

Draft COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

**For the preparation of a new
Community Strategic Plan
for City of Parramatta Council**

June 2017



PURPOSE

This document outlines the process of engaging with key stakeholders for the preparation of the draft Community Strategic Plan for City of Parramatta Council in 2017-18.

INTRODUCTION

Council is preparing a Community Strategic Plan for the new City of Parramatta. The Community Strategic Plan is the highest level of plan that a Council will prepare. Its purpose is to identify the community’s main priorities and aspirations for the future, and to plan strategies for the achievement of these goals.



Local Government Integrated Planning and Reporting framework

Legislative Requirements

The preparation and implementation of this Community Engagement Strategy is required to meet relevant provisions of the NSW Local Government Act (1993) and the accompanying Planning and Reporting Guidelines for Local Government in NSW (2010).

Section 402 of the Act specifically provides that Councils “must prepare and implement a Community Engagement Strategy based on social justice principles for engagement with the local community in developing the Community Strategic Plan”.

The Planning and Reporting Guidelines set mandatory requirements for Community Engagement Strategies. While the guidelines do not stipulate a prescribed format for these strategies, they do provide the following direction:

Essential Element 1.1

The Community Strategic Plan should be developed and delivered as a partnership between council, state agencies, community groups and individuals. It should address a broad range of issues that are relevant to the whole community.

Essential Element 1.2

Information that identifies key issues and challenges must be presented to the community in an accessible format to assist its participation in the planning process.

Essential Element 1.4

Due consideration must also be given to the expected levels of service expressed by the community when preparing the Community Strategic Plan.

Essential Element 1.5

As a minimum, the Community Engagement Strategy must identify relevant stakeholder groups within the community and outline methods of engaging each group.

Essential Element 1.6

Council must place the draft Community Strategic Plan on public exhibition for a period of at least 28 days and comments from the community must be accepted and considered prior to the endorsement of the final Community Strategic Plan.

Furthermore, a yet-to-commence amendment made to the Act by the Local Government Amendment (Governance and Planning) Act 2016 will insert a new provision, section 402A which will require the following:

A council must establish and implement a strategy (called its community engagement strategy) for engagement with the local community when developing its plans, policies and programs and for the purpose of determining its activities (other than routine administrative matters).

This document outlines the engagement and processes that will be undertaken in 2017 in relation to the draft new Community Strategic Plan. The Community Engagement Strategy will outline how Council proposes to engage with stakeholders and the community in developing and reviewing the Community Strategic Plan.

WHAT GUIDES ENGAGEMENT AT CITY OF PARRAMATTA COUNCIL?

What is Community Engagement?

Community engagement, or public participation, is defined by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) as any process that involves the public in problem solving, decision making and uses public input to make decisions. This includes decisions that directly impact upon living, working, playing,

Draft Engagement Strategy for the Draft Community Strategic Plan

studying, using services and doing business in the City. Community engagement is a dynamic process that covers a wide range of activities including consultation, education, communication and relationship building.

Why engage with our communities?

Council is committed to extensive engagement about our City, and values the diversity of skills, views and expertise in our communities. Engagement is an opportunity to gather different and diverse perspectives to more fully inform Council, and other levels of government, particularly as Council makes decisions about policy directions and service delivery that directly affects our communities.

Broad community engagement informs, and therefore improves, Council’s decision making. A robust, transparent and comprehensive community engagement framework helps ensure that Council, in developing and reviewing its Community Strategic Plan and planning strategies for the City, continues to encourage and support the right of our communities to be involved and influence the City’s future directions.

Council’s engagement charter

Council has developed a set of nine principles that guide and shape our approach to all our stakeholder engagement activities. We hold ourselves accountable for these principles:

<i>Building relationships</i>	We act in an honest, open and respectful way at all times to build strong relationships, partnerships and trust with our stakeholders
<i>Right to be involved</i>	We believe that our stakeholders have a right to be involved in decisions that affect them
<i>Clarity of purpose</i>	We are clear about why and how we are engaging with our stakeholders
<i>Accessible and inclusive</i>	We provide a range of engagement activities to ensure that the broadest possible range of stakeholders have the opportunity to participate
<i>Timely</i>	We engage early on and provide sufficient time for stakeholders to provide input
<i>Tailored</i>	We use a range of engagement and communication methods that suit the purpose of engagement and the range of stakeholders involved
<i>Coordinated</i>	We work and collaborate across Council to ensure our engagement activities are coordinated
<i>Transparent</i>	We make our decisions in an open and transparent way and provide feedback to our stakeholders in order to explain our decisions and let them know how their input has influenced the outcome
<i>Learning from practice</i>	We evaluate our engagement activities and learn from the feedback that has been provided to us.

What level of engagement will occur?

Council’s approach to stakeholder engagement is built upon the IPA2 Spectrum for Public Participation. This internationally recognised platform identifies that there are different levels of engagement from “Informing” through to “Empowering”. No single approach to engagement will serve every project. The spectrum requires that the level of engagement must be determined by considering the issue, problem or opportunity

requiring engagement, the objectives to be achieved by engaging and the extent that stakeholders can assist Council to make decisions.



Inform	To provide our communities with balanced, objective information to assist them to understand Council issues, alternatives and decisions
Consult	To obtain our communities' feedback on issues, analysis, alternatives and decisions being considered by Council
Involve	To work directly with our communities throughout the process to ensure that community aspirations, concerns and issues are consistently understood and considered
Collaborate	To partner with our communities in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of a preferred solution
Empower	To place final decision making in the hands of our communities. (Source: IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum)

There will be matters where it is important for our communities to be consulted or involved and provided with an opportunity to give feedback so that Council can make a more informed decision. In other situations, it may be essential that the community is a part of the solution and so the engagement will be collaborative, with Council and the community partnering on an issue.

Different levels of engagement are appropriate for different activities and issues. For example, there are some issues where Council and our communities have no influence and so the appropriate engagement in this case would be for Council to inform our communities. This might occur where there have been changes to legislation and Council is simply reporting this information. Council will consult on a variety of planning matters and collaborate for example on neighbourhood and program planning.

For the review and updating of Parramatta's Community Strategic Plan, the emphasis will be on the first three levels of engagement – Inform, Consult and Involve, depending on the stakeholders and the issue. Some Collaboration may follow, particularly on specific issues and solutions.

It is important to note that while Council seeks to engage with its communities, it operates under the Local Government Act with a number of regulatory responsibilities and cannot delegate its powers. This means that there is little scope to achieve the highest level of engagement (Empower). Council can establish committees within its decision making framework that include members of our communities and elected Councillors, and these Committees can make recommendations to Council.

ENGAGEMENT TO DATE

This work will build on the detailed consultation that has been completed, via a variety of methodologies with over 12,000 people, including staff since Proclamation in May 2016. This informed the preparation of the statement of Vision and Priorities, designed to guide the early days of the new Council, as required by the Department of Premier and Cabinet and Council's 17/18 Operational Plan.

In summary, consultation has showed that:

- A sense of community is very important as are our green spaces, heritage and local jobs.

- You like the unique cultural and sporting activities and experiences that our City offers.
- You're concerned about transport, parking and traffic management.
- You want to see growth managed so the benefits of development are shared.
- You want more communication and engagement from your Council.
- You want the City of Parramatta to be a vibrant, dynamic and creative place at the centre of Sydney.

This work produced a draft vision which is:

Sydney's Central City, Liveable, Sustainable and Productive – inspired by our communities.

The 8 draft priorities for the City of Parramatta local government area are:

- Building a Stronger, more innovative Council for our community's future
- Managing growth and transport
- Promoting green spaces and the environment
- Providing opportunities for recreation and leisure
- Creating a strong economy with a strong city centre
- Having a community focus
- Supporting arts and culture celebrations and destinations
- Creating Vibrant Neighbourhoods and precincts.

The 2017/18 Operational Plan builds on the draft Vision and Priorities framework and the feedback received on the Operational Plan will be used to inform the development of the Community Strategic Plan.

Additionally, Council has undertaken detailed engagement around a number of key areas including Economic Development, the Environment, Social Sustainability and a Reconciliation Action Plan. Key insights from these plans and strategies will also inform the plan's development.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS ENGAGEMENT

The objectives of this engagement are to:

- Identify long term community objectives in partnership with the City's key stakeholders
- Develop strategies to achieve the objectives
- Identify and determine the level of service to provide

KEY MESSAGES

Community

- Council is now preparing its first Community Strategic Plan for our City is the highest level plan of Council.
- The 20-year plan will outline the long term vision, priorities, strategies and issues to be addressed in Parramatta over the next two decades.
- The plan is built on the Vision and Priorities framework which was developed during consultation with over 9,000 residents over the past 12 months.
- We want to hear from you about your ideas and aspirations for our City both now and into the future

- Have your say and keep up to date by visiting our website or joining our online community panel – Our City Your Say

Staff

- The Community strategic plan is the highest level plan that Council prepares and sets the direction and priorities for the City for the next 20 years.
- Your work is directly linked to the plan
- Your input is important and will make a difference

WHO ARE OUR STAKEHOLDERS/COMMUNITIES?

Council defines our communities as any individual or group of individuals, organisation or political entity with an interest in the outcome of a decision.

There are communities that are connected to places, for example people who all live within a defined geographical area, or there are communities of interest where people share a particular experience, interest, or characteristic. Some examples of communities of interest include young people, business and industry groups, gender, faith groups, sports groups, older people, people with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, cultural and linguistically diverse groups or residents and environmental groups.

All of these communities are referred to as stakeholders. They may be, or perceive that they may be, affected directly or indirectly by the outcome of a decision. Internal stakeholders (individuals who work for or with the decision making organisation) are also part of our communities.

Every engagement process is different and each one will engage our communities in the most appropriate ways. Each significant Council project that involves the participation of our communities will therefore detail the relevant stakeholders and the methods of engagement in the project proposal.

City of Parramatta's Stakeholders

- Residents – General Public, Consultative Committees, Residents Panel, CALD Communities
- Council
- Committees of Council
- Businesses – small and large, and peak bodies or associations such as: Parramatta Chamber of Commerce, Western Sydney NSW Business Chamber, Western Sydney Business Connection.
- Government – federal, state and local, including adjoining Councils
- Government agencies with whom the City has MOUs
- State and Federal Members of Parliament
- Educational Institutions – Universities, VET, Schools
- Service providers and not-for-profits
- Workers in the City of Parramatta
- Visitors to our city
- Council staff, including Leadership Team and Executive
- Media

RISK MANAGEMENT

This is a significant project with both organisational and community wide impacts. Therefore, it is critical to manage engagement and communications in a way that provides both transparency and robust outcomes.

ID	Risk Description	Risk Rating	Level of engagement	Mitigation Strategy
R1	Outcomes of engagement are not in-scope and thus not able to be considered or enacted by any of the IP&R documents.	High	Consult	Ensure a transparent process throughout, agreement on messaging, scope clarity, and strong project management.
R2	Community concerns regarding the consultation and communications process.	Medium	Involve	Communicate frequently with the community throughout the process. Ensure the consultation process demonstrates transparency through reporting back, inclusive engagement and timely information and direction.
R3	Conflict resolution – different opinions amongst decision makers around direction and therefore resolution of projects	Medium	Collaborate	Create a shared vision and project parameters with key decision makers and identified stakeholders early in the project. Ensure constant communication throughout process and report back regularly.
R4	Staff do not understand how their day to work aligns with the plan	Medium	Collaborate	Develop and internal communications strategy is in place. Ensure early workshop with Leadership team. Provide staff with a range of ways to engage with the process. Provide regular updates during the process.

PHASES OF ENGAGEMENT

Phase	Purpose	Activities	Timeframe
Phase 1	Initial community and staff engagement prior to the election of the new Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with Council Advisory Committees (LRAC, FCRC) (5 and 26 June) • Community workshop (22 July) • Community Online survey (June - July) • Leadership team meetings (June and August) • Executive team meetings (June, July, August) • Intranet presence and website presence established (June) • Staff online survey (June - July) • Report back to staff (August) • Report back to community (August) 	June – Sep 2017

Phase 2	Engagement with the new Council and testing of initial engagement findings with the Community	Options being considered include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor workshop • Community drop in sessions for exhibition of draft • Citizens Jury 	Oct 2017 – Feb 2018
Phase 3	Exhibition and feedback on draft Plan prior to adoption	Options being considered include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public exhibition display/drop-in • Online survey • Online public exhibition 	March – June 2018

TIMELINE

Stakeholder	Level of Engagement	Timeframe	Proposed Methodology
Residents	Inform-involve	June 2017-June 2018	May be some integration with other consultations. Methodology includes Community workshops, social media, pop-up kiosks, Citizens Jury, online survey, newsletters and e-newsletters, advertising, translation of key documents, use of video to engage and building on previous engagement work undertaken.
Council's Advisory Committees	Consult-Involve	June 2017	Consultation with FCRC and LRAC
Council Administrator	Inform-Empower	to September 2017	Face to face meetings / briefings
Councillors	Inform-Empower	September 2017- June 2018	Workshops, briefings, invitations to participate at community engagement events
The Committees of the New Council	Consult-Involve	September 2017- June 2018	Consultation at committee meetings
Businesses	Consult	June 2017-June 2018	Online survey, letters, invitation to key meetings
Government departments and agencies with which we hold an MOU	Consult-Collaborate	June 2017-June 2018	One-on-one meetings, online survey, letters, invitation to key meetings
Other Government departments and agencies, Service Providers, Not for Profits	Consult-Involve	June 2017-June 2018	One-on-one meetings, online survey, letters, invitation to key meetings
State and Federal MPs	Inform-Consult	June 2017-June 2018	One-on-one meetings, letters, invitations to key meetings
Local Universities	Consult-Involve	June 2017-June 2018	One-on-one meetings, online survey, invitation to key meetings
Workers	Consult-Involve	June 2017-June 2018	Kiosks, walk-ups, online survey
Visitors	Consult-Involve	June 2017-June 2018	Kiosks, walk-ups, online survey

Council Officers	Inform- Collaborate	June 2017-June 2018	Online survey, workshops, face-to- face-meetings
Media	Inform	June 2017-June 2018	Media releases and Administrator Columns

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Council will raise awareness of the CSP planning process and encourage participation through a number of key platforms and channels including:

- Media activity: in the form of media releases and the Administrator column
- Council website: will provide a key hub for information provision
- Council libraries: key hub for written information provision
- Social Media and Our City Your Say online community engagement platform: will be used for both information and engagement activities
- Council quarterly newsletter and monthly e-newsletter: key vehicles for broad-based communications and call to action
- Translation of key materials in key languages
- Advertising in both local papers and key ethnic newspapers
- Video to create engaging messaging for distribution across social media
- Targeted communication to key stakeholders at commencement of each phase of the project

HOW WILL WE EVALUATE THE ENGAGEMENT?

Council will employ a variety of methods to evaluate the engagement activities. These will include:

- Relevancy and appropriateness of engagement activities to the target group.
- Verbal and written feedback from all identified stakeholders on the effectiveness of the engagement activities.
- Participation levels in engagement activities
- Level of qualitative and quantitative information collected
- Achievement of the engagement objectives stated in this strategy

This evaluation will be used to improve future engagement strategies and methods.