

# Group Conversation Guide

## You will need:

- A small group of people
- A person to host
- This Group Conversation Guide
- Group Conversation Toolkit
- Someone to document the conversation



Mildura Rural City Council



**Your Vision. Our Future.**

## Thank you for organising a group conversation about the future of our region and your community.

This Guide has been designed to make it easy for you to prepare and host a conversation with your community group, club, network, committee or group of friends as part of the Imagine 2040 project.

From 5 March to 25 April 2021 Mildura Rural City Council is actively supporting our community to Imagine 2040. We want to ensure everyone who lives, works or visits our community has contributed to this exciting and important project.

Imagine 2040 is an opportunity for everyone in the Mildura Rural City Council area to help shape the future of our region and guide the work of Council over the coming years.

This is your opportunity to imagine a future that has everything you, your family, friends and community need to succeed, be well and happy. All feedback and ideas will be used to help develop a 20-year Community Vision, four-year Council Plan, a Financial Plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and an Asset Plan.

These important strategic documents are required under the new *Local Government Act (2020)* and *Public Health and Wellbeing Act (2008)*, which govern the work of Councils in Victoria. All Victorian Councils are working in partnership with their communities to develop these documents.

There will be further opportunities to be involved in conversations about this project in June 2021 and we encourage you and your group to participate.

## How can you help?

With the support of this Guide, we are calling on the community groups of our region to host a conversation. Your conversation can be as formal or informal as you like. Just be sure to write down your answers and to submit them before 25 April 2021.

This is a whole-of-community project, so your participation is important.

Please refer to the **Imagine 2040 Project Fact Sheet** for more information about this project

## Inside this Guide you will find:

A suggested agenda for your Group Conversation  
Tips for hosting respectful conversations  
Tips on how to prepare for and lead a Group Conversation



## Completing and submitting the Imagine 2040 survey

We encourage you to submit your group's responses to the survey online at [yoursay.mildura.vic.gov.au/imagine](https://yoursay.mildura.vic.gov.au/imagine)

The online survey will be available until 25 April 2021.

If you cannot access the online survey a copy of the survey is contained in the Group Conversation Toolkit. You may prefer to print out a copy of the survey and write your responses directly into the survey before responding online.

Hard copy surveys can be returned to:

- Mildura Rural City Council, PO Box 105 Mildura 3500
- or can be placed into the Imagine 2040 ballot boxes you will find located at any one of our Service Centres, libraries at other locations throughout the region

**All hard copy surveys should be completed and returned to Council by the 18 April 2021.**

If you have further questions about hosting your Group Conversation or providing feedback, please email [connie.demaria@mildura.vic.gov.au](mailto:connie.demaria@mildura.vic.gov.au)

## Suggested meeting agenda

### 1. Welcome everyone

### 2. Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the First Peoples of the Millewa-Mallee, The Latji Latji, Ngintait, Nyeri Nyeri and Werigia, as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Country on which we are. We pay our respects to the Elders past and present of First Peoples of Millewa-Mallee and the ancient connection they hold with their Country.

### 3. Introduction

Mildura Rural City Council is supporting the community to develop a 20-year Community Vision. The Community Vision will outline our long-term goals and how we want our region to grow and develop over the next two decades. It will also guide the development of the Council Plan, Financial Plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, and Asset Plan.

All feedback collected as part of today's discussion will contribute to the development of these documents. The purpose of the discussion today/this evening is to explore what it is that we love and value about our region and your community, what our vision is 20 years from now and to talk about the challenges we might face.

### 4. Survey questions

Work through the survey, discussing each question as a group (20-30 minutes – longer for larger groups) and making notes for each response as you go.

### 5. Complete and submit the survey

Complete the survey online at [yoursay.mildura.vic.gov.au/imagine](https://yoursay.mildura.vic.gov.au/imagine)  
**or**

Assign a group member to write your group's responses to the survey questions in the space provided in the Toolkit and return it by:

- Post to Mildura Rural City Council, PO Box 105 Mildura 3500.
- Drop in one of the Imagine 2040 ballot boxes located at Council Service Centres, libraries at other locations throughout the region.
- Email to [mrcc@mildura.vic.gov.au](mailto:mrcc@mildura.vic.gov.au)
- SMS a photo of it to 0448 846 458

## Tips on how to prepare for and lead a Group Conversation

Group Conversations can take any form, and can take place in any COVID-Safe setting.

1. Select a time and location for the conversation.
2. Nominate someone to document and submit the conversation.
3. Invite people to take part in the conversation.
4. Provide participants with the Imagine 2040 Project Fact Sheet and Background Information Sheets prior to the meeting.
5. Provide participants with the survey questions before the meeting.
6. You might suggest that everyone bring a notepad to write down their ideas during the meeting.

## Tips to encourage respectful Group Conversations

You should first request that everyone present be respectful of each other's ideas. There is no wrong or right answer, everyone's opinion is valid and important to them. And it is important that these are captured and included as part of this project.

### Online meetings



- Start the meeting by asking that everyone mute their microphones



- Encourage participants to use the hands up button to ask a question, and to wait until they are called on to speak (2 or more mics open at the same time can cause static and feedback)

- Ensure everyone has an equal amount of time to speak. You might go around the (virtual) room and ask each person to present their idea one at a time, moving from person to person until everyone has had an opportunity to contribute.
- Alternatively, you might like to put everyone's name in a hat and pull names out one at a time or use some other method to randomise the presentation of ideas so the more talkative participants do not stop the participation of the more thoughtful.
- Record the responses to each question, and read back to the participants before moving on to the next question, to ensure participants feel confident with the responses recorded.
- Repeat this process of going around the room for each of the four survey questions.

### COVID-Safe face-to-face meeting

- Adapt the online etiquette to suit the face-to-face meeting.
- Remind people to wait until called upon to speak (so as not to speak over others).
- Go around the room to ensure everyone contributes equally to the conversations.
- If available, record the responses on a white board or butchers paper so everyone can see each other's contributions.

## More information

If you have further questions about hosting your Group Conversation or providing feedback, please email [connie.demaria@mildura.vic.gov.au](mailto:connie.demaria@mildura.vic.gov.au) or call (03) 5018 8100.

