

# Community Engagement and Communications Strategy

2022-2026



# Acknowledgement of Country

Bayside Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians, the Gadigal/Bidjigal people of the Eora Nation.

The people of the Eora Nation, their spirit and ancestors will always remain with our waterways and the land, our Mother Earth.



*Amelia Bates, The hand saving the lost generation*

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# Strategy snapshot



## Council's Commitment to Engagement

Council is committed to engaging with the community in an inclusive, transparent and accountable way to make fair and equitable decisions that reflect the needs and aspirations of the community.



## Strategy Purpose

The Strategy has been designed to clearly state how and when the community will be engaged in Council's decision-making processes so that we can shape a future for Bayside that reflects community aspirations and meets local needs.

The Strategy includes:

- ◆ Principles that will guide our approach to engagement.
- ◆ The activities or decisions Council will engage the community on.
- ◆ The level of influence the community will have.
- ◆ The methods we will use to seek your input.
- ◆ Notification and engagement timeframes for each type of engagement we undertake.
- ◆ Strategies to engage Bayside's diverse community to ensure we hear from a range of people that are representative of Bayside's demographic.



## Strategic Goals

- ◆ Engagement is meaningful.
- ◆ Engagement is accessible and inclusive.
- ◆ Participation reflects Bayside's diverse community.



## People Underrepresented in Engagement Activities

- ◆ People with no internet/low digital literacy.
- ◆ People who speak a language other than English at home.
- ◆ People aged 35 and under.

# Introduction

Bayside Council's Engagement and Communications Strategy has been designed to clearly state how and when the community will be engaged in Council's decision-making processes so that we can work towards shaping a future for Bayside that reflects community aspirations and meets local needs.

Community engagement is how Council connects with the community to seek their opinion on the plans, projects and policies being developed. A coordinated and strategic approach to community engagement and communications aims to:

- ✦ Inform decision-making
- ✦ Build relationships and trust
- ✦ Strengthen community
- ✦ Build a sense of belonging
- ✦ Keep the community informed of engagement activities

Community engagement improves the efficiency and effectiveness of Council by ensuring that Council is aware of and responsive to community concerns. It also ensures that the community has a broad understanding of the functions and constraints of local government.

## Legislative context

Legislation relevant to this Strategy includes:

- ✦ Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
- ✦ Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009
- ✦ Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998
- ✦ Local Government Act 1993 Section 402

## Strategic alignment

The Community Engagement and Communication Strategy is an informing strategy under the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. This Strategy aligns with the Bayside 2032 Community Strategic Plan as follows:

Community Outcome 2.3: The community feels valued and supported  
*Strategy 2.3.1: Engage and communicate with all community members.*

Community Outcome 2.4: The community is united and proud to live in Bayside  
*Strategy 2.4.3: Ensure Council's decisions reflect community objectives and desires.*

# Definitions

## Community engagement

Engagement involves the community in problem-solving or decision-making and uses community input to make better decisions. It is a planned process with the specific purpose of working across communities and stakeholders to shape the decisions or actions of Council in relation to a problem, opportunity or outcome.

## Communications

Communication keeps the community and key stakeholders up to date and informed. It raises awareness of all aspects of council business including services, events, projects, plans and decisions of council. The provision of all relevant information is essential in obtaining informed feedback on any matter being considered.

## Community

Defines individuals and groups of people, stakeholders, interest groups and citizen groups. A community may be defined by their geographic location (a community of place), a community of similar interest (community of practice), or a community of affiliation or identity (such as industry or sporting club).

## Stakeholder

The word 'stakeholder' defines individuals, groups of individuals, organisations or a political entity, with a specific stake in the outcome of a decision, or to the impact of a policy, project or proposition.

## Community engagement plan

A document outlining what Council is engaging the community on, the level of influence the community will have, the methods that will be used and when the engagement will occur. It also includes the channels of communication that will be used, the identified stakeholders and the key information that is relevant to the matter being considered.

## Public participation

Public participation can be any process that directly engages the public in decision-making and considers public input in making that decision. It acknowledges the right of the public to know the potential impacts of the decisions being made and have the opportunity to comment. Comments are then taken into consideration at the decision-making stage.

## IAP2

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) is an international organisation dedicated to advancing the practice of public participation. It has built an international reputation for best practice in public participation.

# Purpose

*This strategy outlines how Council will involve the community in Council decision-making and ensure the community can have a say.*

*The Strategy details what activities or decisions Council will engage the community on as well as the level of influence the community will have, the methods we will use and the notification and engagement timeframes.*

*This will ensure a consistent, transparent and accountable approach to engagement and decision-making.*



# Statement of commitment

Council will engage with the community in an inclusive, transparent, and accountable way, to make fair and equitable decisions that reflect the needs of the community. This commitment will be achieved by:





# Key objectives

Bayside 2032 outlines that Council will “engage effectively with the community and provide information in a timely manner”. Furthermore, Council has committed to ensuring that engagement participation reflects the demographic profile of Bayside and will support the community to play their part in our shared future.

Bayside Council values meaningful engagement and the role it plays in creating a progressive and informed community. Through trust and active participation, we continue to shape a stronger, confident, and more connected City.

As a culturally and linguistically diverse community, Council has committed to ensuring that our engagement participation is broadly reflective of the community’s demography. Continuing to find ways to make our engagement accessible and inclusive to all is a key principle underpinning this Strategy.



# Roles and responsibilities

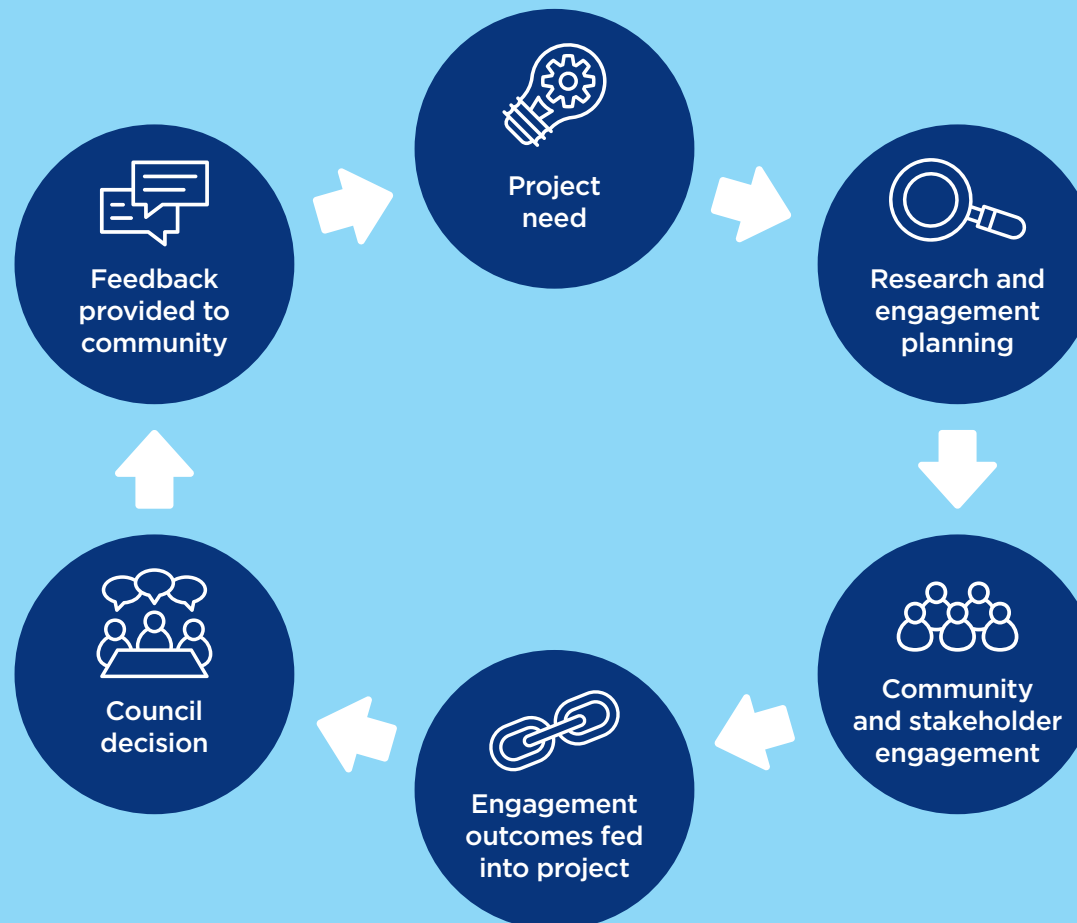
In order to ensure the integrity of the Community Engagement Strategy, everyone involved has a role to play, including Councillors, staff, and the community. The following table summarises the role of stakeholders involved in Bayside’s community engagement activities:

STAKEHOLDER	RESPONSIBILITY
Council	Responsible for decision-making in accordance with relevant legislation.
	Responsible for endorsing the City’s strategic approach to community engagement.
	Supporting our commitment to planning and delivering community engagement by approving adequate resources.
	Promoting community engagement opportunities and encouraging participation of the community.
	Ensuring that community and stakeholder views are given due consideration when making decisions.
	Articulating how the community’s views have been considered in the decision made.
Council Staff	Ensuring the Community Engagement Strategy is consistently implemented and applied across the organisation.
	Ensuring the community engagement needs across all projects, issues and initiatives are effectively considered and resourced.
	Analysing feedback received during community engagement activities and using this information to make recommendations and/or inform a course of action.
	Communicating the outcome and what decision was made and how the community’s views have been considered in the decision.
	Evaluating community engagement activities ensuring adequate feedback is provided to all participants and where necessary, the broader Bayside community.
Community Engagement Team	Provide ongoing guidance and support to staff and contractors in planning and delivering community engagement activities.
	Coordinating the management of community engagement resources, including engagement collateral, templates and Have Your Say website.
	Identifying and responding to the training and development needs of staff in relation to community engagement practice.
	Measuring, reporting on and reviewing the effectiveness of the Community Engagement Strategy.
Community and Stakeholders	Openly receive and consider information provided in relation to community engagement projects.
	Actively participate in community engagement activities by providing considered, constructive input.
	Promote engagement opportunities and encourage participation among relevant networks.
	Communicate with Councillors and Council staff to discuss issues, needs or opportunities to enhance community engagement activities, including participating in relevant evaluation processes.

# The decision-making process

In reaching decisions Council balances a range of factors to ensure that decisions are in the public interest. These factors include strategic priorities as outlined in corporate plans and related policy, community input, the objectives of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, land use priorities identified in strategic plans and applicable policies and guidelines.

This is demonstrated through the Engagement Life Cycle as follows:



# Our community profile

**176,061**  
residents

**29**  
suburbs

**5**  
Council wards

**66.5%**  
of dwellings  
are medium or  
high density

**43.93**  
square  
kilometer

**13,938**  
businesses

**212,836**  
projected  
population grow  
by 2036

Top 5 languages  
spoken at home  
other than English

**Mandarin**  
**Greek**  
**Arabic**  
**Cantonese**  
**Spanish**

**51.5%**  
speak a  
language other  
than English at  
home

**48.1%**  
of residents  
were born  
overseas

**5%**  
need assistance  
due to disability

**1.1%**  
are Aboriginal  
or Torres Strait  
Islander

**14%**  
have no  
home internet  
connection



**5.7%**

Babies &  
pre-schoolers  
(0-4)



**6.7%**

Primary  
schoolers  
(5-11)



**5.3%**

Secondary  
schoolers  
(12-17)



**9.7%**

Tertiary  
education &  
independence  
(18-24)



**20.9%**

Young work  
force  
(25-34)



**21.3%**

Parents  
home  
builders  
(35-49)



**11%**

Older  
workers &  
pre-retirees  
(50-59)



**8.7%**

Empty  
nesters &  
retirees  
(60-69)



**8.6%**

Seniors  
(70-84)



**2.2%**

Elderly  
(85 & over)

# What engagement looks like for Bayside



An individual Engagement and Communications Plan is prepared for each project outlining:

- ◆ The engagement purpose
- ◆ Stakeholders (internal and external)
- ◆ The level of participation that defines the community's role in the decision being made
- ◆ Timing/schedule/critical dates
- ◆ Engagement methods
- ◆ Communication channels
- ◆ Risks and level of impact
- ◆ Reporting back to the community the outcome/s of the engagement
- ◆ Evaluation

Projects are monitored throughout the process and evaluated against the Engagement and Communications Plan.

# Our engagement principles

Bayside Council's approach to community engagement is guided by the following principles:

## Right to be engaged

Community members have a right to be involved in decisions that affect them. Council is committed to ensuring those who are impacted by or have an interest in a decision or initiative of Council will have the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process.

## Representative

Council will adopt strategies to inform and engage with a representative sample of our diverse community.

## Timely

Council will engage early enough for participation to be meaningful. Reasonable time will be given for the community to provide input. Engagement timelines will be considered from the inception of the project and built into the project timeline and project plan.

## Accessible and inclusive

Information and engagement activities will be offered in a range of accessible formats to enable fair and equitable access to participation.

## Clarity of purpose and scope

Council will engage with clarity around what the project/initiative/decision is and what the community can influence.

## Build Relationships

Council will engage in an honest, open and respectful way to build strong relationships and trust within the community.

## Tailored

Council will use a range of engagement and communication methods that suit the purpose of the project and reach the relevant stakeholders. The level of influence the community will have will be appropriate for the nature, complexity and level of impact of the decision being made.

## Transparent and accountable

Council will provide all relevant information relating to the matter being considered to ensure the community can participate in a meaningful way. We will report back on how community input shaped the outcome or decision.

## Strategic

Council will adopt a strategic approach to engagement to avoid duplication of data capture and other inefficiencies. We will consider the time of year, cultural days of significance and other consultations occurring at the time when planning engagement activities.

## Build capacity

Council will continue to work to build the capacity and opportunity for each stakeholder to genuinely participate.

## IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum

The below tables explain the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation which was designed to assist organisations to select the appropriate level of participation that defines the community's role in any community engagement process. The Spectrum is internationally recognised as a best practice approach to engagement planning. Council adopts this approach when planning engagement activities.

PRINCIPLES	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
Goals of Engagement	To provide the community with balances and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions	To obtain community feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions	To work directly with the community throughout the process to ensure that concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered	To partner with the community in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution	To place the final decision-making in the hands of the community
Promise to the Public	We will keep you informed	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives	We will work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations	We will implement what you decide
Example Methods and Channels	Website & social media Noticeboards, posters, signs, flyers & letters Advertising eNewsletter and email Customer Service Centre Use of interpreters and translation of material into community languages	Surveys Quick poll Interviews Small group discussion Town Hall Have Your Say pop-ups and activations	Workshop Focus group World Café Forum Advisory Committee Reference group	Steering committees Deliberative style engagement Co-design Panel	Elections Referendums
Community Role	Listen	Contribute	Participate	Partner	Lead

## Level of engagement required based on community and stakeholder impact assessment

IMPACT	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
High impact	-	-	Appropriate for some high impact projects	Best practice engagement level	-
Medium impact	-	-	Best practice engagement level	Some collaboration may be appropriate	-
Low impact	Appropriate for very minor projects	Best practice engagement level	-	-	-





## Bayside engagement table

The following table explains when and how we will engage the community on plans and strategies and other matters being considered by Council. This is not an exhaustive list but a guide demonstrating the minimum levels and methods of engagement the Council will undertake for matters commonly considered by Council. Where the matter being considered is of a nature that is complex, of high impact and of interest to the community, Council will consider going above these minimum commitments to ensure appropriate engagement is undertaken.

PROJECT TYPE	ENGAGEMENT LEVEL	WHAT WE WILL DO (MINIMUM COMMITMENT)	HOW WE WILL DO IT	ENGAGEMENT PERIOD
Identified asset infrastructure and capital works (e.g. traffic and streetscapes)	Inform and consult	Inform residents of proposed works and provide them with an opportunity to have their say	<p>Notification letter to affected residents/facility users/customers</p> <p>Provide information on Have Your Say Bayside and enable online submissions</p> <p>Promote engagement opportunities via Council's communications channels</p> <p>Offer to hold a meeting/workshop with stakeholders</p> <p>Inform stakeholders of the final decision and results of the engagement</p>	<p>Minimum two weeks for each engagement period</p> <p>Two weeks notification of commencement of works</p>
New capital works and placemaking projects Plans of Management	Consult and/or involve	<p>Provide an opportunity for the community to have a say at each stage of the project</p> <p>Keep the community informed and updated at each stage</p> <p>Update stakeholders on the outcome of the engagement</p>	<p>Create a dedicated Have Your Say Bayside project page and enable online submissions</p> <p>Send notification of project and engagement to all identified stakeholders using appropriate communications channels</p> <p>Host an information session/meeting/workshop/have a say day with stakeholders</p> <p>Promote engagement opportunities to the broader community through Council's communication channels</p> <p>Ensure hard copy information is available upon request</p> <p>Hard copies available in Customer Service Centres</p> <p>Translated information is available upon request or if specific CALD communities are identified as stakeholders</p> <p>Provide a summary of information in fact sheet form or similar in community-friendly language</p> <p>Update stakeholders on the final decision and the results of the consultation and publish this on the Have Your Say project page</p>	<p>Minimum four weeks for each engagement period unless otherwise prescribed by legislation</p> <p>Two weeks notification of commencement of works</p>



PROJECT TYPE	ENGAGEMENT LEVEL	WHAT WE WILL DO (MINIMUM COMMITMENT)	HOW WE WILL DO IT	ENGAGEMENT PERIOD
<p>New iterations of plans and strategies</p> <p>Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program, Operational Plan and Resourcing Strategies</p> <p>Local Strategic Planning Statement</p> <p>Community Engagement Strategy and Community Participation Plan</p>	Involve and collaborate	<p>Provide information and context and provide opportunities for the community to have a say</p> <p>Engagement should be undertaken prior to drafting or re-drafting the document and again once the document has been drafted, prior to adoption</p>	<p>Create a dedicated Have Your Say Bayside project page and enable online submissions</p> <p>Ensure hard copy information and submission forms/surveys are made available in hard copy at Customer Service Centres and upon request</p> <p>Host information sessions/meetings/workshops/forums/focus groups/have a say days/pop-ups and other activations as appropriate</p> <p>Promote engagement opportunities to the community through all Council's communication channels</p> <p>Use simple English and provide an Easy-to-read version upon request</p> <p>Provide translated information upon request</p> <p>Provide a summary of information in fact sheet form or similar in community-friendly language</p> <p>Update stakeholders on the final decision and the results of the consultation. Publish this information on the Have Your Say project page</p>	Minimum four weeks for each engagement period
<p>Programs and services (e.g. Library, school holiday and events programs)</p> <p>Council's services such as customer service, waste, public place maintenance and cleansing etc.</p>	Consult	<p>Provide information and an opportunity for the community and stakeholders to provide input to and feedback on programs and services</p>	<p>Undertake the Community Satisfaction Survey every two years (this measures satisfaction with Council's services)</p> <p>Seek input from relevant stakeholders and community groups when planning and designing new programs, events and services</p> <p>Distribute evaluation surveys to people who participate in programs and events</p> <p>Ensure there is an opportunity for people to provide general feedback via Council's website and Customer Service Centres</p>	As appropriate depending on the program or service being evaluated - two weeks minimum



PROJECT TYPE	ENGAGEMENT LEVEL	WHAT WE WILL DO (MINIMUM COMMITMENT)	HOW WE WILL DO IT	ENGAGEMENT PERIOD
Council policies (e.g. Public Art Policy)	Consult and involve	Provide context information and give the community the opportunity to have a say before drafting or re-drafting the Policy and again once the Policy has been drafted, prior to adoption.	<p>Create a dedicated Have Your Say Bayside project page and enable online submissions</p> <p>Send notification of project and engagement to all identified stakeholders using appropriate communications channels</p> <p>Host an information session/meeting/workshop/have a say day with stakeholders</p> <p>Promote engagement opportunities to the broader community through Council's communication channels</p> <p>Ensure hard copy information is available at Customer Service Centres and upon request</p> <p>Translated information is available upon request or if specific CALD communities are identified as stakeholders</p> <p>Provide a summary of information in fact sheet form or similar in community-friendly language</p> <p>Publish the results of the consultation and the adopted Policy on the Have Your Say project page. Send this to key stakeholders involved in the engagement</p>	

**Note:** For the public exhibition, notification and advertising requirements as they apply to Council's planning instruments such as DAs and Planning Proposals, please refer to section two of this document, Community Participation Plan.

## Instances where Council may not engage the community

There will be circumstances where Council may not engage the community in a decision, or only consult with a section of the community. Examples of this include situations where:

- ◆ Immediate action is required to rectify or remediate an issue
- ◆ Technical or other expertise is the primary input to guide the decision
- ◆ Council is responding in an emergency where public health and safety are at risk
- ◆ Legal, commercial or confidential restrictions are involved
- ◆ The community has already had input through prior engagement activities.

In these instances, Council is committed to informing the community of the decision and rationale behind it.

# Stakeholders

## Identification and analysis

Stakeholders are any individual or group who has an interest in decision-making. They may be residents, ratepayers, business owners, customers, community interest groups, agencies or hard-to-reach groups.

Many people belong to more than one 'community' and will engage with Council on issues that are relevant to them at a particular time. A community may be a geographic location (community of place), a community of similar interest or a community of affiliation or identity (such as business or sporting clubs).

While most community engagement undertaken by Council staff is done in-house, from time-to-time Council will contract consultants to undertake work on behalf of Bayside Council. Particularly sensitive or potentially contentious issues where Council needs to be seen as impartial to the community feedback process.

Analysis of participants in Council engagement projects has identified gaps in the following population groups, compared with their representation in the overall community:

- ✦ People aged under 35 years, in particular people aged 16 – 24 years.
- ✦ People from culturally and linguistically diverse populations.
- ✦ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- ✦ People with low digital literacy and/or without internet access.

## Local context: challenges/barriers to be considered

### Internet access and digital literacy

People without internet access are especially challenging to reach with the demise of community and local newspapers. These newspapers provided opportunities for local governments to frequently communicate with residents as they were typically delivered free to households every week and became a regular platform for reaching older people and those disconnected from Council's digital communication and engagement outlets.

Bayside Council has attempted to bridge this gap by publishing regular hard copy newsletters, but the frequency of publication cannot match the weekly or bi-weekly distribution of a regular community newspaper, and by the time newsletters are distributed, the content is dated. Engagement undertaken for this Strategy identified that residents aged 65+ years were the most likely to require information in hard copy, and engagement and communication methods should consider the needs of these community members.

### People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

Likewise, people for whom English is not their primary language or language spoken at home are less likely to participate in Council engagement activities. While it is cost-prohibitive to produce all engagement material in multiple languages, Council can offer alternate language(s) and formats upon request for those who require it. Furthermore, Council's engagement platform, Have Your Say enables users to select an alternate language option and all content on the page is displayed in that language.

## Young people

Our data also identified that young people are less likely to participate in engagement activities. Young people have also identified more frequent communication from Council, and communication via email as their preferred methods of hearing from Council.

International research<sup>1</sup> has identified that teenagers are more likely to obtain information from digital sources, with the platforms YouTube, TikTok and Instagram being the most frequently used channels by this demographic, closely followed by Snapchat. Facebook has significantly declined in use by this demographic with 32% of US teenagers ever using Facebook in 2022 compared with 71% in 2014-15. Bayside Council heavily relies on Facebook as a social media channel and has designated pages for youth services. But with the decline in young people using Facebook, this is arguably a missed opportunity to reach this age group online.

Likewise, Council's YouTube page is predominantly used to broadcast and record Council meetings and Mayor announcements, content that is likely to appeal to a select group of people and/or those specifically interested in that topic. More could be made of this platform as a communication and engagement approach by producing engaging content that appeals to young people. In relation to TikTok, this was the second most downloaded app in Australia in 2021.<sup>2</sup> Council does not have a TikTok account, representing a missed opportunity to reach a growing number of people aged under 17 years who are using this platform.

1. Vogels et al 2022

2. SMPerth 2022



## Inclusive engagement and hard-to-reach groups

Aboriginal people with a disability, residents from a non-English speaking background and people disability are also under-represented in Bayside's engagement participation. Building and sustaining mutually effective stakeholder relationships with service providers and other agencies which represent these groups can help Council to better connect with these residents.

Council has committed to establishing Aboriginal and disability inclusion community advisory committees to help progress implementation of its Reconciliation Action and Disability Inclusion Action Plans. These committees will comprise representatives from the local Aboriginal community and people with disability and will provide an invaluable resource with whom Council can consult on issues relevant to these groups.

Likewise, sound relationships with Bayside's culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) community are key to improving engagement and communication with this demographic. Council runs a number of events throughout the year that are aimed at various multicultural communities and represent good engagement opportunities to reach this demographic. As mentioned above, there is scope to produce engagement material in alternative language(s) upon request, and Council's Have Your Say webpage includes an option to display the content in alternate languages.

# Community engagement to inform the Strategy

In 2022, Council engaged the Bayside community to better understand how people prefer to receive information from Council and how we can enhance how we engage our diverse community in shaping the future of Bayside.

In addition to community engagement, the Strategy has been informed by:

- ◆ A comprehensive review of international, national and local evidence-based approaches and literature on community engagement and communications
- ◆ The Bayside Community Strategic Plan Review survey and other relevant engagement data captured by Council in the preceding year
- ◆ The demographic profile of the Bayside community.

In August 2022, the first phase of engagement ran from 1 August to 11 September 2022. The purpose was to obtain feedback on:

- ◆ Preferred methods of communication, frequency of communication and topics of interest
- ◆ How Council can enhance how it engages the community in decisions and planning
- ◆ Strategies to engage people who are currently underrepresented in Council's engagement activities.

Council also reviewed feedback from engagement undertaken to inform Council's Community Strategic Plan 2032 and several other Strategies, including:

- ◆ Local Strategic Planning Statement
- ◆ Community Participation Plan
- ◆ Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-26
- ◆ Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan 2022-23
- ◆ Age-friendly Community Strategy 2022-26

Council updated the Strategy and then embarked on the second phase of engagement, which ran from 30 September to 27 October 2022. The purpose was to obtain feedback on the draft Strategy and seek further ideas on how Council can enhance how it engages with the community, including with the under-represented groups.

Overall, data from over 1,080 community members have informed the Strategy. A comprehensive Community Engagement Summary Report will be published upon the adoption of the final Strategy.

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SNAPSHOT

Community Strategic Plan Review Survey

**602**  
responses

Communications Survey

**300**  
responses

Face-to-face conversations with local multicultural community members

**8**  
conversations

Community Engagement Survey

**45**  
responses

Youth Survey

**37**  
responses

Focus group with older and younger people

**14**  
participants

Talking Bayside Webinar

**18**  
views

Council Staff:  
Community Life, City Infrastructure,  
City Project, Customer Service

**4**  
business unit conversations

Mayor's Mobile Offices

**50+**  
consultations

Talking Bayside Webinar

**5**  
attendees

Total Engagement

**1080+**  
people



## Key themes arising from community engagement

The below table summarises the key themes arising from community engagement undertaken to inform the Strategy. A comprehensive Engagement Outcomes Report has been published and can be found on Council’s website and Have Your Say Bayside website.

COMMUNITY RESPONSE THEMES	COUNCIL RESPONSE
<p>Feedback showed that the community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Is unaware of opportunities and appropriate channels to have a say</li> <li>◆ Don’t believe engagement is genuine</li> <li>◆ Believe a decision has already been made prior to engagement</li> <li>◆ Would like Council to continue communication with interested stakeholders as the project progress</li> <li>◆ Expect Council to report back on how their input influenced the final decision or outcome</li> </ul>	<p>Council undertook a Communications survey to better understand how the community prefers to receive information and engage with Council. Feedback will inform future communication with the public.</p> <p>The Strategy includes new engagement principles that detail a commitment to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Ensuring key information is provided in inclusive and accessible formats</li> <li>◆ Engaging in an honest, open and respectful way to build strong relationships and trust within the community</li> <li>◆ Being transparent and accountable by providing all relevant information relating to the matter being considered, providing progress updates and reporting back on how community input shaped the outcome or decision</li> <li>◆ Engaging in a timely manner by engaging early enough in the process for participation to be meaningful</li> </ul> <p>Council also has a commitment to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Be more visible in the community</li> <li>◆ Build Council’s Have Your Say subscribership and e-Newsletter subscribers</li> <li>◆ Include engagement opportunities in Council’s hard copy Newsletter that is distributed to over 60,000 homes in the LGA</li> </ul>



COMMUNITY RESPONSE THEMES	COUNCIL RESPONSE
<p>Respondents would like to see the diversity of Bayside’s community reflected in the images used in Council’s publications, including images of community members out and about in the Bayside local government area.</p>	<p>Council will build on Council’s image library by commissioning photos of community members in Bayside locations, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✦ People of all ages and abilities</li> <li>✦ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people</li> <li>✦ People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds</li> <li>✦ Images that are inclusive of people who identify as LGBTQIA+</li> </ul> <p>Consent and permissions would apply to photographing and using images of community members.</p>
<p>14% of respondents identified speaking directly with the Mayor and Councillors as a preferred method of engaging with Council, of this, only 4% said they would be willing to attend a Council meeting.</p>	<p>Council staff can increase awareness of the public forum item on Council meeting agendas as an opportunity to address the Mayor and Councillors. This can be achieved through increased promotion across all Council’s communications channels.</p> <p>Council can also increase opportunities for the community to speak directly with the Mayor and Councillors outside of formal Council meetings via Town Hall meetings, pop-up stalls, Mayor’s mobile offices and community events.</p>



COMMUNITY RESPONSE THEMES	COUNCIL RESPONSE
<p>The top three preferred communications channels overall are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Email</li> <li>◆ E-Newsletter</li> <li>◆ Social media</li> </ul> <p>The top three communications channels preferred by people aged 65+ are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Hard copy newsletter</li> <li>◆ E-Newsletter</li> <li>◆ Website</li> </ul> <p>The top three communication channels preferred by young people are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Social media, primarily Tik-Tok and Instagram stories</li> <li>◆ YouTube</li> <li>◆ Emails and e-Newsletters</li> </ul>	<p>Council already disseminates key information via these Email, e-Newsletter and social media. Council will continue to consider these preferences when developing communications strategies to promote community engagement activities.</p> <p>The variation in responses between people of different ages highlights the need to adopt a multi-channel approach to communicating with the community to ensure all members of the community are reached and included.</p> <p>While Council currently uses Instagram and YouTube to promote opportunities to have a say, the platforms aren't used in a way that is engaging to young people. Young people are less inclined to click through to the Have Your Say website to view more information and submit their feedback.</p> <p>Consider using Instagram 'stories' targeted to young people with quick polls to capture feedback on-the-spot before redirecting to the Have Your Say website.</p> <p>Also consider creating a Council Tik-Tok account to communicate and engage with young people in Bayside.</p> <p>Commit to considering social media engagement along with formal submissions and reflecting this in engagement reports.</p> <p>These preferences are also noted in the section, 'What engagement looks like at Bayside' section of the Strategy.</p>

# Strategies to engage hard-to-reach and under-represented people

Below is a summary of suggestions to improve engagement with underrepresented and hard-to-reach people in the Bayside community:

PEOPLE	APPROACH	COMMUNICATION	METHODS
Young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Adopt a less formal approach</li> <li>◆ Use youth-friendly language</li> <li>◆ Consider times that suit young people (outside of school hours)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Tik-Tok</li> <li>◆ Instagram stories</li> <li>◆ YouTube</li> <li>◆ Email and e-News</li> <li>◆ Local schools and universities</li> <li>◆ Parents and family members</li> <li>◆ Through local youth services and centres</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Youth-friendly locations               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Youth centres</li> <li>◆ Places in the public domain where young people gather</li> <li>◆ Sporting clubs</li> <li>◆ YCMA</li> <li>◆ Youth programs e.g. School holiday programs</li> </ul> </li> <li>◆ Enable/facilitate youth-led engagement               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Consider establishing a youth council, advisory group or panel</li> </ul> </li> <li>◆ Use polls and surveys on social media (Tik-Tok and Instagram stories)</li> </ul>



PEOPLE	APPROACH	COMMUNICATION	METHODS
People who speak a language other than English at home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Understand the diversity of the Bayside community</li> <li>◆ Be aware of cultural nuances and sensitivities</li> <li>◆ Continue to foster and build relationships with local support services and leaders in the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ WeChat (mainly for Mandarin/Cantonese) speaking people</li> <li>◆ Promote the availability of free Translating and Interpreter Service (TIS) for people who contact Council via the phone</li> <li>◆ Ensure key information is provided in community languages upon request</li> <li>◆ Display important information in public locations in a range of languages (Libraries and Customer Service Centres)</li> <li>◆ Provide video material with translated captions</li> <li>◆ Share information through community service networks</li> <li>◆ Information in English is simple and easy to understand with images that support the interpretation of the message</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ In-person engagements (in libraries and town halls) with an interpreter(s) present</li> <li>◆ Seek support from local support services such as Advanced Diversity Services and Sydney Multicultural Services</li> <li>◆ Ensure key engagement information is in community languages</li> <li>◆ Consider establishing a multicultural advisory committee or panel</li> <li>◆ Identify and build relationships with leaders in the community</li> <li>◆ Employ bi-lingual workers with training/qualification in interpreting</li> </ul>
People with low digital literacy or without a home internet connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Commit to providing information and engagement opportunities in a variety of formats</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Disseminate information and engagement opportunities via letterbox drop or hard copy Newsletter</li> <li>◆ Display hard copy information and surveys at Council's Customer Service Centres and Libraries</li> <li>◆ Utilise signage in high-traffic locations around the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Be more visible in the community (i.e. attend community events, pop-ups and other activations)</li> <li>◆ Ensure participation can occur in-person or over the phone - not just online</li> <li>◆ Enable internet access at Libraries and pop-up internet cafes</li> </ul>



PEOPLE	APPROACH	COMMUNICATION	METHODS
Aboriginal people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Ask the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community how they want to be engaged</li> <li>◆ Adopt a culturally aware and sensitive approach</li> <li>◆ Engage the Aboriginal community early in the process, especially where the matter being considered may be of interest to Aboriginal people or impacts places of significance to Aboriginal culture and heritage, as defined in the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plan</li> <li>◆ Allow an appropriate amount of time for Local Aboriginal Land Councils and leaders in the community to circulate opportunities to have a say and for the community to review the information, consider a response and respond to Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Inform the Aboriginal community of opportunities to have a say through the Local Aboriginal Land Councils, Elders and other leaders in the community</li> <li>◆ In-person notification of opportunities to have a say</li> <li>◆ Share information through community service networks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Continue to engage the Bayside Council Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group</li> <li>◆ Continue to build relationships with the Local Aboriginal Land Councils, local Elders and leaders in the community</li> <li>◆ Create opportunities for Aboriginal employment within Council</li> </ul>



PEOPLE	APPROACH	COMMUNICATION	METHODS
<p>People with disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Consider accessibility and the inclusion of people of all abilities when planning engagements</li> <li>◆ Make provisions to accommodate support people</li> <li>◆ Provide information on how to get to a venue to assist with travel planning</li> <li>◆ Be flexible and adaptable depending on the needs and preferences of the person/people being engaged</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Share engagement opportunities through community service networks</li> <li>◆ Provide information in alternative formats, including Easy-to-read English and hard copy versions, as well as Word and accessible PDFs</li> <li>◆ Ensure the website is compliant with the latest standards in web accessibility</li> <li>◆ Printed and online material uses simple English, large fonts, appropriate images, contrasting colours, clear structure and headings etc</li> <li>◆ In-person communication is clear and respectful</li> <li>◆ Promote the National Relay Service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Seek support from disability support services to promote and facilitate engagement</li> <li>◆ Seek advice from Council’s Community Development Disability Specialist to design, promote and deliver engagements</li> <li>◆ Engage the Bayside Disability Inclusion Action Plan working group and other people with disability in the community in identified engagement opportunities</li> <li>◆ Consider co-designing accessible parks, playgrounds and other community assets and programs with people with disability</li> <li>◆ Choose locations that are easily accessible</li> </ul>

# Communication strategies

Accessible and engaging communication is key to inclusive and effective community engagement.

Communications planning is undertaken by Council when planning any engagement project.

Considerations include:

- ◆ Clear and consistent messaging;
- ◆ Simple use of English;
- ◆ Appropriate amount of information to enable informed engagement;
- ◆ Honest and open communication;
- ◆ Clarity, transparency and accountability;
- ◆ Appropriate channels that reach people without internet access, people with disability, people for whom English is not their primary language, and people with low literacy levels;
- ◆ Access to translated materials.





# Customer service and experience



In the context of this Strategy, customer service is the support provided to community members and stakeholders before, during and after an engagement activity. Customer experience is the internal and subjective response community members have to any interaction with Council throughout the process.

Council is committed to providing exceptional customer service every time a customer interacts with Bayside, including anyone who participates in Council's engagement activities.

# Reporting, review and evaluation

Informing engagement participants of the project outcome is important to ensure people feel they have been meaningfully consulted.

It helps mitigate the belief that engagement is tokenistic and keeps Council accountable to the community.

This Strategy will be reviewed to align with Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting schedule, the Department of Planning, Industry & Environment's (DPI&E) review of the Community Participation Plan and the proposed amendment to the Local Government Act regarding Development Control Plans. Following this, the Strategy will be reviewed every four years or when relevant legislation changes.

The reporting and review of engagement activities are summarised as follows:

## Reporting

- ◆ Collate and analyse community input
- ◆ Report back to engagement participants with results
- ◆ Report to decision makers



## Review

- ◆ Inform engagement participants and broader Bayside community of decision
- ◆ Explain how the decision was made and how community's input influenced the decision



## Evaluate

- ◆ Evaluate the engagement process
- ◆ Learn from the evaluation to inform further engagement activity



SECTION TWO

# Community Participation Plan

The Community Participation Plan (CPP) determines how and when Council will engage with the community under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act), including legislative reform, plan-making and to make decisions on the proposed development. Council will always exhibit a project/proposal for the minimum CPP timeframe and will consider an extended timeframe for an exhibition based on the scale and nature of the proposal.

The objectives of the EP&A Act include:

- ✦ The promotion of orderly and economic use of land;
- ✦ Facilitating ecologically sustainable development;
- ✦ Promoting social and economic well-being;
- ✦ Promoting good design and amenity of the built environment;
- ✦ Providing increased opportunity for community participation.

## Why is community participation important?

Community participation creates a shared sense of purpose, direction and understanding of the need to manage growth and change while preserving local character. It provides access to community knowledge, ideas and expertise; and builds confidence in the planning system.

## What functions does the Community Participation Plan apply to?

The CPP applies to Regulatory Plan Making and Assessments.

## Plan Making

Council plans for communities by undertaking strategic planning and considering social, environmental and economic issues in light of the special attributes of the area.

Examples of this work include preparing new local environmental plans; planning proposals to amend local environmental plans; development control plans; contribution plans; policies; strategies and master plans.



## Assessments

Officers of Council make recommendations to independent local and regional planning panels in relation to development applications and planning proposals, and to Council itself in relation to Planning Proposals. When making assessments about proposed developments some may also be determined under delegation by Council staff. Consideration is given as to whether the proposals are in accordance with strategic priorities outlined in state and local government policies and strategies, and whether impacts are acceptable and in the public interest in accordance with applicable policies and guidelines, including the EP&A Act. Consideration is also required to be given to public submissions in accordance with the EP&A Act.

### Who does the Community Participation Plan apply to?

Council's CPP is a requirement of the EP&A Act (see division 2.6 and Schedule 1 of the EP&A Act) and applies to the exercise of planning functions by Council and its delegates. The Bayside CPP will be reviewed on a periodic basis. It does not apply to other New South Wales (NSW) planning authorities, such as other local councils. All other NSW planning authorities will prepare a CPP as per the requirements of the EP&A Act.

### Development Control Plan (DCP) notifications

Bayside Council is currently undertaking a review of the Rockdale and Botany DCP's to create a single Bayside DCP. This is expected to be finalised in late 2020. The DCP notifications in the individual Rockdale and Botany DCP will apply until the adoption of the Bayside DCP. The CPP will then be updated to reflect the Bayside DCP notifications.

## Exhibition timeframes

Section 2.21(2) of the EP&A Act details the types of proposals that must be considered in the CPP and Schedule 1 sets a minimum exhibition timeframe for most of these proposals. Council will always exhibit a proposal for this minimum timeframe and will consider an extended timeframe for exhibition based on the scale and nature of the proposal. The only requirements in this plan that are mandatory are those set out and these are the same as the mandatory minimum timeframes in Schedule 1 of the EP&A Act.

Key points to note about public exhibitions include the following:

- ◆ A public authority is not required to make available for public inspection any part of an environmental impact statement whose publication would, in the opinion of the public authority, be contrary to the public interest because of its confidential nature or for any other reason;
- ◆ Timeframes are in calendar days and include weekends if the exhibition period is due to close on a weekend or a public holiday. Council may extend the exhibition to finish on the first available workday;
- ◆ The period between 20 December and 10 January (inclusive) is excluded from the calculation of a period of public exhibition.

## Mandatory exhibition timeframes

PLAN MAKING MANDATORY EXHIBITION TIMEFRAMES	
Draft Community Participation Plan (CPP)	28 days
Draft Local Strategic Planning Statements (LSPS)	28 days
Planning proposals for local environmental plans subject to a gateway determination	28 days or as specified by the gateway determination, or due to the minor nature of the proposal, that no public exhibition is required
Draft Development Control Plans	28 days
Draft Contribution Plans	28 days

DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT MANDATORY EXHIBITION TIMEFRAMES	
Application for development consent (other than for complying development certificate, for designated development or for State significant development)	14 days or as specified by the gateway determination, or due to the minor nature of the proposal no public exhibition is required
Application for development consent for designated development	28 days
Application for the modification of development consent that is required to be publicly exhibited by the regulations	The period, if any, to be determined by the consent authority in accordance with the relevant community participation plan
Environmental impact statement obtained under Division 5.1	28 days

## Non-mandatory exhibition timeframes

Several Council functions and proposals do not have minimum exhibition timeframes. As a matter of course in line with our community participation objectives, Council will typically exhibit documents related to the exercise of these functions and proposals for the timeframes described below.

NON-MANDATORY EXHIBITION TIMEFRAMES	
Draft legislation, regulation, policies and guidelines	28 days based on the urgency, scale and nature of the proposal
Application for modification of development consent that is required to be publicly exhibited by the regulations	Up to 14 days based on scale and nature of the proposal
Plans for urban renewal areas	Commonly six weeks
State Environmental Planning Polices (SEPP's)	Discretionary based on the urgency, scale and nature of the proposal
Re-exhibition of any amended application or matter referred to above	Discretionary based on the urgency, scale and nature of the proposal

There may be other proposals not subject to the mandatory exhibition timeframes for which Council will have the option to exhibit for at least 28 days and engage with the community in line with our community participation objectives.

Additionally, there may be some occasions where a government priority or administrative requirement demands immediate action on proposals that prevent the implementation of our usual community participation process.



## Glossary

### Contribution Plan

A plan developed by councils for the purpose of gaining financial contributions from new development towards the cost of new and upgraded public amenities and/or services required to accommodate new development.

### Development Control Plan

A plan that provides detailed planning and design guidelines to support the planning controls in a LEP.

### Gateway Determination

A gateway determination is issued following an assessment of the strategic merit of a proposal to amend or create an LEP. It allows for the proposal to proceed to public exhibition.

### Local Environmental Plan (LEPs)

An environmental planning instrument developed by a local planning authority, generally a council. An LEP sets the planning framework for a Local Government Area.



**Bayside Council**  
Serving Our Community

**Bayside Customer Service Centres**

Rockdale Library, 444-446 Princes Highway, Rockdale  
Westfield Eastgardens, 152 Bunnerong Road, Eastgardens  
Monday to Friday 8:30am – 4:30pm

Phone **1300 581 299 | 9562 1666**  
Email **[council@bayside.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@bayside.nsw.gov.au)**  
Web **[www.bayside.nsw.gov.au](http://www.bayside.nsw.gov.au)**