

Annual Plan and Budget Priorities 2027-2028 community engagement report

Through July and August 2026, we conducted a community engagement program to identify which services are most valued by our community, and which actions they would like Council to prioritise to improve Knox in 2027-2028. The engagement program ran from 22 July to 23 August 2026.

Our 2027-2028 Annual Plan and Budget engagement had three distinct purposes:

- To inform our 2027-2028 Budget and future budgets
- To inform the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan year three actions and performance measure targets
- To inform our annual service planning program for 2027-2028.

In addition to these community engagement results, there are several other inputs that will inform the 2027-2028 Annual Plan and Budget including:

- Community engagement results from the development of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.
- Changes to the external environment including reforms, cost of living changes, population trends.
- Risk assessments, legislative requirements, service planning and reviews, community satisfaction data, voice of customer data, service performance trends, complaints, and changes in service volumes.

Engagement approach

The engagement program was designed to capture input from people motivated to participate through Council's online engagement page, while also reaching a broader cross-section of the community through five pop-up activities held at locations across the municipality. Targeted engagement activities, including representation from ten Advisory Committees through a Multi-Advisory Committee workshop, ensured the perspectives of key audiences were captured.

The engagement captured feedback through the following activities:

- Budget allocation / voting to understand what services they believe the community value the most
- Question to propose actions for the Annual Plan and Budget 2027-2028 including location where relevant
- Formal written submissions.

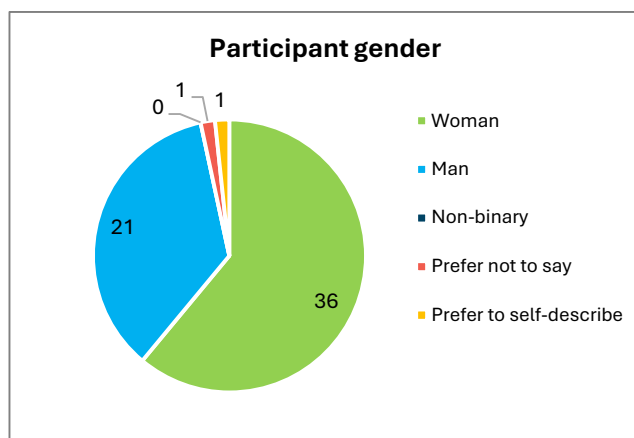
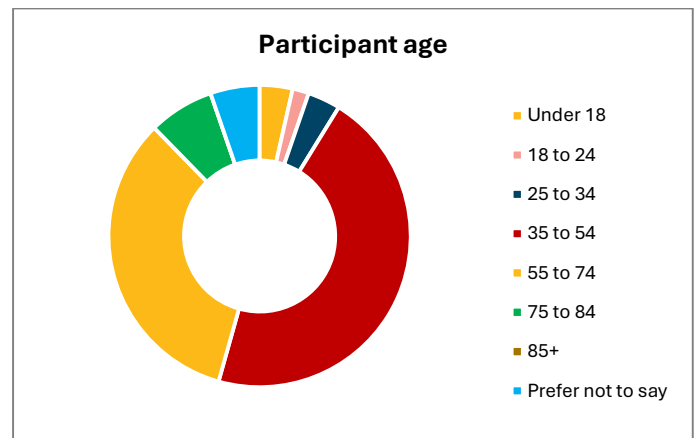
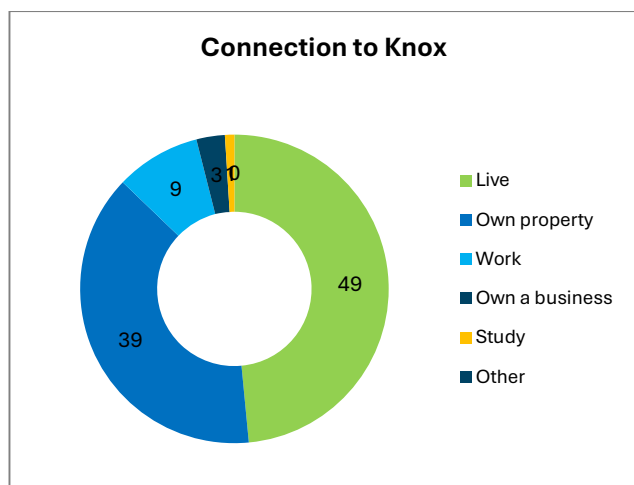
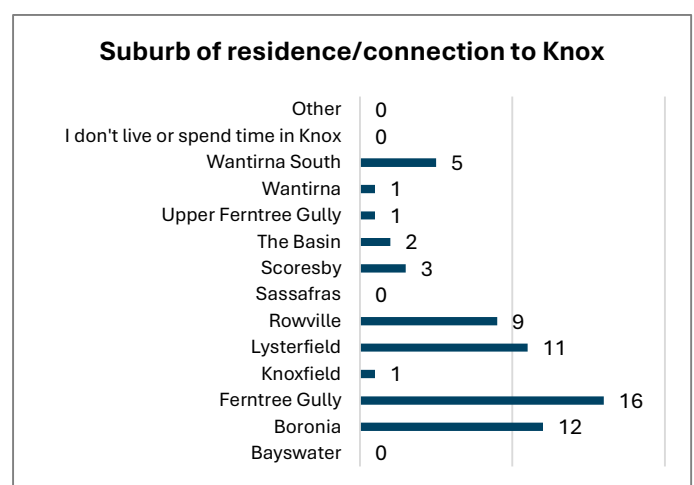
Who completed the activities?

- 413 participants from the Knox community
- Eight members of the community submitted a public submission, with 6 of these 8 members of the community requesting to attend the public submission meeting
- Approximately 35 children submitted a drawing at various pop-ups sessions.

The demographic profile of respondents to the online survey is summarised in the following charts, noting demographic data was not collected at the pop-up activities. Respondents were asked to provide their connection to Knox and relevant suburb; all other demographic information was voluntary.

It is important to note that the feedback obtained through this engagement activity is not statistically representative of the Knox community as a whole. The findings should therefore be considered indicative of the views of participating community members rather than a definitive representation of broader community sentiment.

In contrast, the extensive engagement undertaken in 2024 as part of the development of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 involved a broader and more diverse cross-section of the community, including a representative deliberative panel, and was designed to provide a statistically representative understanding of community priorities. As a result, the findings from that engagement process remain the most comprehensive and representative reflection of community views across Knox.



Breakdown of Activities

1. Service Budgeting – Which services do you think the community value the most?

Using the 'Fund It' tool, participants were asked to identify which services they believe are most valued by the community by allocating a budget across Council's 24 customer facing services, each supported by a description to aid understanding, and asked to allocate a total budget of \$1,000 across these services. It is important to note

that some Council services are legislatively required or essential to Council's operation and must be delivered regardless of how they are ranked. This engagement activity was selected because it provided a simple and accessible method for community members to participate in a values-based ranking exercise. Participants were allocated a notional dollar amount to distribute across Council services, enabling them to indicate the relative value they place on each service. The dollar values are intended to reflect perceived community value and should be interpreted as an indication of both the community's desire for Council investment in a service and the importance placed on Council's advocacy role in that area.

2. Actions and Ideas - *What actions would you like to see as a priority to improve Knox in 2027-2028?*

Participants were given the opportunity to share what actions they would like to see as a priority to improve Knox in 2027-2028 and support delivery of the Council Plan and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029.

Participants were invited to indicate whether their suggested action or project related to a specific location within Knox. Where applicable, a mapping tool was provided to enable respondents to identify the exact location.

Participants were also invited to provide any additional comments, including suggestions for future priorities, projects or initiatives that Council should consider beyond 2027-2028, as well as feedback on the survey questions.

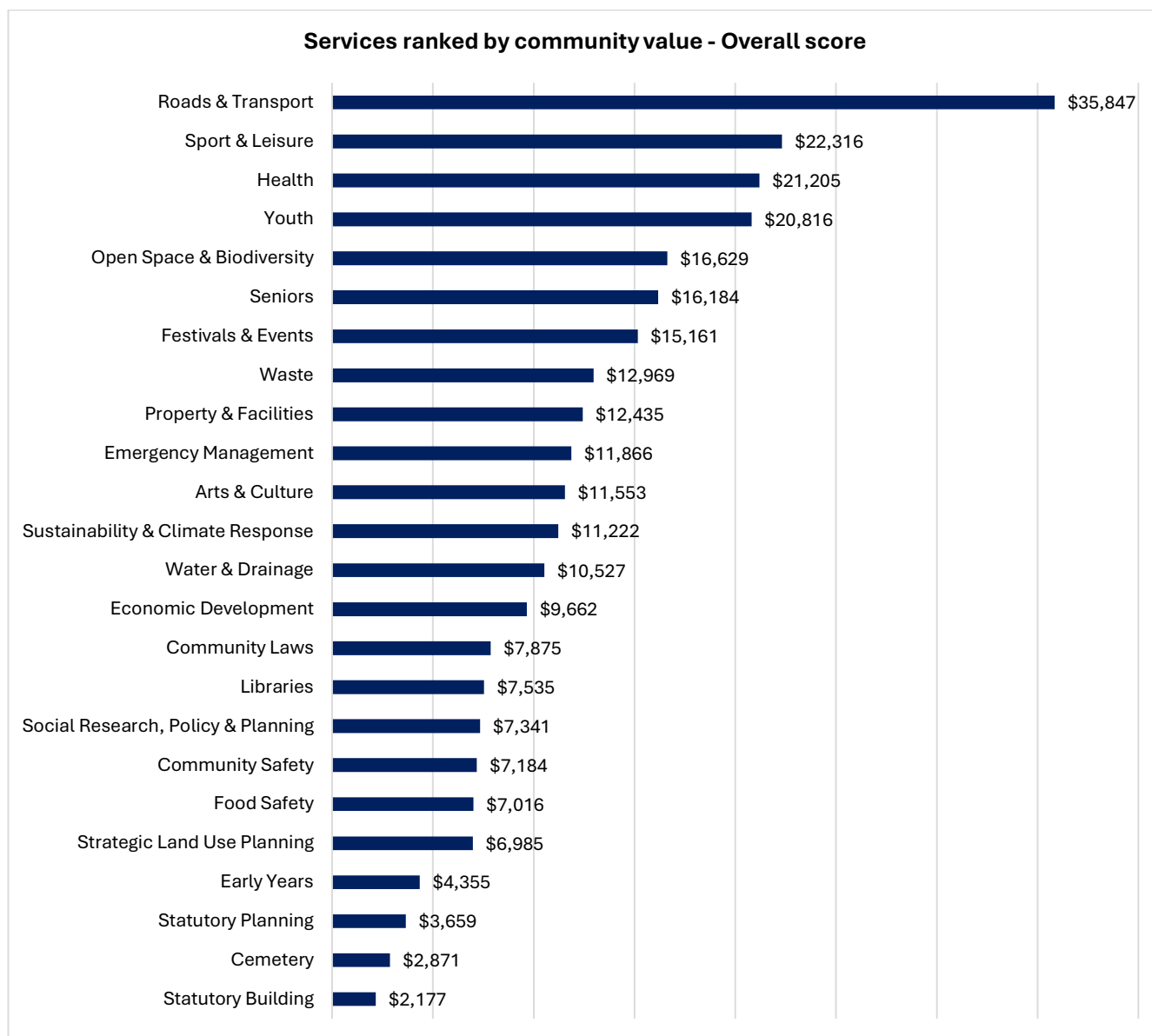
3. Public submissions

Respondents were invited to make a written submission to Council and present to Council at a public meeting.

Results

Service Budgeting activity consolidated results

The contributions from all participants across the Have Your Say online survey, Multi Advisory Committee workshop, and Pop-up activities have been consolidated into the below:

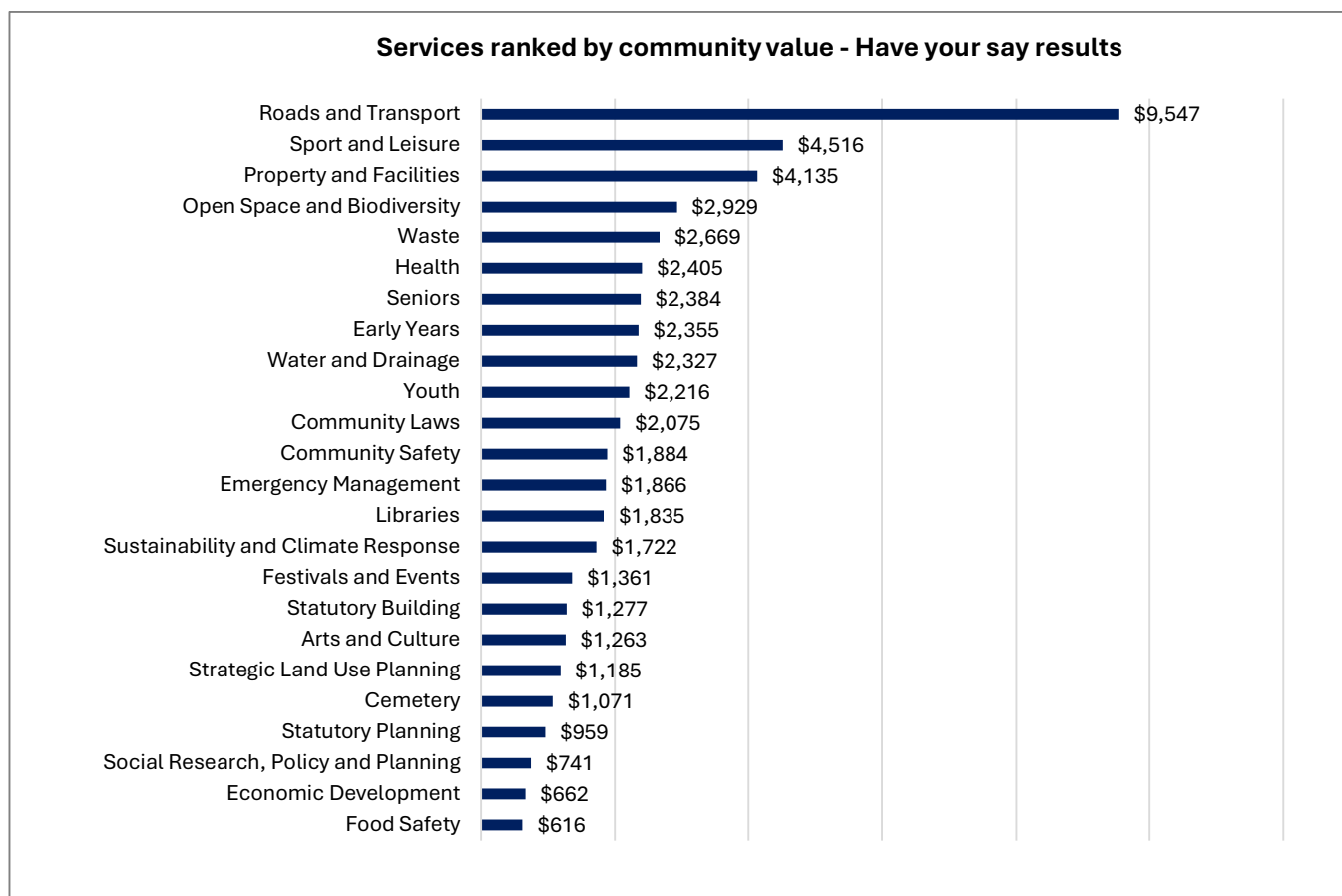


Note: Participants were given \$1000 to allocate to the services they believe are most valued by the community. The \$ value represents combined contributions from all participants. A more detailed breakdown of the results for both the Service Budgeting and Actions and Ideas activities, by engagement method, is provided in the following sections.

Have Your Say Online survey

Community interest in the project was demonstrated through strong participation in the online survey, which was open from 27 July to 23 August 2026. Over the engagement period, the Have Your Say page attracted:

- 1814 project page views
- 1083 visitors
- 116 online contributions (62 survey and 54 Fund It tool)



Note: Have your say participants could choose to allocate their \$1000 in any way they chose.

Actions and Ideas activity: *What actions would you like to see as a priority to improve Knox in 2027-2028?*

Community members shared extensive feedback through the survey, with 41 responses received on priorities for 2027-2028. Many responses included multiple recommendations, providing rich insights into community expectations and needs. An additional 25 comments were submitted identifying other issues and opportunities that Council should consider in future years.

All comments received through the online survey were reviewed and analysed. To assist with reporting and interpretation, comments have been grouped into key themes and relevant Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 Theme based on the topics raised by participants.

Note: A complete list of verbatim comments is included in Appendix A for reference.

Roads, Traffic and Transport (Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources)

- Road upgrades and maintenance
- Improve traffic safety, pedestrian crossings and speed management
- Enhance cycling infrastructure, footpaths and active transport connections
- Improve public transport access and connectivity

Parks, Recreation and Open Space (Caring for and enhancing our environment)

- Playground upgrades and park improvements
- Improve public toilets, seating and community amenities
- More dog parks, exercise facilities and recreation opportunities
- Accessible and family-friendly open spaces

Environment, Trees and Sustainability (Caring for and enhancing our environment)

- Increased tree planting and shade
- Bush regeneration and biodiversity initiatives
- Climate change and sustainability actions
- Streetscape beautification and landscaping

Maintenance and Public Amenity (Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources AND Caring for and enhancing our environment)

- Graffiti removal and reducing illegal dumping
- Increase grass mowing, landscaping and street sweeping
- Road, footpath and public infrastructure maintenance
- Improved cleanliness and presentation of public spaces

Community Safety and Amenity (Being a strong voice for safety)

- Road and pedestrian safety
- Improve street lighting and CCTV
- Anti-social behaviour and local law enforcement
- Noise management and protecting neighbourhood amenity

Waste and Resource Recovery (Caring for and enhancing our environment)

- Hard rubbish collections
- Bin services and litter management
- Illegal dumping prevention
- Community waste education

Community Facilities and Services (Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources AND Embracing connection inclusion and diversity)

- Libraries and leisure facilities
- Children's services and early years education
- More aged care and support services
- Enhanced and more community spaces and facilities

Planning, Housing and Neighbourhood Character (Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources AND Embracing connection inclusion and diversity)

- Housing density and development
- Local shopping, cafés and activity centres
- Parking and transport planning
- Preserving neighbourhood character and liveability

Community Connection and Inclusion (Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources)

- Community events and celebrations
- Opportunities for social connection
- Improved communication and engagement
- Inclusive and connected neighbourhoods

Other Feedback

- Knox Annual Budget should provide for more public funded low cost EV Charging Stations.
- Volunteer money that goes to local CFA ultimately ends up in other rural and regional brigades.
- Reduce seeming prioritised spending on minorities. Help the majority of people.
- Stop unnecessary spending on things like waste bins and lid changes.
- Recognise the needs of The Basin are very different to Boronia and other areas.

Multi Advisory Committee Workshop

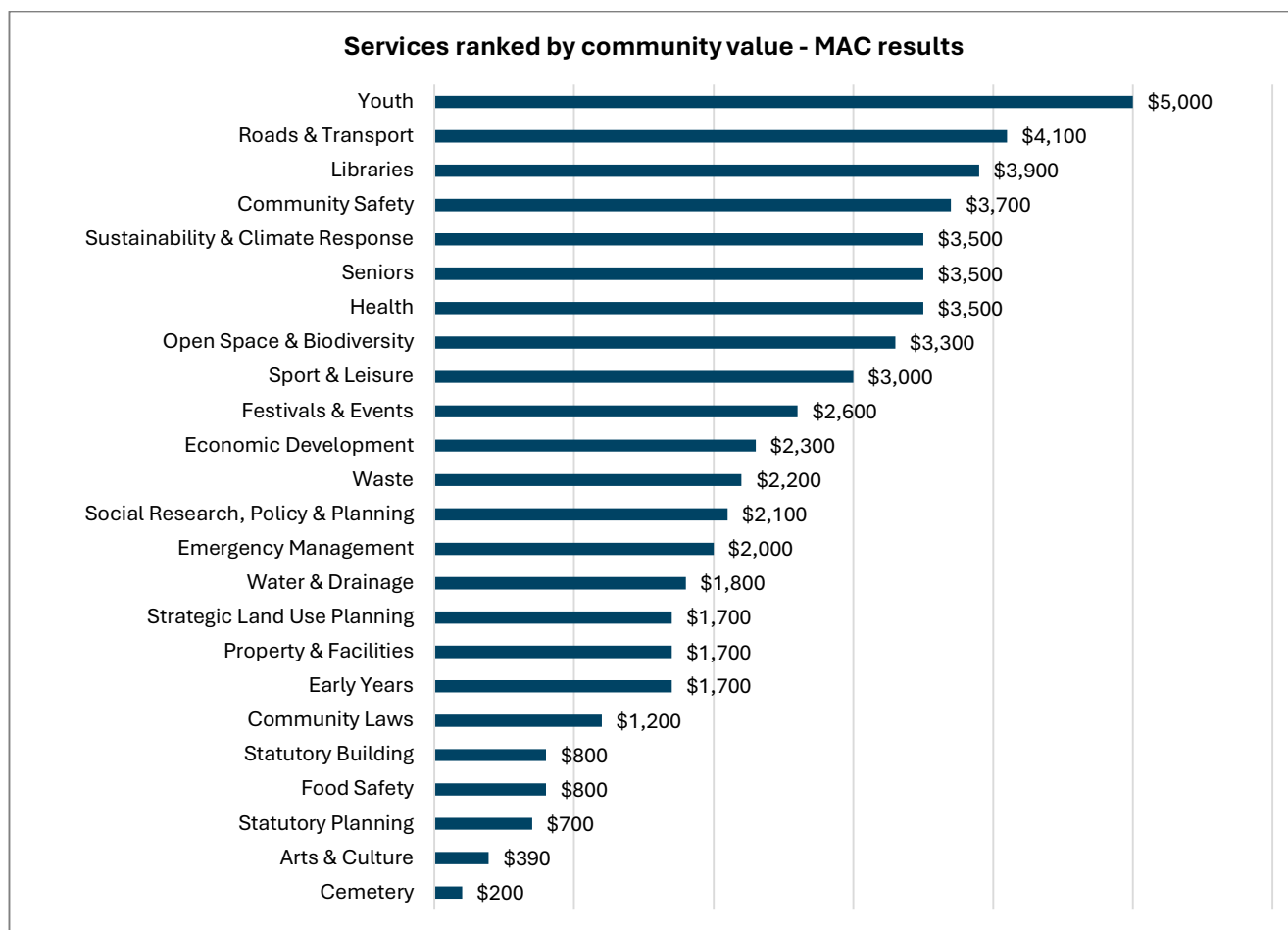
A Multi Advisory Committee (MAC) workshop was held on 22 July 2026, bringing together representatives from all ten committees. The activities in these workshops replicated those in the online survey and pop-up sessions.

The Multi Advisory Committee is made up of the following committees:

- Multicultural Advisory Committee
- Early Years Advisory Committee
- Art and Culture Advisory Committee
- Recreation and Leisure Advisory Committee
- Environment Advisory Committee
- Knox Youth Advisory Committee
- Disability Advisory Committee
- Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee
- Active Ageing Advisory Committee
- Transformation and Governance Advisory Committee

There were 55 community members present at the Multi Advisory Committee.

The following graph reflects the results of the budget exercise carried out by this cohort.



Note: Multi Advisory Committee participants were given 10 sticky dots each worth \$100. They could allocate their \$1000 in \$100 blocks.

The results should be viewed in the context of the workshop's participant profile. Youth representatives made up a significant proportion of attendees, which may have influenced voting patterns and contributed to stronger support for youth-related priorities. This should be considered when comparing these results with findings from other engagement activities.

Actions and Ideas activity:

The key themes emerging from this activity are outlined below along with the relevant Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 Theme:

Community safety and local amenity (Being a strong voice for safety)

- Better street lighting and public safety
- Boronia safety improvements (especially station/mall precinct)

Transport, roads and active travel (Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources)

- Train to Rowville

- Repair roads, potholes and footpaths
- Improve public transport generally
- Better bike path connectivity

Environment, greening and biodiversity (Caring for and enhancing our environment)

- More trees and urban greening
- Community gardens and biodiversity corridors

Community facilities, amenities and accessibility (Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources AND Embracing connection inclusion and diversity)

- Upgrade Knox Leisureworks
- Accessibility improvements
- More public toilets and amenities

Community connection, youth and creativity (Embracing connection inclusion and diversity)

- Multicultural/community connection programs
- More youth spaces and youth services
- Arts, music and creative spaces

Place activation and renewal (Enhancing community connection to vital services)

- Activate and revitalise Boronia.

Pop-Up events

Five pop-up sessions were conducted to enable broad community input into the development of the Annual Plan and Budget 2027-2028 scheduled across a range of times, days and locations across Knox to maximise accessibility. Approximately 287 community members participated across the five sessions.

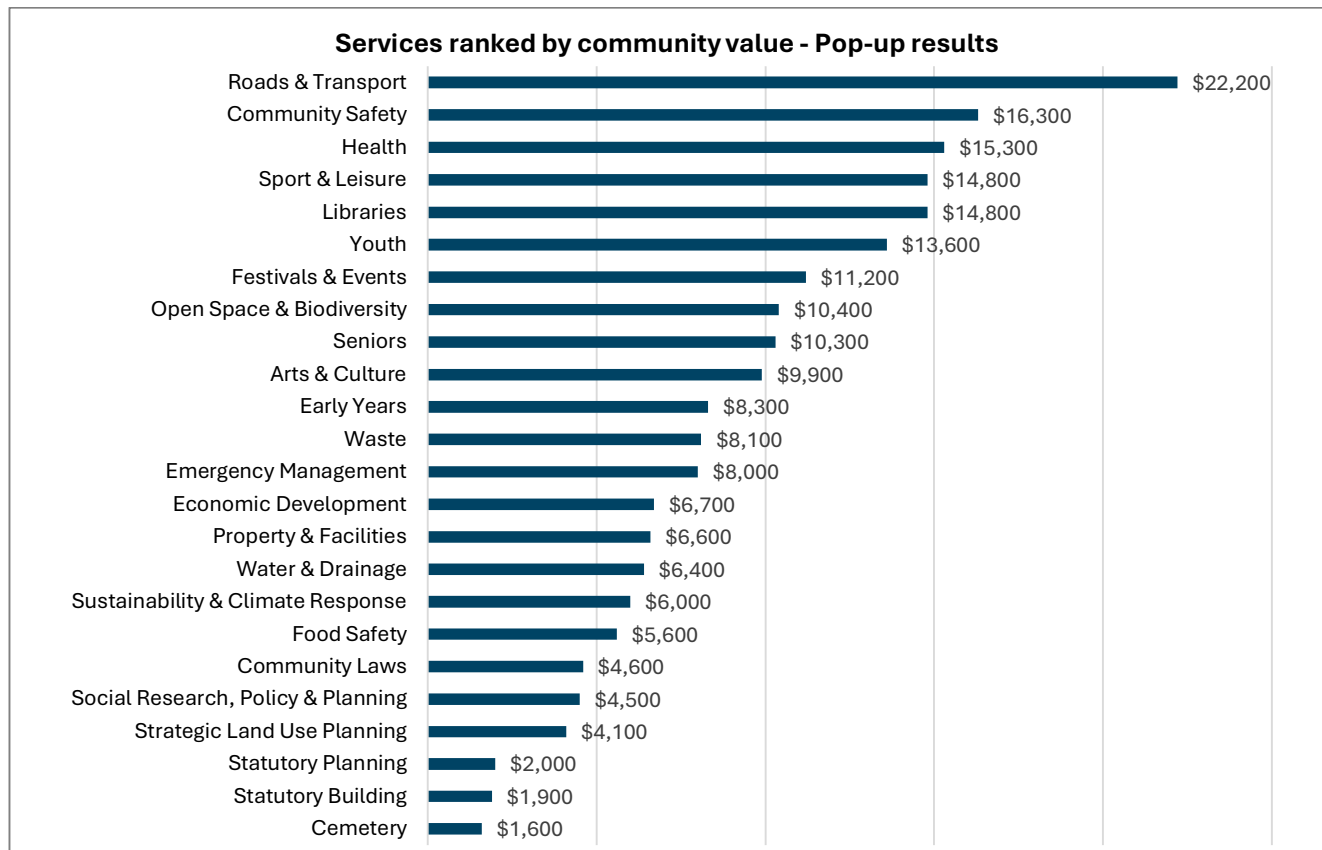
Location	Date	Times
Knox Library	Friday 31 July 2026	10:30am - 12:30pm
Knox Leisureworks	Saturday 8 August 2026	9:00am - 11:00am
Knox Library	Saturday 15 August 2026	10:30am - 12:30pm
Rowville Community Centre	Thursday 20 August 2026	10:00am - 2:00pm
State Basketball Centre	Saturday 22 August 2026	10:30am - 12:00pm

Participants completed the same prioritisation exercise in a face-to-face format to ensure consistency with the online survey and Multi Advisory Committee workshop. Participants were provided with 10 dots, each representing \$100, and asked to allocate them across the same 24 external services.

Facilitators observed that some participants at the pop-up sessions chose not to allocate their full \$1,000 budget. While facilitators reminded participants that they were able to spend the entire allocation in any way they wished, some indicated that they did not want to use the full amount. The number of participants who made this choice

could not be quantified, as interactions were generally brief. This observation was recorded during facilitator debrief sessions.

Participants also had the opportunity to speak directly with Council officers and Councillors, discuss ideas and potential actions, and provide place-based feedback using a map of Knox.



Note: Pop-up participants were given 10 sticky dots each worth \$100. They could allocate their \$1000 in \$100 blocks.

Please see Appendix B for a breakdown of results by location.

Actions and Ideas activity:

Participants were given the opportunity to provide any additional information for Council to consider as part of the Annual Plan and Budget 2027-2028 or future years, including further comments or context to support their budget allocation.

Feedback received at the pop-ups were generally similar to what we heard via the Have Your Say survey. They have been themed up as follows:

Community safety continues to be a major concern

- Safety, youth crime, hooning, break-ins, CCTV and lighting were recurring issues.

Waste collection and hard rubbish are high-friction topics

- Weekly bins, hard rubbish mess, green waste/general waste balance and compostable bags came up repeatedly.

Rowville has distinct infrastructure and access concerns

- Many Rowville residents feel they lack local shops, walkability, public transport, commercial zoning and community infrastructure.

Libraries, neighbourhood houses and community centres are highly valued

- Residents appreciate them but want longer hours, more staffing, more promotion and more programming.

Paths, lighting and active transport matter for safety and health

- Walking/cycling path maintenance, lighting, safe night running, footpaths and bike routes came up often.

Residents value green spaces but are mindful of spending

- Some want more trees, wildlife space and parks, while others feel Council should avoid over-investing in parks, leisure centres or cricket nets.

Children, youth and seniors need targeted support

- Feedback highlighted community desire for holiday activities, youth classes, crime prevention, seniors' outings, aged care and accessible programs.

Formal Submissions

Participants were also invited to make a formal submission on the Annual Plan and Budget 2027-2028 and speak to Councillors on their submission. All participants were offered this opportunity, with attendees of the Multi Advisory Committee workshop and Pop-ups being directed to the Have Your Say website for further information.

Eight formal submissions were received, with six members of the community requesting to speak to their submission at the Public Submission Meeting on Monday, 5 October 2026. These can be found in Attachment 2.

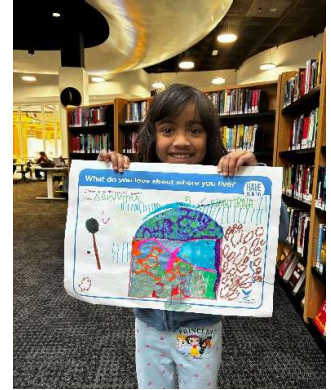
Children's Drawings and Statements

Children attending the sessions were invited to complete colouring activities, providing a creative way to show what they value and love about where they live.

Common themes include:

- Spending time with family and pets
- Bike riding and swimming
- Playing outdoors
- Socialising
- Sport
- Home, garden and bedroom

- Use of park, footy ground and playground facilities for socialising, play and walking
- Close proximity of services
- Closeness to the mountains, forest, birds, flowers, open spaces, rainbows and the sun



Verbatim comments include:

- "There are lots of parks and playgrounds where I can ride my bike and play with my friends."
- "We can go to the basketball court and skate park, and there's always something fun to do."
- "I like how there are lots of trees and nature."
- "The library is cool because I can borrow books and meet new friends."
- "(Westfield Knox) is fun because we get an ice-cream and watch movies."
- "My school is close by and I've made lots of friends here."
- "I like walking my dog on my bike with my mum and dad."

Appendix A - Have Your Say Online survey verbatim comments

The information below has been collated from the comments submitted through the online survey. To assist with analysis and reporting, feedback has been grouped into key themes based on the topics raised by participants. The commentary has been retained as provided wherever possible to preserve the intent and views expressed by community members.

Roads, Traffic, Footpaths and Transport

- Speed humps in Mountain Gate shop carpark. Too many near misses occurring. Cars too fast and not safe for pedestrians.
- Raised footpaths are a tripping hazard.
- Pot holes.
- We would like to see Cornish Rd upgraded for improved safety and access to Lysterfield Park.
- Sealing of Cornish Road and line marking for cycle path to provide safe access to Lysterfield Lake Park mountain bike tracks. Numerous near misses with oncoming cyclists on blind bends.
- The upgrade and asphaltting of Cornish Road Lysterfield for improved access to the National Park.
- Cornish Rd upgraded, has not been upgraded for 100 years and needs to be safer and allow traffic to park safely into the park.
- As new residents to Cornish Road, we see the widening/sealing/upgrading of the road as a high priority.
- Upgrade the Napoleon Road to improve road safety and maintenance. Implement consistent speed limits.
- Napoleon road is impossible to turn left or right onto past 7/11 headed to Glenfern Road at peak hour.
- Push for Napoleon Road duplication and Dorset Road extension.
- Clear all the pot holes on the roads, increase foot paths and off the road bicycle tracks along the main roads.
- Road and footpath repair.
- Active transportation connections.
- Install new and improve existing footpaths.
- Fix and widen local roads.
- A mini bus service in the Timbertop Estate so we can catch the bus on Stud Road.
- A pathway leading to Wellington Road along the back track in the wetlands.
- Improvement of some footpaths in the Ferntree Gully area.
- We live on Cornish Rd... It's close to impossible to cross Wellington Road on foot.
- The intersection Kellets Rd/Wellington Rd is super dangerous.
- Cycle track extension and Pedestrian crossing on Wellington Road opposite Kellets Road for mountain bikers.
- Upgrade Napoleon Road and introduce consistent speed limits.
- Better Road access out in and out of Knox area to Monash area. Connecting Napoleon Road and Dorset Road.
- Make road crossing easier.

Parks, Playgrounds and Recreation

- Fix and reopen the outdoor pool at Knox Leisureworks.
- Put dog refuse bins at entrances to parks especially Lakewood Reserve.

- Also, a toilet at Lakewood Reserve.
- More fenced off parks so families can safely run around and enjoy the parks.
- I would like the Blackwood Park and surrounding Koolamara area revamped.
- Improvement to playgrounds.
- The Liberty Avenue Reserve playground needs a desperate makeover.
- More dog parks around Lysterfield.
- Destination Parkland zoned with café spaces. Sealed walking tracks encircling parkland spaces, also with seating and rubbish bins.
- Upgrade Pinehill Reserve Playground in Rowville.
- Add outdoor exercise equipment and a bike track.
- Continue to care for the Quarry Park which is much enjoyed.
- Yes, the kids want a 1/2 size basketball court to engage and practice with their friends and possible BBQ area and shelter/toilets.

Environment, Trees and Sustainability

- Ivy that seems to take over along the bike tracks could be jumped on early.
- I would like to see trees planted in every possible space, car parks especially.
- Spend more money on bush regeneration please.
- More green spaces, more trees planted, more focus on waste education and climate change.
- Massive gum trees not suitable for residential streets removed and replaced.
- More public electric chargers.
- More flowers and trees.
- More plant diversity, deciduous trees and flowers to beautify Knox.
- Plant more large, beautiful trees, particularly where there are large developments.
- Acquiring and developing additional open green space to offset new housing.
- Planting of additional trees.
- Plant more trees to mitigate against climate change.
- The enormous gumtrees need to go, they are messy and dangerous.
- Oak trees look much more appealing.
- Planting attractive deciduous trees along major roadways to beautify the area.
- Plant more trees everywhere.
- Increase the amount of trees/shade we have.

Maintenance, Cleanliness and Presentation

- Please wash the street signs and beautify the roundabouts with nice foliage.
- The Timbertop/Seebeck roundabout really needs a facelift.
- Maintenance of centre median strip on Burwood Hwy and Ferntree Gully Road.
- Better hard rubbish collection.
- Ongoing grass cutting and maintained landscaping on roads.
- Landscaping and improvements in and around the toilet block and vacant land adjacent to the railway crossing in Ferntree Gully.
- Clean up all the graffiti in Knox.
- A real focus on graffiti removal.

- Another focus should be rubbish removal.
- To improve the maintenance of maple trees along Severn Crescent, Rowville during autumn.
- More frequent street sweeping and leaf collection during autumn.
- More proactive care of facilities.
- Don't leave repairs and cleanups until there are complaints.
- Regular onsite visits from staff to review potential problems.
- Also cut the grass more often.
- Have Vic Roads maintain the median strips better on public roads.
- Incentivise residents to maintain their front yards and nature strips.

Community Safety, Local Laws and Amenity

- Conduct community education and awareness campaigns of the existence of local laws and the reasons for them.
- Have officers actually attend and investigate all complaints of polluters impacting on amenity.
- Increased lighting and safety in populated areas.
- Noise from neighbouring properties.
- Night time loud music.
- Daytime excessive basketball bouncing.
- Crime prevention through more CCTV and street lighting.
- Better management of antisocial behaviour, including drug use.
- Proactive council action on noise complaints.
- Noise complaints to be seriously addressed for day and night time.
- My first consideration is personal. I had an accident in the lower Mountain Gate carpark from a motorist driving the wrong direction.

Waste and Rubbish Services

- Resumption of twice yearly hard rubbish collections.
- Better hard rubbish collection.
- We should have our red bins upgraded to the same size as the yellow and green bins.
- We have noticed that rubbish has been dumped more now due to this reason.
- More focus on waste education.
- Continue the two hard rubbish per year, or reintroduce the tip voucher system.
- Keep the FOGO and rubbish standards and services as they are.
- Additional rubbish and recycling bins in parks and public spaces.
- Control illegal rubbish dumping.

Community Facilities, Libraries and Leisure

- Library enhancement.
- A reduction in Knox Council's debt. To retain the Miller's Homestead Library.
- Rowville library should also have a larger storytime room.
- Fix and reopen the outdoor pool at Knox Leisureworks.
- Create more community spaces such as small gardens, barbecue areas or meeting places where neighbours can gather.

- Add more third-spaces to the community.

Children, Families, Aged Care and Social Services

- Improve the quality within the children services especially the childcare centres.
- The educators are amazing however, they are not recognised for their amazing efforts.
- Make My Aged Care services more available to the aged.
- Educators should be a part of the Knox Council end of year Christmas celebrations.
- Restore kindergartens.
- Help with the cost of living crisis. Food Relief services assistance.
- Increase public and social housing/facilities to help people get back onto their feet.

Planning, Housing and Development

- Less multi unit (6+) dwellings.
- Changes to zoning in Rowville to allow for the development of more commercial property infrastructure.
- Zoning for shops and cafes throughout Lysterfield and Rowville estates.
- No more multi slums adding cars and ugly units to our streets.
- Update the planning rules to make sure that there is enough off street parking on site.
- Acquiring and developing additional open green space to offset new housing.

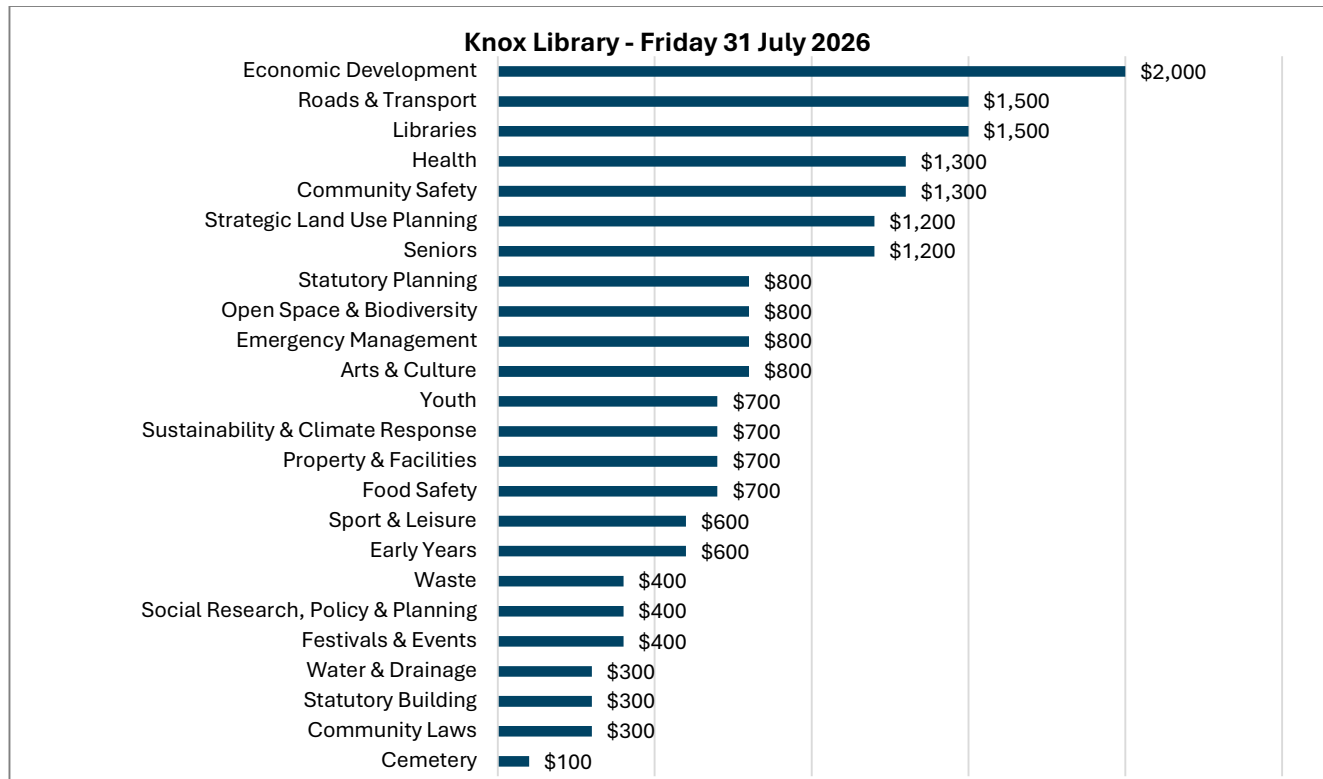
Community Connection, Events and Communication

- Christmas decorations.
- We lack character and celebrations around the Christian calendar.
- Support more community events such as markets, outdoor movie nights and neighbourhood festivals.
- Create more community spaces where neighbours can gather.
- More connectivity and social spaces in largely residential areas.
- Council does a great job, its major issues are with communications to residents.
- You do a great job.

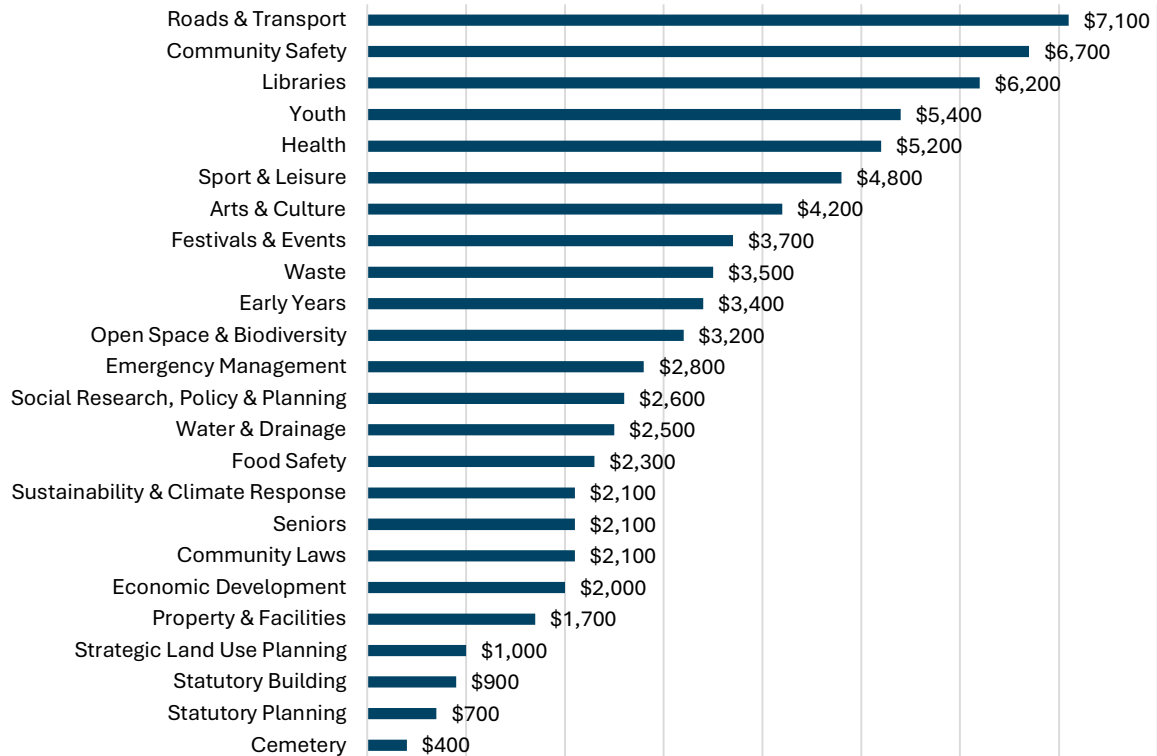
Other Feedback

- Knox Annual Budget should provide for more public funded low cost EV Charging Stations.
- Volunteer money that goes to local CFA ultimately ends up in other rural and regional brigades.
- Reduce seeming prioritised spending on minorities. Help the majority of people.
- Stop stupid spending such as unnecessary waste bins and lid changes.
- Recognise the needs of The Basin are very different to Boronia and other areas.
- Your survey requires personal details even for those NOT wanting to present their feedback.

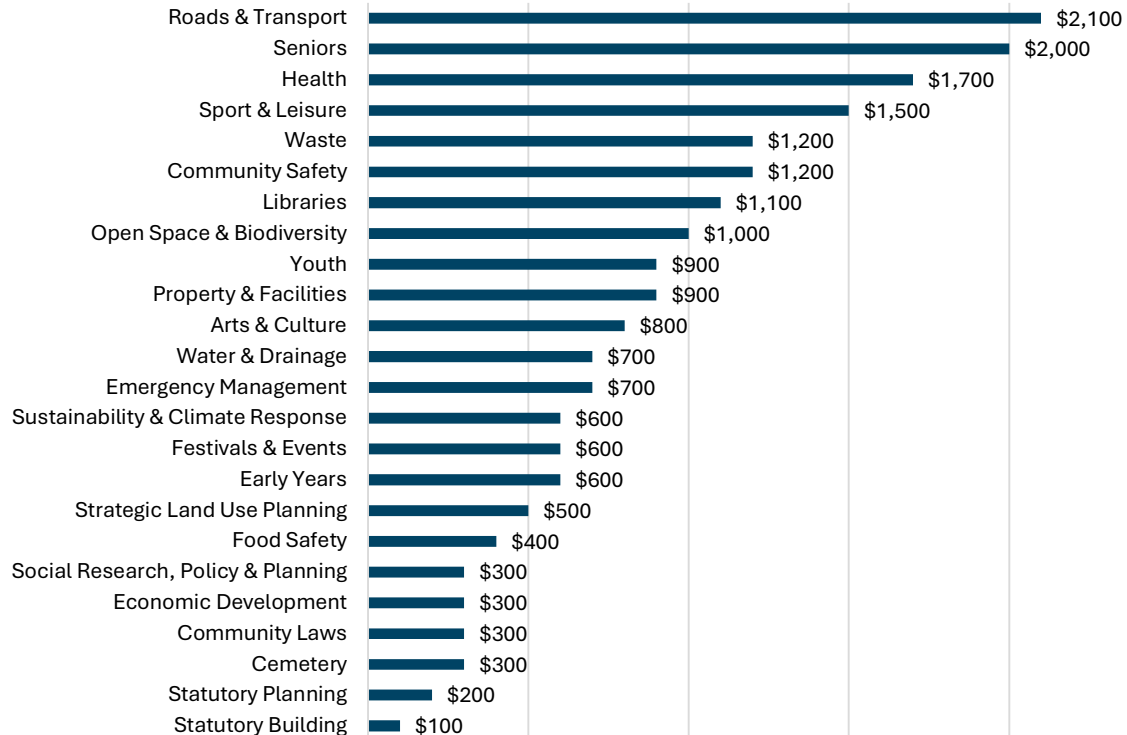
Appendix B - Pop-Up events - Service Budgeting activity by location



Knox Library - Saturday 15 August 2026



Rowville Community Centre - Thursday 20 August 2026



State Basketball Centre - Saturday 22 August 2026

