

Major Road Projects Victoria: Fitzsimons Lane Upgrade – Effective engagement takes opponents to allies, outrage to celebration



at the Gateway.

Highlights at a glance

Major Road Projects Victoria (MRPV) is a delivery agency of the Victorian government tasked with developing and delivering major road projects across the state, including new roads, major arterial and freeway upgrades, bridges and rehabilitation works.

The Fitzsimons Lane Upgrade, a major project delivered by MRPV for the state government, consisted of upgrading four intersections in Melbourne's northeast. The project included converting a large and complex roundabout at Main Road in Eltham, an area locally known as the 'Gateway to Eltham'. The project drew strong opposition from local action groups from the outset, who opposed the size and design of the proposed new intersection. Amid protests, lobbying and calls to stop the project, the Fitzsimons Lane Upgrade Communications and Engagement team devised a strategy that saw opponents turn allies and public opinion shift from outrage to celebration, using the Involve, Consult and Empower levels of the IAP2 engagement spectrum.

Major highlights of the impact of engagement include:

- redesigning the intersection and thus reducing the overall footprint
- increasing the number of trees to be planted from 600 to 6,000
- recreating a new 'Gateway to Eltham' through collaborating with fierce opponents.

Key engagement takeaways include:

- diffusing community outrage and taking control of the project's narrative – measured by public sentiment from media articles and themes of stakeholder enquiries
- building productive relationships with community and key stakeholders – measured by the outcomes of stakeholder meetings
- effectively managing construction impacts with businesses and residents – measured by the results from stakeholder surveys as part of an established Key Performance Indicator (KPI) program.

Key search words: Public, State Government, delivery of road projects, *community consultation, Inform, Consult, and Collaborate.*

1.0 Objectives

Background

Eltham is a gateway suburb in Melbourne's northeast, known locally as the Green Wedge. Loved by locals for its greenery and natural environment, the community is resistant to heavy urbanisation. The Eltham Gateway – the original roundabout at the Fitzsimons Lane and Main Road intersection – was seen as a community landmark, renowned as the entry to the Green Wedge.

The roundabout, a critical north–south traffic corridor for the broader community, catered to 66,000 vehicles daily, with poor traffic outcomes, was dangerous and in desperate need of a road upgrade. Major Road Projects Victoria (MRPV), a delivery agency under the Victorian Government, was tasked with converting the roundabout to a fully signalised intersection, which promised to improve safety and traffic flow. The project was funded by the state and federal governments under the Suburban Roads Upgrade.

The project drew strong opposition from local action groups who opposed the size and design of the proposed intersection. Amid protests, lobbying and calls to stop the project, the Fitzsimons Lane Upgrade Communications and Engagement team devised a strategy that saw opponents turn into allies and public opinion shift from outrage to celebration.

Engagement Purpose and Scope

- The Eltham Gateway was seen as a community landmark
- This dangerous roundabout was catering to over 60,000 vehicles a day and well in need of upgrading to maintain performance and capacity into the future
- A large, active community opposed the project and fought aggressively against it
- Through a comprehensive engagement campaign, we used the IAP2 engagement framework measures of inform, consult, and empower to turn community sentiment around, converting our fiercest opponents into crucial allies and leaving a legacy space to serve the community for years to come.

Objectives

Our overarching objective was to enable the delivery of the Fitzsimons Lane Upgrade with the support of community and stakeholders. Having the endorsement of community and stakeholders was a key driver for the government and thus we needed to address the public's concerns and find ways to mitigate them. To do this, we needed to make decisions about the level of information we shared and who it was provided to, and what were the project negotiables and who could influence them. Meeting our broader objective consisted of the following:

Objective	Success metrics
Diffuse community outrage and take control of the project's narrative by addressing and responding to public concerns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respond to feedback on the design, notably reducing the footprint of the Main Road intersection and preserve more trees• Reduce formal complaints about the project by 50% (by late 2020 we were receiving an average of 47 formal complaints every month)• Achieve a minimum score of 70% on whether people thought they were listened to, even if their concerns were not solved*. <i>We opted for a conservative target due to the level of outrage, which had manifested into protests, 'tree funerals' and letter writing campaigns</i>• Achieve 80% positive or neutral sentiment for all media coverage by the time of project completion.
Build productive relationships with key stakeholders to identify and collaborate on activities that were important to them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Achieve a minimum average score of 70% for Overall Stakeholder Satisfaction*• Achieve a minimum average score of 70% for whether people thought they were treated with respect*• Obtain public endorsement from project opponents on key issues such as environment and legacy.

Effectively manage construction impacts to minimise disruptions for local businesses and residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve a minimum average score of 70% on whether people thought we acted in a professional manner* Achieve an overall Community and Stakeholder Satisfaction score of at least 70%*. For both these measures we opted for a conservative target to reflect the low base from which we were starting.
Deliver a community-changing legacy project that stakeholders could be proud of.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involvement and collaboration of project opponents Public promotion of the project and endorsement of MRPV in the media.

*Independent Community and Stakeholder KPI and KRA Survey conducted by Ipsos.

Affected stakeholders, participation level and legislative context

To achieve our objectives, our overarching campaign needed to be multipronged, involving multiple stakeholder groups with varying needs. There were elements that required us to 'Inform' stakeholders on activities that were non-negotiables, while other areas allowed us to 'Collaborate' to reach an outcome that worked best for all affected stakeholders and the community.

The stakeholder engagement program was supported by a comprehensive suite of communications utilising a diverse range of tools and channels, including website and digital assets, press advertising, letters, flyers, factsheets and EDMs.

The detailed Figures 1 & 2 below provide a broad overview of our stakeholder engagement approach and communications channels.

Figure 1: Stakeholder engagement approach

Issue dealt with in order	Stakeholder	Tactic	Outcome	IAP2 Spectrum
1. Project design and scope	Community / ECAG / Nillumbik Council – <i>Engaged but highly distressed about the footprint of the reference design.</i>	Extensive consultation during the development of the project using a variety of methods.	Following feedback from community, we were able to effectively advocate internally to reduce the scope of the Main Road intersection while maintaining its performance. We were able to highlight this on all our material as a counterpoint to accusations of 'lack of consultation'.	<i>Consult</i> was used as we sought feedback from community and stakeholders on the draft plans we had created.
2. Lack of information	Vicki Ward MP and Minister for Transport Infrastructure's Office – <i>Engaged.</i>	Organised fortnightly briefings to provide timely updates on key activities. First briefing was Christmas Eve 2020 ahead of tree removals in January, which started the building of trust.	Provided visibility to most important local stakeholder. Briefings were also used to obtain insight from Vicki who understood the local community well.	<i>Inform</i> used as the update provided was MRPV providing information about what was coming up. While it was a conversation, we didn't open it up for the stakeholder to influence the outcome.
	Nillumbik Shire Council – Initially disengaged and distressed.	Regularly presented plans to councillors (many of whom were vocal opponents to the project).	Provided clarity on our plans to the entire Council. Regardless of whether they agreed or not, they were privy to what had developed.	
	Eltham Community Action Group (ECAG) – <i>Engaged but highly distressed.</i>	Briefed the group and confronted all the issues and questions in person that they had been publicly speaking out about.	Removed any doubt of our intentions and provided clarity about our plans.	

		Provided clear and definitive positions on all of them. Established a monthly meeting moving forward.		
	Other community groups – <i>Engaged but distressed about loss of vegetation.</i>	Arranged regular one-on-one meetings to answer and discuss any topic.	We were able to get to know different people in the community and understand their issues.	
	Residents – <i>Disengaged.</i>	Created and mailed out monthly 'Community Update' newsletters, web updates, social media and media stories.	We were able to highlight the project benefits while also countering misinformation.	
	Businesses – <i>Disengaged but concerned about potential impacts to their business.</i>	Met and interviewed each business ahead of works and as required.	We were able to build relationships and a strong database of information that we used to inform our works program and develop trader support programs.	<i>Consult</i> was used to collect insights from businesses regarding their operations and needs. This information was then used to influence the construction program and minimise disruptions to local business.
3. Environment	Community / ECAG / Nillumbik Council – Engaged but highly distressed about project's impact on the environment.	Sought out a partnership with respected local group Eltham Rotary. They had plans to procure and plant more than 6,000 trees across the municipality. Through the project we were able to fund this initiative and enable a massive planting response.	By funding this program, we were able to show that we were planting considerably more trees than we were removing. This was a key tactic in managing this accusation. Rotary also used their network to partner up with schools, which we were able to leverage in our communications.	<i>Collaborate</i> was used because the experts were the Rotary so we took their advice on timing and rollout.
	Community – <i>Disengaged.</i>	Sought out opportunities to reuse felled timber and vegetation. This included things such as replanting native grasses in private property and donating timber to local organisations like Men's Shed.	This helped us to strengthen our links in the community. Prior to the removal of vegetation, we'd seek out people who had expressed an interest for their advice on appropriate reuses of vegetation.	<i>Consult</i> was used to gain insights from the community about need for reused timber.
	ECAG / Community / Nillumbik Council – <i>Engaged but highly distressed about project's impact on the environment.</i>	Funded and created a new 'Eltham Gateway' in partnership with ECAG and the Nillumbik Shire Council to replace the area where we had built the new Main Road intersection.	This turned our fiercest opponents into our strongest allies. By working together to realise an important legacy project they could no longer fight us publicly, and instead, refocused their energy into the Gateway rather than the road project. This also helped our relationship with Vicki Ward MP who could stand up and own a project that everyone loved.	<i>Collaborate</i> was used as we wanted the project to be led by community. We provided some parameters and support. but we wanted specific stakeholders to lead.

Figure 2: Communications channel map

Asset	Audience	Frequency
Have your say collateral <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Letter - Postcards - Consultation website for feedback - Fact sheets - Visual renders - Social media posts 	Community and stakeholders impacted by the project	These were used during the initial consultation phase in 2018 to encourage people to have their say on the proposed design
Dedicated website containing all project information	General public	Maintained regularly for the life of the project
Works notification letters	Impacted stakeholders, such as residents and businesses	As required to accompany construction activities
Printed fact sheets explaining the design, environmental impacts and traffic changes	Impacted stakeholders, such as residents and businesses	Released at the start of the construction
Community Update printed newsletters	Impacted stakeholders, such as residents and businesses. Broad distribution (15,000 homes and businesses)	Every two/three months
EDMs (email) focusing on disruption and construction impacts	Subscribers to the database	Weekly
Consultation website for the Eltham Gateway project – <i>Participate Nillumbik</i>	Eltham Community	Used during the consultation phase of the legacy project

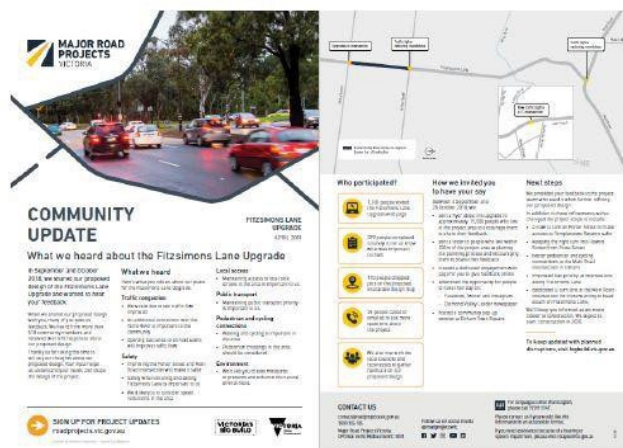
B1.5 Postcards

Distributed to 3095, 3106 and 3093, reaching approximately 15,000 residents. Additional postcards were also sent to the Manningham City Council, Nillumbik Shire Council and Banyule City Council for display, and were used at community pop-ups to encourage local communities to use the online engagement website to provide feedback on the projects.



B1.17 April Community Update

In April 2019 a newsletter was released with a summary of the community consultation and key outcomes. This was sent to homes and businesses within 100m of the project area, uploaded to the [your.roadprojects](#) website and included in an email to project stakeholders.



B1.6 Digital Advertising

The following digital mediums were used.

- Big Mobile
- Spotify

These advertisements were used in the following mediums, with the following estimated reach:

- VIDEO: 51,109 views and 389 click-throughs
- MOBILE DISPLAY: 180,644 impressions and 263 click-throughs
- AUDIO: 133,199 impressions and 86 click-throughs



2.0 Methodology

Planning and internal governance

As a major government-funded infrastructure project, the Fitzsimons Lane Upgrade's governance model for Communications and Engagement involved strict internal approvals from the Project Director, Communications Director, Delivery Director and Minister's Office. Considered a highly contentious project, all collateral and information required significant levels of scrutiny at the highest levels of MRPV and government.

The budget for our Communications and Engagement activities to support the project represented roughly 0.75% of overall project budget.

Methods

We used a variety of engagement methods to inform, consult and collaborate during delivery of the project. The type of method used depended on the topic being discussed, the level of influence and time available.

An engagement-specific website was developed to become a one-stop-shop for people to seek information, ask questions and have their say. Online engagement was often complemented by in-person opportunities, such as pop-ups, meetings and phone calls. While these methods are vital for collecting feedback, the supporting communications and advertising campaigns alerting people to the opportunity to contribute are equally as important. Tactics typically used to inform and attract included social media, emails, letters and doorknocks to local residents and businesses.

Participation levels and targets

Our targets for engagement varied between different activities; however, as a general guide, we sought to achieve 100 individual pieces of feedback per activity. This could include pins on an interactive map or survey responses.

While engagement occurred throughout the project, there were two major consultation activities that highlight the benefit of this case study:

1. Design consultation

The project launched a 'Have your say' in 2018 that commenced an extensive community consultation campaign. Over 500 pieces of feedback were received, which included community concerns that the upgrade was unnecessary and would destroy the gateway based on the design footprint and loss of trees.

The Eltham Community Action Group (ECAG) fiercely opposed the design for the roundabout and commissioned an alternative design. They attracted local media, campaigned extensively both on site and on social media, demanded change from the local member for Eltham and sent a petition to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure.

After listening and internally advocating for a community-focused outcome, MRPV investigated alternative designs, including those put forward by the action group. The revised design balanced the needs of the community and all stakeholders and achieved a 25% reduction in the design footprint, while maintaining the capacity and performance of the new intersection. In addition, the change in scope enabled MRPV to preserve an additional 150 mature trees.

The cost of the design change was included in the design refinement phase during the project development, meaning no additional cost to overall project budget. Despite the outcome, the action group continued to campaign for more changes. Research commissioned by MRPV indicated there was broad support for the project and a silent majority welcomed the upgrade.

2. Eltham Gateway Project

To manage the ongoing and escalating opposition to the project from the leading action group, we identified a legacy project that would help to neutralise the outrage by redirecting their energy into something they could influence, utilising the empower tactic from the IAP2 engagement framework.

The *Eltham Gateway Project* focused on rehabilitating and enhancing areas on both sides of Main Road, between Falkiner Street and the Diamond Creek Bridge, in response to the construction of the new intersection and removal of the roundabout at Fitzsimons Lane.

The aim of the project was to create a sense of arrival into Eltham and the Green Wedge Shire of Nillumbik by reclaiming public open space and revegetating underutilised roadside areas. The project would also acknowledge the traditional owners of the land using native planting and the creation of a public artwork on the northern side of Main Road.

The development of the new Eltham Gateway was an important activity that helped to meet our objectives regarding legacy and diffusing community outrage.

Governance structure

To ensure the project was developed with true collaboration, we set up a Project Coordination Group (PCG) that included representatives from key stakeholders, including MRPV, Council, ECAG and Vicki Ward MP. As part of the agreement with Council, an independent project manager was appointed to keep the project on track.

The PCG's terms of reference included meeting monthly, transparent sharing of information and decision-making.

Consultation

Using local knowledge, the PCG developed a draft masterplan with assistance from local consultants *Indigenous Design*. The master plan was released for broader community feedback during July and August 2022. During this phase of consultation, we received more than 160 detailed responses from the community, which were subsequently used to refine the initial master plan.

The feedback included a preference for removing dead vegetation, revegetation of the area with native species and building a walking path, seating, signage and a key piece of public art.

Nillumbik Council's consultation platform 'Participate Nillumbik' was used to house all relevant information, solicit feedback and provide updates. It was also used to showcase promotional videos and explanatory visuals.

Utilising this local engagement platform aligned with our strategy for this to be a grassroots initiative.

MRPV invested heavily in this particular piece of the engagement strategy, providing 20% of the overall Communications and Engagement budget for the Eltham Gateway Project portion of the consultation. This was complemented by a contribution from Nillumbik Shire Council.



Pictured: The draft Eltham Gateway master plan that people commented on, and the sequence of events that formed part of the consultation program.

Alignment with IAP2 Core Values for the practice of public participation

IAP2 Core Values	Example of how this was considered in the design of your project methodology
1. Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process	To inform the development of the project, we invited the community to provide feedback on our reference design. Based on their feedback we refined the design and built something that factored in their concerns.
2. Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision	Community feedback and the public's contribution directly influenced the final outcome of the project, specifically the size and footprint of the intersection at Main Road. Through our co-design approach to delivery of the Eltham Gateway Project, the community were also directly involved in shaping the final treatment.
3. Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognising and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision-makers	MRPV was committed to explaining the rationale for every major decision made on the project. For example, we held extensive face-to-face meetings with project opponents so they could challenge our rationale and did our utmost to explain decisions even though they did not agree with them.
4. Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision	As part of the project, we deliberately sought out the Rotary Club of Eltham and partnered with them. As a local group they were directly affected by our project and their plans and vision aligned with our objective to plant one tree for each one we removed. As such, we enabled the rollout of their revegetation program, which helped us to further offset any tree losses as

	part of the project and surpass our objective, replanting six trees to each one we removed.
5. Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate	As part of the development of the Eltham Gateway Project, we initially consulted with key stakeholders on how they would like to be consulted. During this process, they also helped to design the broader engagement process and breadth of the consultation.
6. Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way	<p>During the initial consultation period in 2018, we ran an extensive campaign that was designed to encourage people to participate. This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive map on which the community could pin their comments, ideas or suggestions, and a survey • Postcards distributed to 15,000 properties in Eltham, Templestowe and Lower Plenty • Letters sent to properties within 100 m of the project area • Advertisements in the local newspaper and on Facebook • Emails sent to stakeholders and project subscribers • Community pop-up at Eltham Town Square • 24/7 customer call centre so we could respond to community enquiries. <p>By the end of October 2018, the online engagement platform captured over 500 pieces of feedback, including 379 surveys and 170 comments on the interactive project map.</p>
7. Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision	<p>In addition to the above, all feedback received was documented and shared with the project team to review and consider in the design refinement process.</p> <p>Consultation led to the following design changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced the footprint of the Main Road intersection • A new U-turn on Porter Street to make access to Templestowe Reserve safer • Retaining the right turn into Hawtin Street from Foote Street • Better pedestrian and cycling connections at the Main Road intersection in Eltham • Improved bus priority at intersections along Fitzsimons Lane • Dedicated U-turn lane at the Main Road intersection for those wanting to head south on Fitzsimons Lane. <p>A project newsletter was distributed in April 2019 highlighting the key consultation themes and the updated reference design. The newsletter was sent via post, email, social media, published on the website and distributed to Council offices.</p>

In the span of the project, we went from community fervently opposing the Upgrade, to working with us to leave a lasting legacy. A true credit to our comprehensive engagement strategy

DIPAL SORATHIA, PROJECT DIRECTOR

The successful delivery of the Fitzsimons Lane Upgrade is a result of a good strategy, strong partnerships and genuine consultation

TRENT WOODBERRY, DIRECTOR,
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

PROJECT DESIGN CONSULTATION — ONLINE ENGAGEMENT CAPTURED:

500

PIECES OF FEEDBACK

379

SURVEY RESPONSES

170

COMMENTS ON
INTERACTIVE PROJECT MAP



Rotary members prepare planting packs for students.



Students use felled timber to learn about milling.



Community plants at the new Gateway.

3.0 Manage engagement

Throughout the campaign to shift the narrative on the project, we encountered numerous challenges that played out in the public arena. The main ones centred on impacts to the local environment, which community groups highlighted by staging protests within the work area, holding 'tree funerals' and tying red ribbons around trees, providing dramatic photos for social media and encouraging others to join the cause.

These tactics were complemented by a separate campaign to recognise an 'alternative design' to the Main Road intersection that was developed by a group of retired engineers who were part of ECAG – an established and connected group. The group challenged our traffic modelling, design and other technical data, thus adding a professional element to their campaign. The group had time, resources and the necessary experience to continue causing issues for the life of the project.

To overcome these challenges, we implemented a long-term strategy to empower ECAG by identifying, funding and enabling a legacy project ECAG could drive, and then work together to bring to fruition. The plan required extensive engagement with a range of stakeholders and community over two years. The result was the creation of the 'Eltham Gateway', which ECAG and the locals developed, converting them from opponents to partners. The group itself opted to change its name to the Southern Gateway Renewal Group, to embrace their new objective as a group.

Data collection and analysis

All information collected from stakeholder interactions is stored on our Consultation Manager system. The data from this system is regularly analysed to ensure there are no outstanding issues and queries are being addressed. Based on data, we saw initial concerns regarding project design soften as the project progressed with complaints dropping by 14% in the first 12 months.

Activities that required formal consultation utilised Engage Victoria and Participate Nillumbik. These platforms provided a report that our team used to analyse feedback. This process involved multi-disciplinary technical discussions to determine what is feasible and appropriate for the project. In the case of the Eltham Gateway, the feedback was summarised into themes and then provided to landscape designers who used it to refine the masterplan.

In the case of the initial design consultation, the feedback obtained led to a reduction of the overall size of the Main Road intersection by 25%.








Data reporting and generating findings

Following periods of formal consultation, we developed an engagement summary, which was published on the engagement platform and MRPV website, emailed to key stakeholders and promoted in the local media. The summary included participation statistics, key themes from commentary, and reiterated the commitment that feedback was being used to inform decision-making.

In the case of Fitzsimons Lane Upgrade, the outcomes of the consultation led to major changes that were eventually communicated far and wide.

The success of this project can be attributed to the project team harnessing relationships and collaborating with three local councils and the local MP. The Communications and Engagement team worked closely with the engineers to continue to challenge design solutions and provide engagement opportunities that would address community feedback, but also achieve the project objectives and traffic performance goals.

Specifically, we exceeded all our measures as highlighted below:

Objective	Goal	Result
 Diffuse community outrage	REDUCE FOOTPRINT OF MAIN ROAD INTERSECTION	25% REDUCTION IN INTERSECTION SIZE
	PRESERVING MORE TREES	6000 TREES PLANTED – 6 TO 1 RATIO OF TREES REMOVED
	50% REDUCTION OF FORMAL COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE PROJECT	95% ACHIEVED
	70% SCORE FOR OVERALL COMMUNITY SATISFACTION*	72% ACHIEVED
	70% PEOPLE FELT LISTENED TO, EVEN IF THEIR CONCERNS WERE NOT SOLVED*	90% ACHIEVED
	80% POSITIVE OR NEUTRAL MEDIA SENTIMENT BY TIME OF PROJECT COMPLETION	100% OF MEDIA SENTIMENT POSITIVE OR NEUTRAL AT TIME OF PROJECT COMPLETION
 Build productive relationships with key stakeholders	70% SCORE FOR OVERALL STAKEHOLDER SATISFACTION*	80% ACHIEVED
	70% PEOPLE THOUGHT THEY WERE TREATED WITH RESPECT*	92% ACHIEVED
	OBTAIN PUBLIC ENDORSEMENT FROM PROJECT OPPONENTS ON KEY ISSUES SUCH AS ENVIRONMENT AND LEGACY	 ACHIEVED – TURNED FIERCEST CRITICS TO ALLIES
 Manage construction impacts, minimise disruption	70% PEOPLE THOUGHT WE ACTED IN A PROFESSIONAL MANNER*	90% ACHIEVED
	70% SCORE FOR OVERALL COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER SATISFACTION*	74% ACHIEVED
 Deliver legacy project that stakeholders could be proud of	THE INVOLVEMENT AND COLLABORATION OF PROJECT OPPONENTS	 ACHIEVED – TURNED FIERCEST CRITICS TO ALLIES
	PUBLIC PROMOTION OF THE PROJECT AND ENDORSEMENT OF MRPV IN THE MEDIA	 ACHIEVED

* Independent Community and Stakeholder KPI and KRA Survey conducted by Ipsos

Innovation and uniqueness

To meet our objectives, we needed to challenge our team to think differently and break precedent. We challenged our design managers to solve complex technical issues when reducing the footprint of the Main Road intersection. Using feedback from consultation and listening to public concern we were able to effectively influence our team to exceed expectations.

To meet and exceed our replanting target, we needed to find land and space. Instead, we proactively sought out a partner with strong community links that could secure private and public permission to plant and execute a rollout of this magnitude. In doing so we vastly exceed our target and, in the process, created meaningful links with schools and the local nursery.

Finally, to deliver the Eltham Gateway legacy project, we needed to fund and operate an activity that was beyond our project boundary. This was something new for the organisation and required extensive engagement with a range of landowners. We undertook extensive internal consultation to receive endorsement of our proposal.

In summary, we achieved our objectives by using a combination of fundamental engagement methods that pushed the boundaries where required. By taking a long-term approach, we were able to harness people's outrage and channel it towards a meaningful outcome that the community could own and love. This needed to be complemented with a consistent communications and engagement approach that provided clarity and confidence to all stakeholders. The Fitzsimons Lane Upgrade has now officially been completed and is considered a success by all.



Acknowledgements and to find out more:

We would like to thank Major Road Projects Victoria (MRPV) for agreeing to share this case study and insights to advance engagement practice. This case study was authored by Carlos Ibarra.

At the time of publishing, Carlos was employed by Major Road Projects Victoria in the position of Head of Communications & Stakeholder Engagement.

Major Road Projects Victoria was engaged by IAP2A to support practitioners to share their engagement story as a case study.

For more information about this project see:

- <https://bigbuild.vic.gov.au/projects/major-road-projects-victoria>
- <https://engage.vic.gov.au/>
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