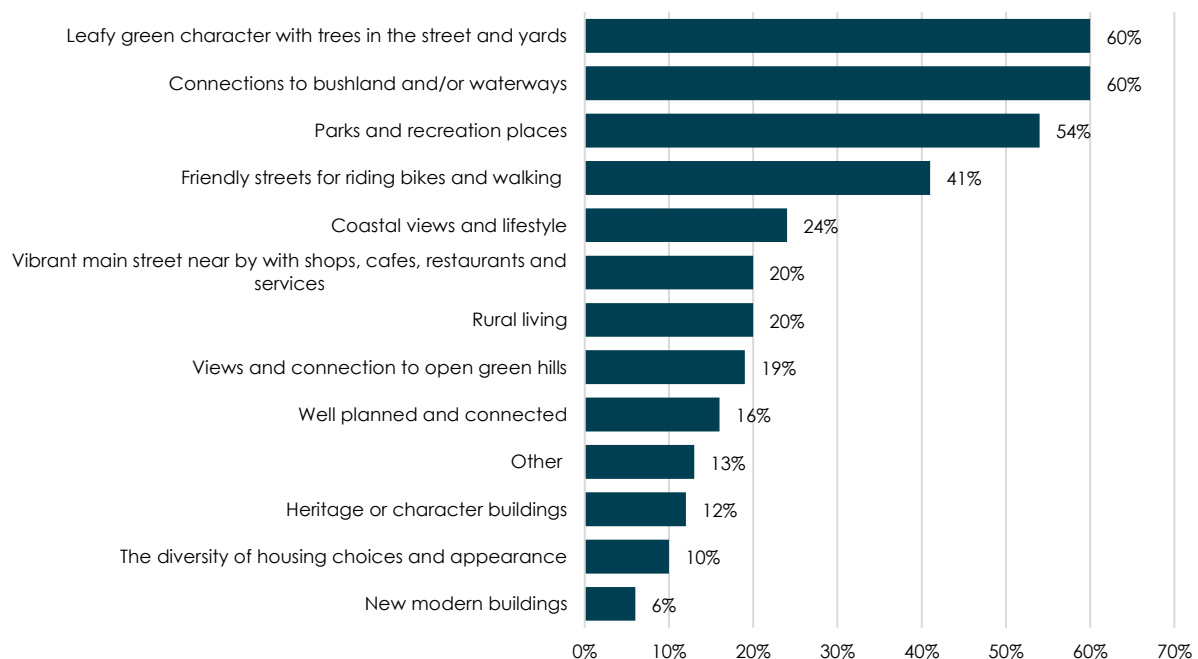


Figure 2. Importance of identity characteristics in participant neighbourhoods.

"I love living in the Moreton Bay Region...We have a lovely neighbourhood with great neighbours." – Hills District resident

"Like minded neighbours that value peaceful and quiet streets with shared areas" – Bribie Island and coastal areas resident

"I love this area and want it to continue to embrace the whole community, this means everyone can enjoy a good lifestyle" – Scarborough resident

"I live in Redcliffe and do not want it to become another Gold Coast. I love it's quaint village feel and believe we should capitalise and make a feature of its Art Deco history." – Redcliffe resident

Current qualities of local neighbourhoods

The data in Figure 3 displays how community members feel about inclusivity, opportunities for recreation, diversity and sustainability of their neighbourhood. Responses indicate residents are largely happy with most aspects examined, apart from inclusivity.

Please rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements:

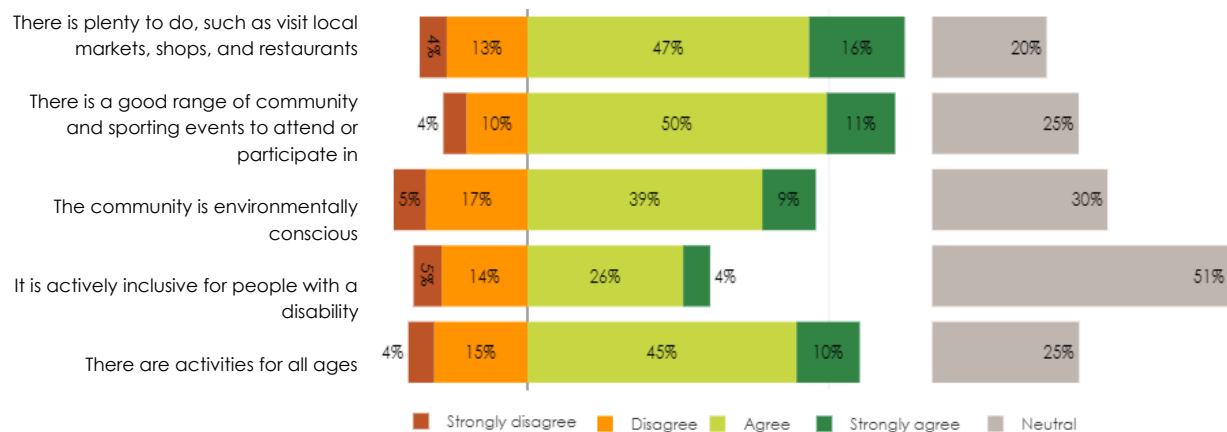


Figure 3. Frequency distributions of social amenity characteristics participant neighbourhoods

Overall, 30% of respondents agreed their neighbourhood was actively inclusive for people with disabilities, with 51% indicating a neutral response on this item. This high level of neutral responding may indicate a lack of awareness of how inclusion is supported within the general community and represents an opportunity for Council to engage on this issue more fully.

In line with qualitative comments left by participants in previous Moreton Says surveys, there also appears to be lower levels of agreement that the community in general is environmentally conscious. This is consistent with past results showing that participants feel they are doing what they can, on average, to act in sustainable ways.

Community pride and identity

Community pride, trust in neighbours, civic responsibility and a welcoming attitude were all characteristics cited by participants as areas of real strength in their neighborhoods (see Figure 4). Maintaining a sense of community as population grows received near universal agreement with just 1% disagreeing with this sentiment and 8% indicating a neutral response.

Please rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements as they relate to the neighbourhood you live in

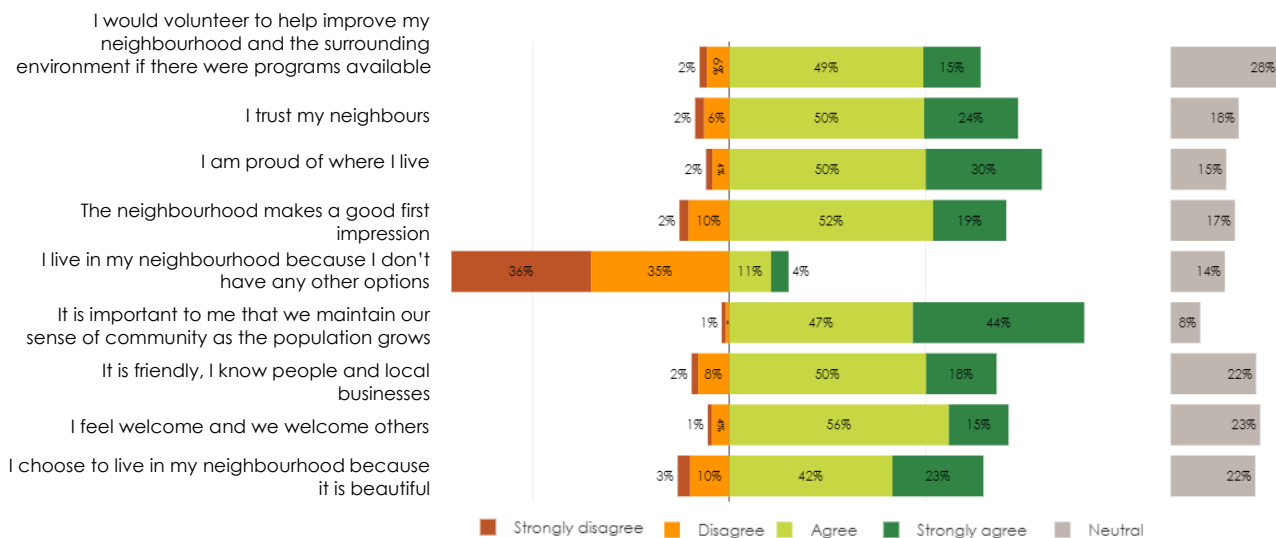


Figure 4. Frequency distributions of community pride and identity

Responses to the item 'I live in my neighbourhood because I don't have any other options' reflected strong disagreement overall, although 15% of participants indicated agreement. Examining this item in more detail, several strong patterns emerged from the data.

Community members that agreed more strongly with this statement included those in younger age cohorts, those selecting a non-binary gender category, those with lower education attainment, those that are unemployed or are students, and those residents with or caring for someone with a disability. This item may be a proxy for mobility and socio-economic status. Residents of Caboolture and surrounds were much more likely to agree with this statement, with those from Strathpine and surrounds also higher than the average score.

2. Higher density housing

In the previous survey (Pulse #2) community members were invited to share their thoughts on population growth and new developments within the region. Results showed feelings were mixed.

Acceptance of new development was contingent on the developments being appropriately located, that necessary infrastructure provisions were incorporated in planning and ensuring that environmental features of the area were retained.

To accommodate population growth while protecting the environment and limiting urban sprawl, higher density housing in areas where there are services will be necessary. The third Pulse investigated what is important to the community when thinking specifically about higher density living and higher density development within the region.

Regional characteristics in the context of new development

Community members were asked to select the characteristics or qualities they feel should inform planning for new development, housing, and neighbourhoods for the region. These questions provide good context for a more detailed examination of options related to higher density housing development.

Figure 5 shows respondents are keen to ensure plans prioritise environmental features and amenities of the region. Parks and recreation places (69%), leafy green character with trees retained in streets and yards (67%) and connection to bushland and/or waterways (61%) were most commonly selected. Well planned and connected development was also important to respondents (54%).

"Creating green spaces for our wildlife is so important. Developers should have stricter wildlife corridor requirements and be required to plant more trees between houses along streets etc" – Caboolture and surrounds

"The payoff for people living in Moreton Bay regional council should be that we maintain larger blocks, and new developments should have roads that are wide enough to have cars parked on both sides if necessary. We need to have greater investment in recreation for teenagers in our inland areas for residents rather than over-investing in coastal areas. All kids should be within a safe bike ride to a good quality fun biking area (jumps, mountain biking or pump track)." – Hills District

We'd like to understand what characteristics should inform future planning of buildings, housing and neighbourhoods in the region, as a whole (Select up to 5)

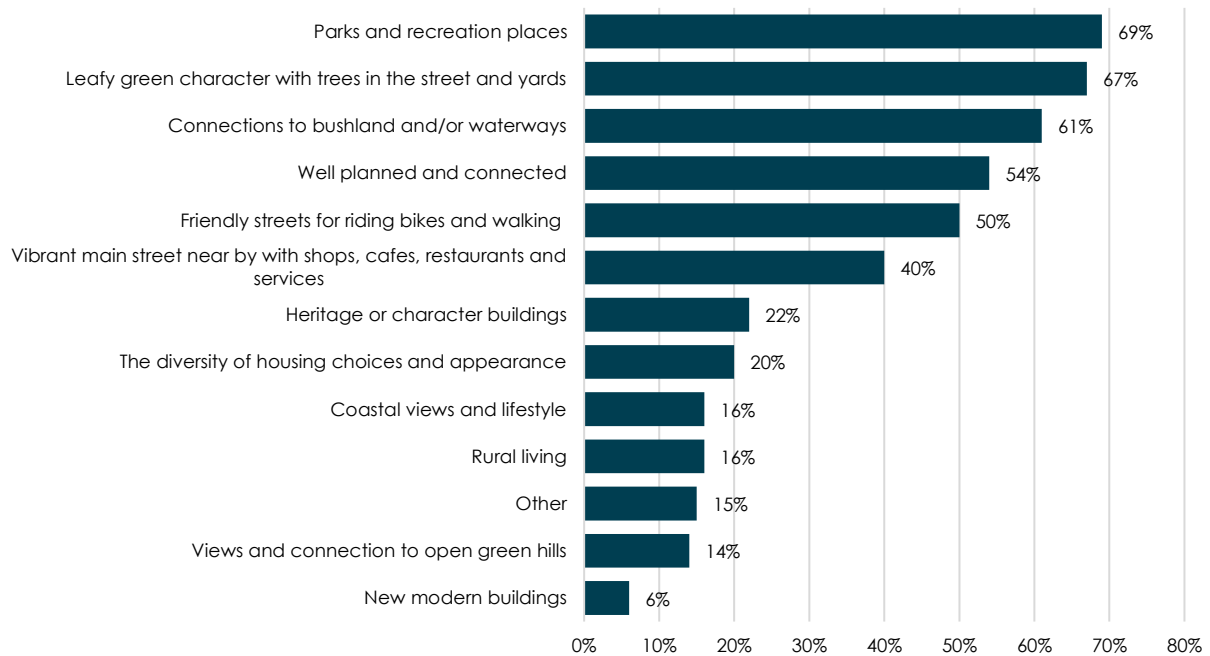


Figure 5. Desired characteristics of respondents for future developments in the region

Higher density housing

Community members were asked a series of questions focused on higher density housing. Figure 6 displays sentiment towards specific characteristics that community members feel would positively contribute to how those neighbourhoods look and feel.

Buildings that are suitable for the climate and that incorporate greenery (62%) was the most important characteristic community members want to see incorporated into future higher density development. This was followed by inclusion of vibrant, social places (38%) and the use of environmentally responsible materials and practices in construction (38%).

What characteristics of future higher density housing options do you think would positively contribute to the look and feel of the neighbourhoods where they are built? (Select up to 3)

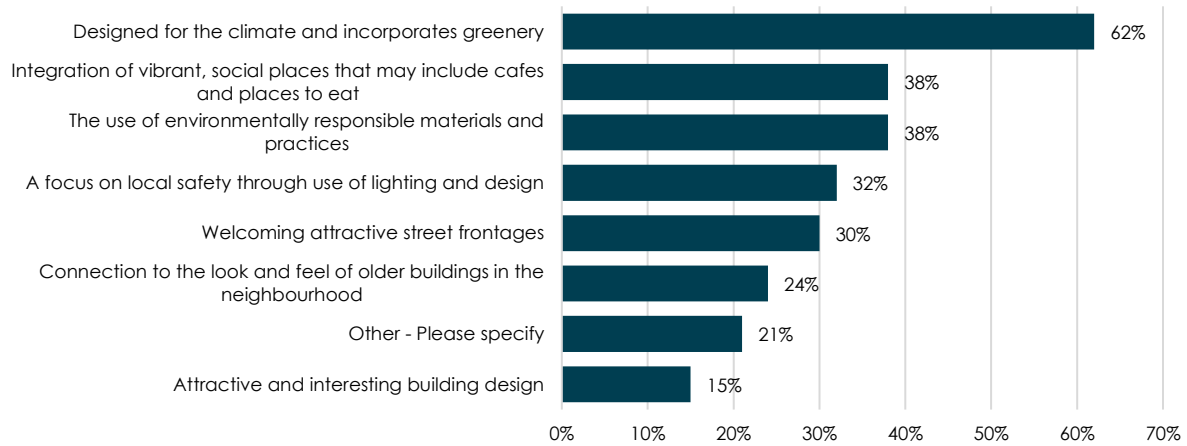


Figure 6 Characteristics of future higher density housing options that would most positively contribute to the look and feel of neighbourhoods.

Several Redcliffe Peninsula residents left comments in the survey imploring Council to preserve the look and feel of iconic local buildings in any new development activities. For example:

"We need to make sure that we don't lose the homes that have made the Redcliffe Peninsula so iconic." – Redcliffe Peninsula

However, Redcliffe Peninsula residents did not select this option in the list above (Connection to the look and feel of older buildings in the neighbourhood) in significantly greater proportions than residents from other areas overall.

Across geographical areas, the pattern of responding on these characteristics was broadly consistent. Similarly, there was strong consistency in the priority of characteristics across age group categories and length of residence in the Moreton Bay Region.

Participants were also invited to respond to a series of questions that examined the potential benefits and preferred location or type of higher density housing in the region (see Figure 7).

The majority (66%) of respondents agreed higher density housing is acceptable when it is constructed in locations that are central or close to transport. However, when asked a trade-off question about higher density development in existing areas instead of small lot housing at the region's urban edge, participants were more divided in their views (48% agreed and 32% disagreed).

Participants were also split on whether higher density housing reduces impact on the environment or helps to address housing affordability challenges in the region. Although more participants agreed with these statements, sizeable groups of participants disagreed.

"Higher density housing only works if the infrastructure grows to support it. In Scarborough, higher density has led to traffic congestion, and decreased water pressure. These may not be Council issues per se, but planning should include discussion with other authorities to ensure the infrastructure can cope with seemingly exponential growth. Do not prioritise rate revenue over your residents." – Redcliffe Peninsula

"Higher density housing is needed and ticks a lot of boxes. Makes it more modern looking, gives a sense of growth, supports local businesses with more consumers, provides options to residents, accommodates small businesses at the bottom of the apartment complex, saves green space, etc" – Strathpine and surrounds

"I applaud the Council's forward-thinking and sustainably minded approach to development in the region, and in particular the increased transparency and communication regarding higher-density development. It is a testament to MBRC's inclusive and accessible presence in the region." – Narangba & surrounds



Please rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements about housing density options:

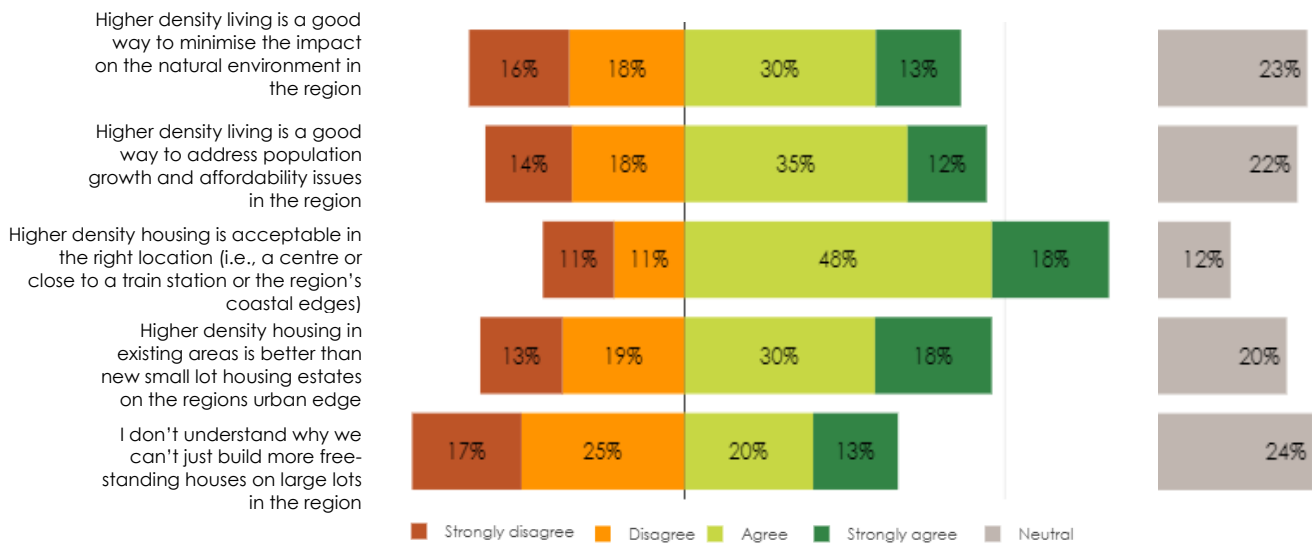


Figure 7. Sentiment towards higher density development in Moreton Bay Region.



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3. Relationship with Council

The Moreton Says program is designed to enable Council to check in on key elements of their relationship with community members and understand how these relational qualities may be changing in response to its work. These relational elements were identified in through the detailed Anchor survey. A selection of these questions are included in most Pulse surveys and those from the third Pulse are reported here.

Overall satisfaction with day-to-day services and future planning

A large majority of residents are satisfied with the handling of day-to-day services by council. The average score for all residents has declined over time from 3.69 in the Anchor survey, to 3.63 in the first Pulse (November 2021), to 3.52 in this most recent Pulse survey (see Figure 8).

There were some differences between geographic areas for this question in the third Pulse. Caboolture and surrounds (52%) had slightly lower agreement and Redcliffe (68%) had notably higher agreement with the question's average agreement of 61%.

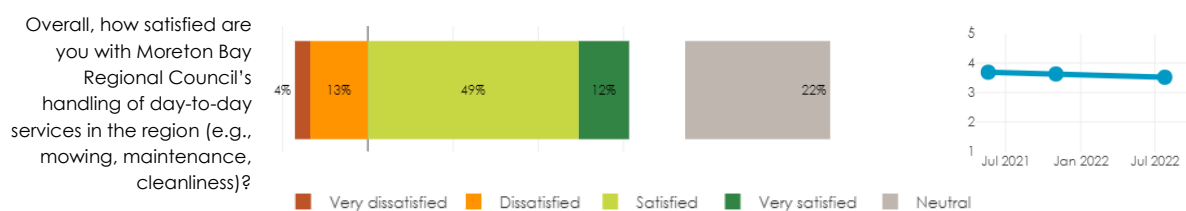


Figure 8. Frequency distribution of overall handling of day-to-day activities.

Satisfaction with Council's handling of planning for the future needs of the region (e.g., growth management and infrastructure development) also declined since November 2021 (from 2.8 to 2.64). This Pulse score is close to the Anchor survey result of 2.69.

This decline was most evident in the responses of community members from Caboolture and surrounds, Redcliffe Peninsular, Dayboro and surrounds, and Narangba and surrounds. However, ratings on this measure improved among residents of North Lakes and surround and Samford Valley.

Internal and external governance mechanisms

Over the course of Moreton Says, we have measured perceptions of governance and Council at Anchor, first Pulse and now the third Pulse. Ratings that 'External regulations ensure the council does the right thing' improved from Anchor to the first Pulse (from 2.61 to 2.87) before declining in the third Pulse (2.71).

Confidence that 'Council operates in a transparent way' similarly improved from Anchor to the first Pulse (from 2.46 to 2.72) and declined in the third Pulse (2.57). For both measures, ratings in the third Pulse remain above the Anchor survey baseline (see Figure 9).

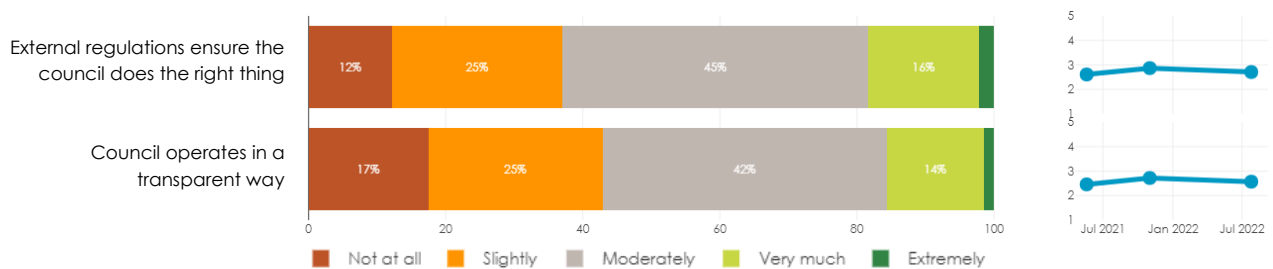


Figure 9. Frequency distribution of Council governance measures.

Council responsiveness

Council responsiveness demonstrated via responding to community concerns is an important, positive driver of community trust in Council. Ratings collected at three time points in Moreton Says indicates the same pattern observed for the governance items above with respect to perceptions that Council listens to and respects community perspectives (see Figure 10). An improvement from Anchor to the first Pulse was observed on this measure (from 2.81 to 2.99) followed by a decline in the second Pulse (2.85).

Community perceptions regarding Council's willingness to change its practices in response to community concerns remained steady at the third Pulse (2.71).

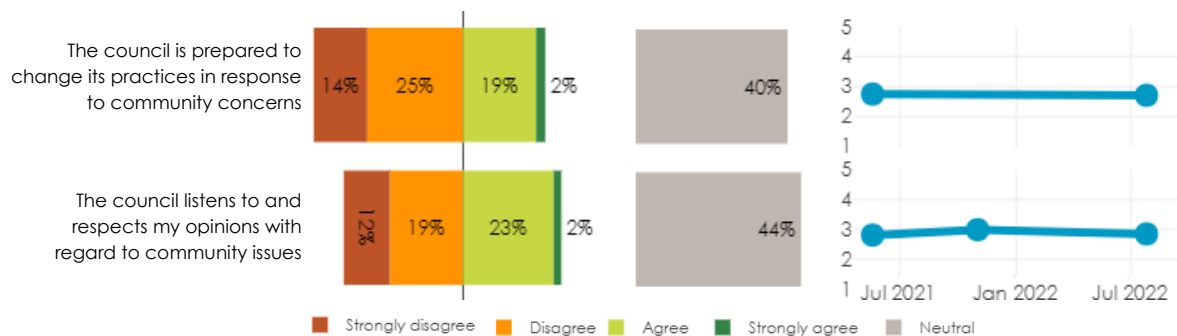


Figure 10. Frequency distributions and averages over-time for council responsiveness

In general, scores on both measures remain below the midpoint of the scale. There is an opportunity to improve ratings through engaging community members indicating 'neutral' scores on both. Neutral scores represent 40-44% of respondents, indicating many community members do not have strong views around the extent to which Council is taking their views on board and using them to shape their plans and actions.

Contact quality

A slight decline in contact quality was observed in the third Pulse, with the average rating dropping from 3.79 to 3.69 (see Figure 11).

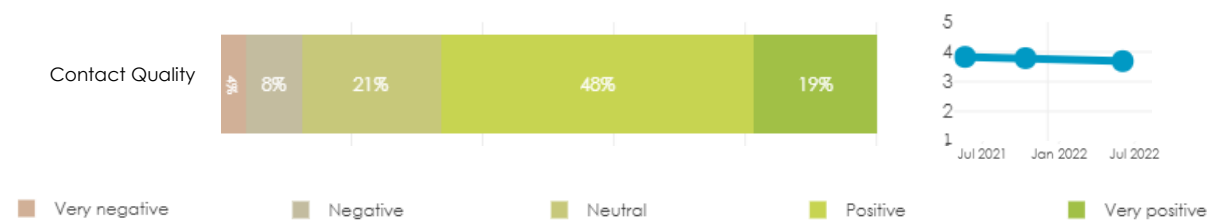


Figure 11. Frequency distribution and average over-time for contact quality.

67% of participants who interacted with Council reported positive or very positive contact quality, with only 12% reporting negative contact quality. These are strong ratings and demonstrate that where community members have interactions with Council, they are largely positive in nature.



Trust and approval

Trust and approval declined in the third Pulse to levels below the Anchor baseline. Community approval of Council dropped to 2.85 in the third Pulse after increasing to 3.05 in the first Pulse from a baseline level of 2.96 in the Anchor survey.

Community trust in Council to act responsibly also dropped in the third Pulse to 2.66, down from 2.87 in the first Pulse and 2.84 at the Anchor survey. Together, these results show the results of declines in drivers of trust including contact quality, ratings governance, satisfaction with service delivery and planning, and Council responsiveness. There is work for Council to do to reverse this trend.

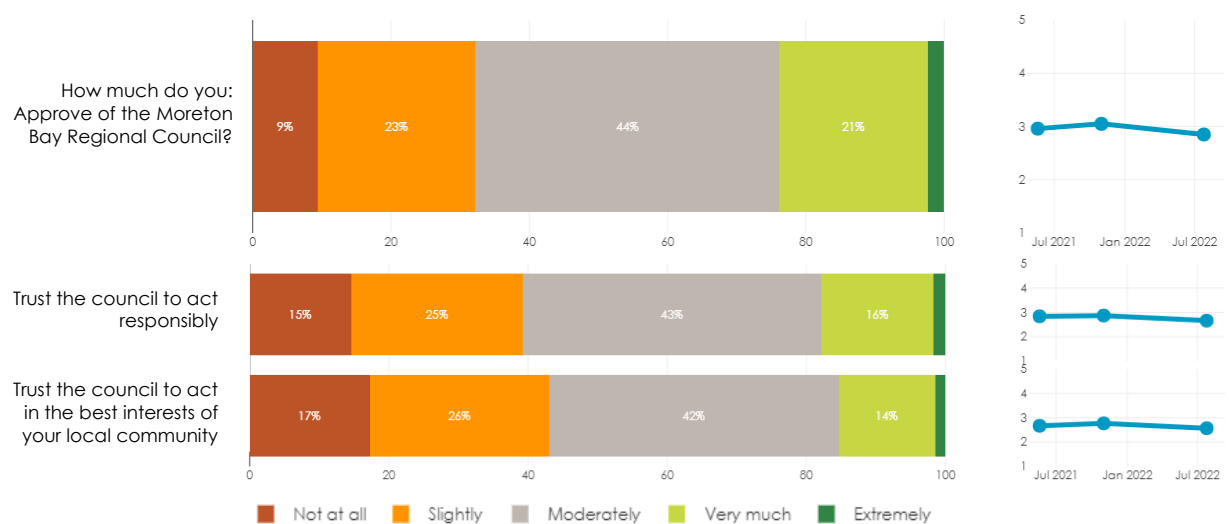


Figure 12. Approval and trust frequency distributions for Pulse #3 and average ratings over time.

"This survey is not unlike many taken before. It asks the right questions. But based on the Council's past experience, I have no confidence it will pay the slightest attention to the opinions expressed here. Council is supposed to have a Plan to guide decisions on development. But in my neighbourhood, that plan is routinely ignored and on-compliant developments are routinely approved" – Bribie Island & surrounds resident

"I feel tokenistic opportunities (such as these surveys) are created to say, "the people have been consulted" and had the opportunity to voice their concern." – Woodford D'Aguilar and surrounds

CONCLUSION

The third Pulse in the Moreton Says program focused on community identity and attitudes toward higher density housing options across the region. We also examined several key relationship metrics to track changes across time in those measures that drive trust and approval of Council.

In the third Pulse we observed continued growth in community participation in the pulse survey component of the program. The 3,200 participants in this Pulse is an increase of 577 participants from the second Pulse and 716 more participants than were recorded in the first Pulse, representing strong organic growth in participation. The third Pulse sample size is 76% of the Moreton Says Anchor survey sample.

This survey showed clearly when community members think about what they value in the identity and character of their neighbourhood and region, environmental values and amenity are dominant. Council can take from these and past results that all decisions and considerations regarding planning, managing population growth, the construction of new neighbourhoods or increasing density of existing residential areas must incorporate environmental value to meet community expectations.

Planning for higher density housing is an area of particular interest for community members, especially among participants that live in areas where such development has already taken place. For those residents, faith in Council to deliver positive outcomes for existing residents is lower than among residents of other parts of the region. One challenge identified through the third Pulse focal topic is the need for Council to help community members to understand the breadth and diversity of what it means by 'higher density'.

High levels of neutral scores and even comments on Moreton Says Facebook posts advertising this Pulse survey show there may be a narrow view about what higher density entails. Helping community members to understand the diversity of options in managing an increasing population, while maintaining the character and identity of existing neighbourhoods is a clear and present challenge.

Relationship measures included in the third Pulse showed community ratings have generally declined slightly since November 2021. This has led to a decline in trust and approval of Council. Through engagement with key relevant issues to community members (e.g. planning effectively for higher density residential living) is a key opportunity for Council to address this decline through demonstrating responsiveness and transparency.



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