

2023 - 2027
COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT
STRATEGY
(INCLUDING
PARTICIPATION
PLAN)



Legislative requirements | Integrated Planning and Reporting

The 2023-2027 Community Engagement Strategy (including Community Participation Plan) has been prepared in accordance with Section 402A of the Local Government Act 1993, Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, and responds to the requirements of NSW Government Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IPR).

What is IPR?

IP&R is a framework that NSW councils use to plan, document, and report on their plans, ensuring a holistic approach to community needs and aspirations. The framework supports a clear vision for the future and provides an agreed direction for delivering community priorities and aspirations.

What is a Community Engagement Strategy?

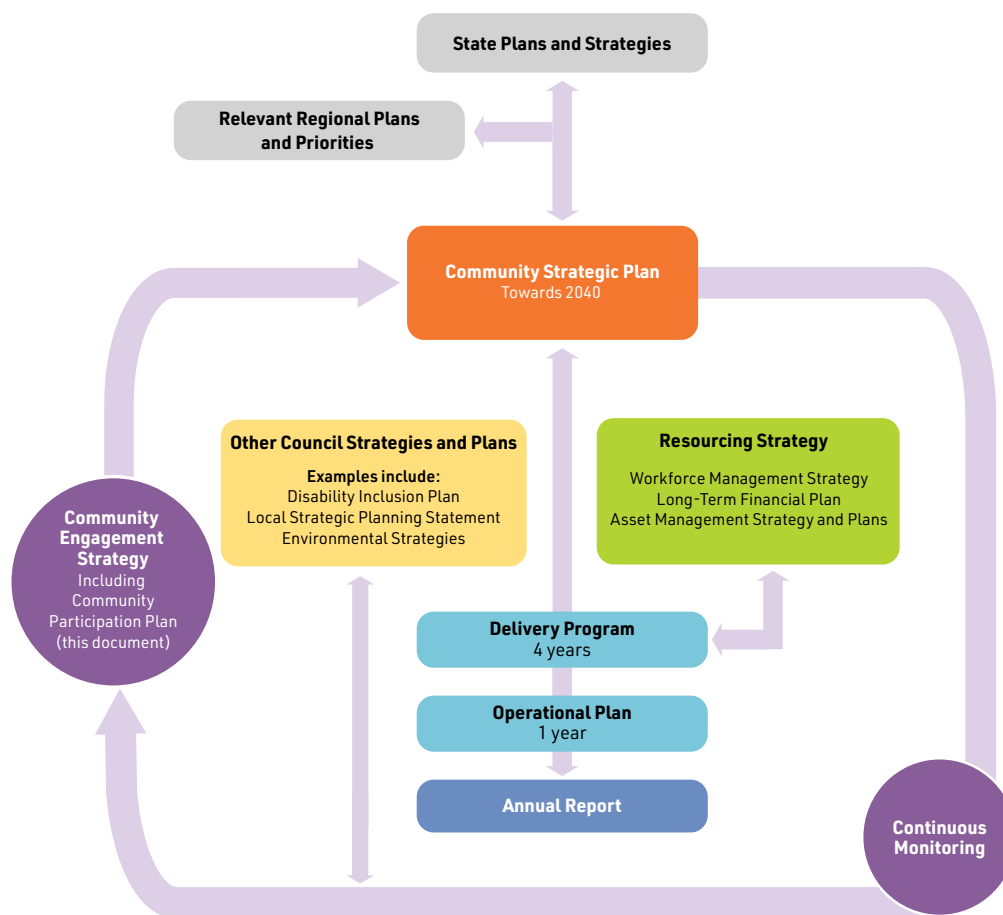
We are required to prepare a Community Engagement Strategy to support the development of all plans, policies, programs and key activities. This includes those relating to IPR, as well as strategic plans and programs required under other legislation. The Strategy is reviewed in line with Council elections and IPR requirements.

The strategy is based on the social justice principles of access, equity, participation and rights, it identifies relevant stakeholder groups in the community and outlines the methods that we will use to engage each of these groups.

It is important to understand the difference between informing the community about what the Council is proposing, and empowering the community to play an integral role in determining the goals, strategies and actions to be undertaken. The strategy acknowledges that effective engagement allows communities to be active participants in shaping their own future and play a part in positive change.

Towards 2040

Dubbo Regional Towards 2040 is our highest-level plan. This plan is developed with and on behalf of the community. Its purpose is to identify the main priorities and aspirations for the future and to plan strategies for achieving these goals.



For more information on Council's plans visit:
dubbo.nsw.gov.au/About-Council
(A-Z Plans and Strategies)



or scan the QR code



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Wiradjuri people who are the traditional custodians of the land on which we live, work and play. We pay our respects to Elders past and present of the Wiradjuri Nation and thank them for their care of the land, water and sky and extend that respect to other Indigenous Australians.

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Our Vision, Purpose and Values

Our Vision

Creating Community for Today and Tomorrow

Our Purpose

Lead, Connect, Deliver

Our Values



Progressive

Be Curious, Courageous and Committed

- Challenging the status quo
- Finding better ways
- Seeking change and innovation



Sustainable

Balanced Approach to Growth and Opportunity

- Financially sound
- Social equity
- Conscientious leadership and governance
- Environmentally responsible



One Team

Working Together

- We take care of each other and ourselves
- Partnering to deliver better outcomes
- Fostering positive experience
- Investing in people



Integrity

Accountable for Our Actions

- Valuing and acknowledging our cultures
- Leading by example
- Open and ethical practices
- Upholding our commitments

Mayor's Message



Connecting and engaging with the community is at the centre of everything we do in Local Government. Council is responsible for delivering essential services that support our thriving region, including housing, transport, recreation, the local economy and the environment. But beyond service delivery, we must listen. Everyone in Dubbo Regional Council's Local Government Area has the right to share their ideas, concerns and aspirations for the future of our region.

At a time when wider issues such as the rising cost of living and housing supply challenges affect our communities, engaging with our residents is more important than ever. This strategy outlines Council's commitment to ensuring everyone has the opportunity to have their say and be informed about decisions and projects that shape our region. We are dedicated to an open, fair and transparent process where all voices are valued.

Through this strategy, we set out a whole-of-Council approach to engagement, one that encourages participation, builds trust and fosters meaningful conversations. We are committed to making sure that community members:

- ✓ Have opportunities to provide input and make recommendations to Council;
- ✓ Are informed about decisions that may impact them;
- ✓ Can raise issues and have their say in a way that suits them; and
- ✓ Feel confident that their feedback has been considered.

This is not just a document, it is our commitment as a Council to ongoing, proactive engagement that strengthens trust and transparency. I encourage you to assist us and be part of shaping the future of our wonderful community.

Councillor Josh Black

Mayor of Dubbo Regional Council

“This is not just a document, it is our commitment as a Council to ongoing, proactive engagement...”

About the strategy

This Community Engagement Strategy outlines our approach to engaging with the community and stakeholders. It provides transparency and clarity for all stakeholders so they can understand their role in the decision-making process.



The strategy outlines who, when and how we will engage on plans and policies. The level of community involvement varies depending on the project and the potential impact of the decision.

Engaging with our stakeholders and community allows us to gather feedback, which may include views, needs, issues and aspirations, and use this information to make effective, robust and sustainable decisions.

Community engagement is not a single activity; it's an ongoing conversation that allows us to build a stronger understanding of our community and help us make better decisions.

While engagement does not replace the final decision made by the elected body, community engagement plays an important role.

Thanks to Our Community

We encouraged community to help shape this strategy, here is what we learned from your feedback.





About the Dubbo Region

The Dubbo Regional Local Government Area (LGA) shines as a dynamic, thriving activity centre nestled in the heart of New South Wales' Central West Orana Region.

Covering 7534 square kilometres, the Dubbo Regional LGA extends from Eumungerie in the north, Kerr Creek in the south, Twelve Mile in the east and Minore in the west, and encompasses the major thriving hubs of Dubbo and Wellington.

The Dubbo Regional Council LGA benefits from significant investment opportunities and sustainable economic growth, servicing a catchment area equivalent to one third of the size of New South Wales.

The Dubbo Regional LGA is home to 56,720 people (2023 estimate), which represents an average annual increase of 1.3% over the last 10 years. This population will continue to grow, with an additional 10,000 people projected to call the Dubbo Regional Council LGA home by 2036.

Dubbo Regional Council is transitioning towards becoming a vibrant, culturally diverse destination hub. Almost 20% of the population was born overseas, with just under 20% speaking a language other than English at home.

The Dubbo Regional LGA is a thriving location which will continue to expand over time.

Major projects will continue to generate economic growth within the region.

Home to approximately 5,100 successful businesses the Dubbo Regional LGA has proved to be a fantastic destination to invest in. The region also provides the opportunity for an affordable lifestyle to become an attainable reality with a median monthly mortgage repayments at around \$1,500 and median rents averaging at \$300. There is something for everyone with notably over 100 sporting clubs, three shopping malls and 57 educational facilities.

Community Snapshot



Average Age

36



Total Population

56,558 (March 2024)



Total Households

22,686

If we engaged 100 people from our community population, the representation would reflect



50 are men



50 are women



40 households comprise of couples with children



17 are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander



18 were born overseas



17 are between the ages of 12 – 25



17 are over 65+ years



62 are 15 years and over working full-time

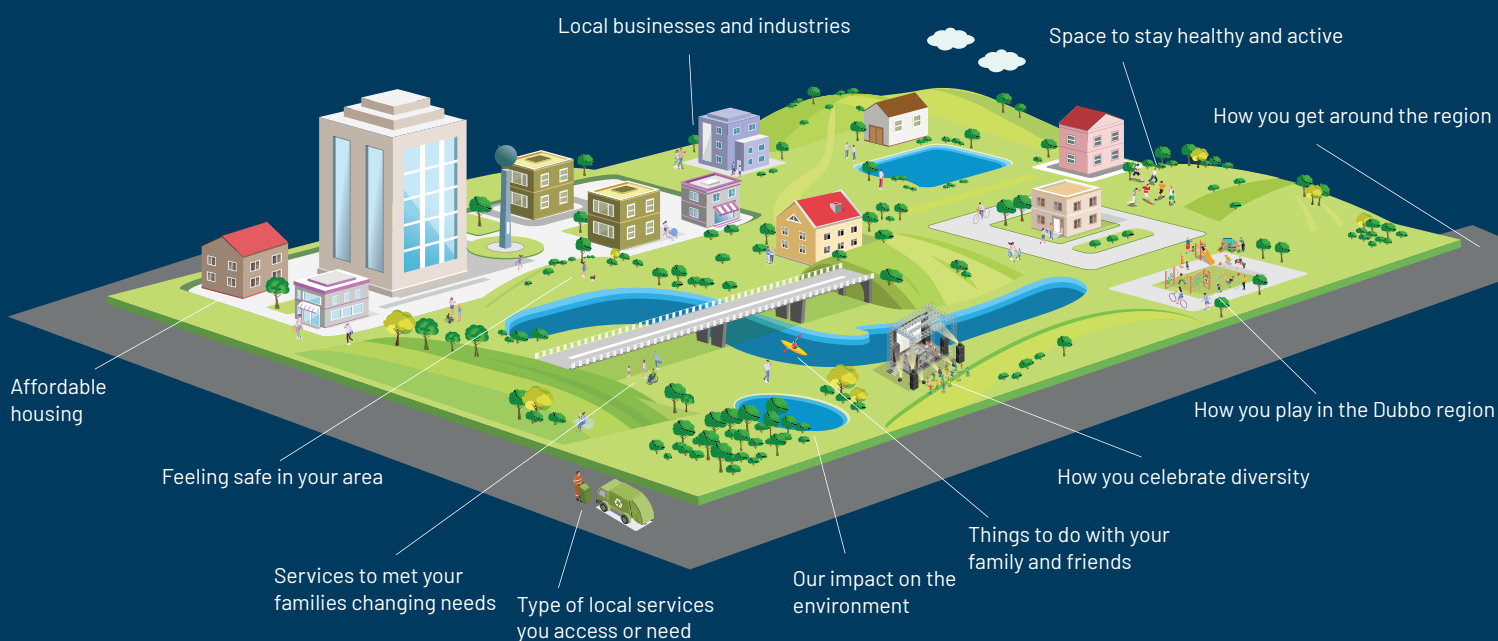


6 have a need for assistance with core activities

Note: References – REMPLAN, ABS (2021 Quickstats).

Please note that all statistics have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Participation Can Influence How You Live in the Dubbo Region



Our Region



*Facilities of Dubbo Regional Council

What is Community Engagement?

Community engagement is about Dubbo Regional Council (DRC) and the community achieving together. It is a process that encourages the community to contribute their thoughts and ideas to help shape the future of our region. Community engagement is essential for building trust and fostering relationships between DRC and our community. We proactively plan meaningful engagement opportunities to listen and respond to the current and future needs of our community.

Community engagement is not a single activity; it's an ongoing conversation that allows us to build a stronger understanding of our community and help us make better decisions.



Engagement Principles

Dubbo Regional Council have adopted the following principles which represent the foundational elements and underlying aspiration for community engagement.



Build relationships

Act in an honest, open and respectful way to build strong relationships, partnerships and trust with our stakeholders.



Right to be involved

Believe stakeholders have a right to be involved in decisions that affect them.



Clarity of purpose

Well planned with a defined purpose and stages for community input.



Accessible and inclusive

Seek views representative of the community ensuring the most comprehensive range of stakeholders are able to participate. A broad range of activities are to be considered for this to occur.



Timely and coordinated

Engage early and provide enough time for our stakeholders to provide input so that view can be considered.



Tailored

Use a range of communication and engagement methods that suit the purpose and type of project we are consulting on. Consider the impact, complexity, risk, timing and range of stakeholders.



Transparent

Provide information in a manner that enables community to provide input. Make decisions in an open and transparent way, provide feedback to our community to explain decision making processes and decision outcomes.



Continuous learning

Evaluate our engagement activities and learn from feedback and best practice.

Why Community Participation in Engagement is Important

Participating in community engagement contributes to improving the quality of life for those living in the Dubbo Regional Local Government Area and has a direct impact on Council planning, facilities management and service delivery.

By getting involved in an engagement activity you can:

- ✓ Be a leading voice for the community
- ✓ Share ideas, aspirations, concerns, needs and experiences
- ✓ Make connections and hear what others think
- ✓ Provide input on priorities and resource allocation
- ✓ Find out more information about projects or plans directly from the project team
- ✓ Learn about the matters Council must consider before making the decision
- ✓ Gain a better understanding of how the outcome of the decision will benefit the wider community.

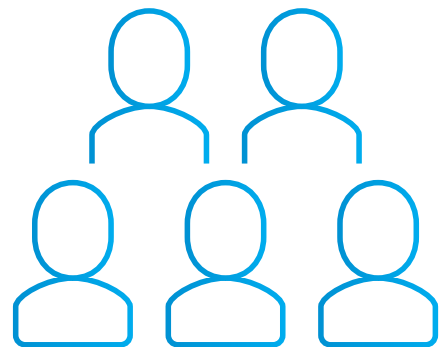


When we will seek community participation

When we engage with the community varies depending on the complexity and nature of the activity, as well as the level of impact on the community.

Times we may engage with the community include:

- ✓ Change of service or strategic direction is proposed
- ✓ New project, plan or initiative being developed
- ✓ Significant policy, strategy or plan being developed or changed
- ✓ Major infrastructure projects being considered or planned
- ✓ Issues raised that require a decision
- ✓ Decisions being made that will impact our community.



When we won't seek community participation

There are some circumstances when we will not engage with the community to seek input. For example:

- X No scope for community influence
- X Public health and safety are at risk
- X Immediate resolution is required or we are responding to an emergency
- X Matter is strictly confidential or commercially sensitive
- X Developing or reviewing internal procedures and protocols
- X Legal constraints.



Roles and Responsibilities

The Mayor



- ✓ Act as the spokesperson for the Council to promote engagement on key strategic plans including developing the Community Strategic Plan.
- ✓ Together with the Chief Executive Officer, ensure adequate opportunities and mechanisms for engagement between Council and the local community.
- ✓ Promote partnerships between Council and key stakeholders.

Chief Executive Officer



- ✓ Oversee preparation of the Community Strategic Plan and Integrated Planning and Reporting documents along with endorsement by the elected Council.
- ✓ Ensure that community members are given enough information to participate in the Integrated Planning and Reporting process in a meaningful way.
- ✓ Sustain an organisational culture that values community participation and capability, seeking effective community input.
- ✓ Ensure appropriate performance monitoring of engagement systems, processes and practices.

Mayor and Councillors



- ✓ Promote engagement on key strategic plans including supporting and participating in community engagement for the development of the Community Strategic Plan.
- ✓ Participate in the development of Integrated Planning and Reporting documents, including the Community Strategy Plan.
- ✓ Endorse and monitor the Community Strategic Plan on behalf of the community and approve the remaining components of the Integrated Planning and Reporting documents.
- ✓ Promote and participate in community engagement activities.

Council Staff



- ✓ Work with and support the Chief Executive Officer in the development and ongoing monitoring of the Community Engagement Strategy and plans.
- ✓ Implement the Community Engagement Strategy and provide timely and ongoing advice to the Chief Executive Officer on community views.
- ✓ Build capability to support effective community engagement practices across the organisation.



Responsible Behaviour

An effective participation framework should enable community to actively, constructively and respectfully have their voice heard and equally hear the voice of others.



Be concise and once you have voiced your feedback, let others have an opportunity.

Do your best to understand the pros and cons of every option. Be objective and fair-minded.

Listen to and respect other points of view.

Everyone is encouraged to participate but it is OK to just listen and observe.

Pay attention to the person speaking. If you think you will forget an idea that comes to mind, write it down.

Be solution focused; if identifying an issue or opportunity, you should present ideas on potential solutions and/or proposed next steps.



Insisting on an unreasonable amount of information, scale of services, or making an unreasonable number of approaches.

Rudeness, anger, aggression, harassment, threats or physical violence.

Behaviour that is obstructive or deliberately unhelpful.

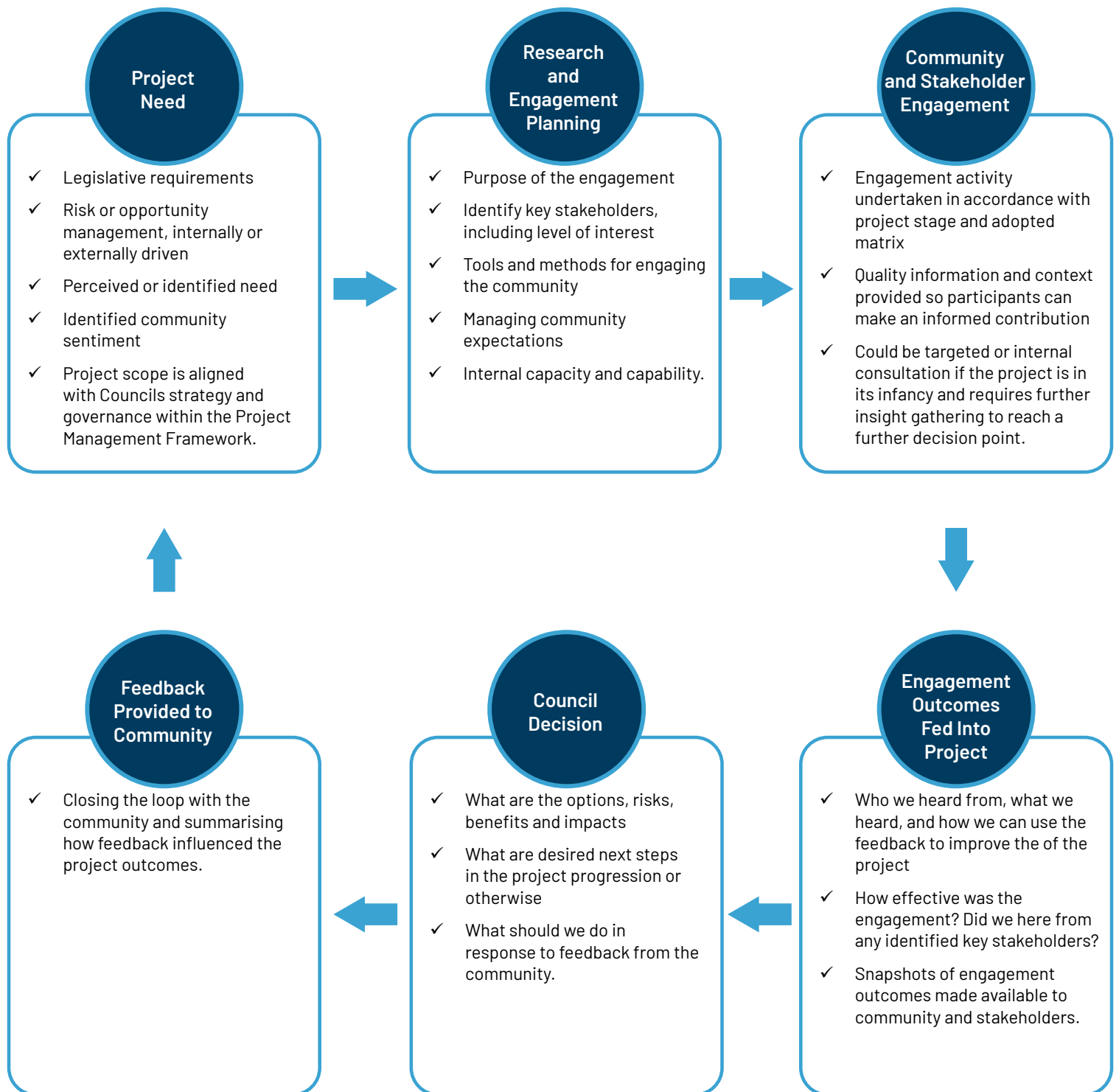
Making allegations with no evidence.

Personal attacks on individuals including Councillors, Staff or other community members.

Continue to proceed with issues even though they have been dealt with.

Our Engagement Approach

An effective participation framework should enable community to actively, constructively and respectfully have their voice heard and equally hear the voice of others.



Note: Projects outside clear alignment to adopted Delivery Program or Operational Plan, or require resource allocation, must go to Council for direction prior to undertaking further community engagement.
In this circumstance, strategic direction will be sought by Council before broader or targeted community consultation.

How We Engage



Engaging in person

Engagement or participation is not only about having your say, it is also about listening to others to understand their point of view. In person engagement activities allow an opportunity for discussion.

- ✓ Exhibition documentation displayed in Council's Customer Experience Centres in Dubbo and Wellington.
- ✓ Community workshops, stakeholder meetings, information sessions, public events and pop ups enable the community to understand and be understood by others when sharing their views.
- ✓ Community committee and reference groups provide a forum for community group representatives to raise issues relevant to the Committee's Terms of Reference.
- ✓ Direct contact, either in person or over the phone, with individual community members and groups on specific projects and plans.
- ✓ Members of the public are able to address the Mayor and Councillors at Committee meetings or during Public Forum at Ordinary Council meetings. Meetings are live streamed and the recording catalogued online. Presenting at a meeting is a great opportunity to speak directly to the elected body but there is no opportunity for two way engagement during the meeting.



Engaging online

Online communication and engagement continues to grow and can allow people who may otherwise be excluded from in person engagement activities to have their say.

- ✓ Council's online engagement platform YourSay – yoursay.dubbo.nsw.gov.au provides the community a central hub to engage, participate and provide feedback on a range of Council's projects, plans, policies and studies including public exhibitions.
- ✓ Council's website provides information to the public on Council activities, services and projects including progress reports on the adopted Towards 2040 Delivery Program and Operational Plan.
- ✓ Social media keeps the community up to date on Council news and provides the community access opportunities to learn more and have their say on Council matters.
- ✓ All Council meetings are live streamed via YouTube, providing greater access to Council decisions and debate and eliminates geographic barriers preventing the community from attending meetings.
- ✓ YourSay Community Engagement E-newsletter provides a quarterly update on Council's engagement activities including information about engagement projects open for feedback, how you can participate and outcomes of completed engagement activities.



Engaging through traditional methods

There is still a need and appetite for traditional methods of engagement. Some traditional methods are outlined under engaging in person.

- ✓ Print publications distributed to our stakeholder groups and specific industry and special interest publications.
- ✓ Direct mail to residents and groups, including rates notices and courtesy notices of major projects.
- ✓ Onsite or physical displays and signage at events or key locations.



Elected Body

Community can engage with the elected body directly on issues that impact them. Direct contact details are listed on our website dubbo.nsw.gov.au.

Our Stakeholders

A stakeholder is any individual, group of individuals, organisation or entity with a specific stake in the outcome of a decision made by Council. Our stakeholders can vary significantly from project to project.

Community engagement is a shared responsibility. We all have a role to play in participatory decision-making that shapes the places where we live, work, play and create. There are roles for both Council and the community in initiating, leading, participating in and delivering engagement activities.

A vital component of the community engagement process includes identifying and understanding key stakeholders who will be impacted by or who have an interest in a decision. Our engagement aims to reach the community to ensure a range of views are heard.



Below is a list of the stakeholder groups who may have an interest in or be impacted by our decisions and projects;

External Groups	Internal Groups
✓ Residents ✓ Travellers to the region for work purposes ✓ Business, industry, investors or developer groups ✓ Dubbo Chamber of Commerce ✓ Organisations with a Council delegate ✓ Community organisations/groups ✓ Sporting organisations ✓ State and Federal agencies ✓ Members of Parliament ✓ Schools and education providers ✓ Visitors ✓ Tourism industry groups ✓ Social groups including: • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders • People living with disabilities • Migrants and new Australian Citizens • Youth • Seniors ✓ Council Volunteers.	✓ Mayor and Councillors ✓ Council staff ✓ Standing Committees • Corporate Services Committee • Infrastructure, Planning and Environmental Committee • Culture and Community Committee ✓ Community Engagement Groups • Council Community Committees • Dubbo Regional Interests Councils • Reference Groups ✓ Working parties ✓ Project control groups ✓ Advisory groups.

Inclusive and Accessible Engagement

We want to hear from all members of our community to make sure that what we deliver for our community is informed, relevant and responsive to community needs. We recognise that some groups are less likely to participate and may face additional barriers or challenges in engaging with us.

These groups include;



We know from early engagement for this strategy that we need to make inclusion of diverse groups a key priority.

Some of the ways that we will do this are:

- ✓ Identify hard-to-reach groups during engagement planning
- ✓ Using a range of engagement methods and tools that cater to the needs of hard-to-reach groups, including DRC's Advisory Committees
- ✓ Continuing to engage with DRC's Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group to provide advice on strategic matters of importance to local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- ✓ Providing our engagement materials in accessible formats
- ✓ Translating our engagement materials when required
- ✓ Hosting our engagement events in accessible venues and locations
- ✓ Providing more in person opportunities, where possible.

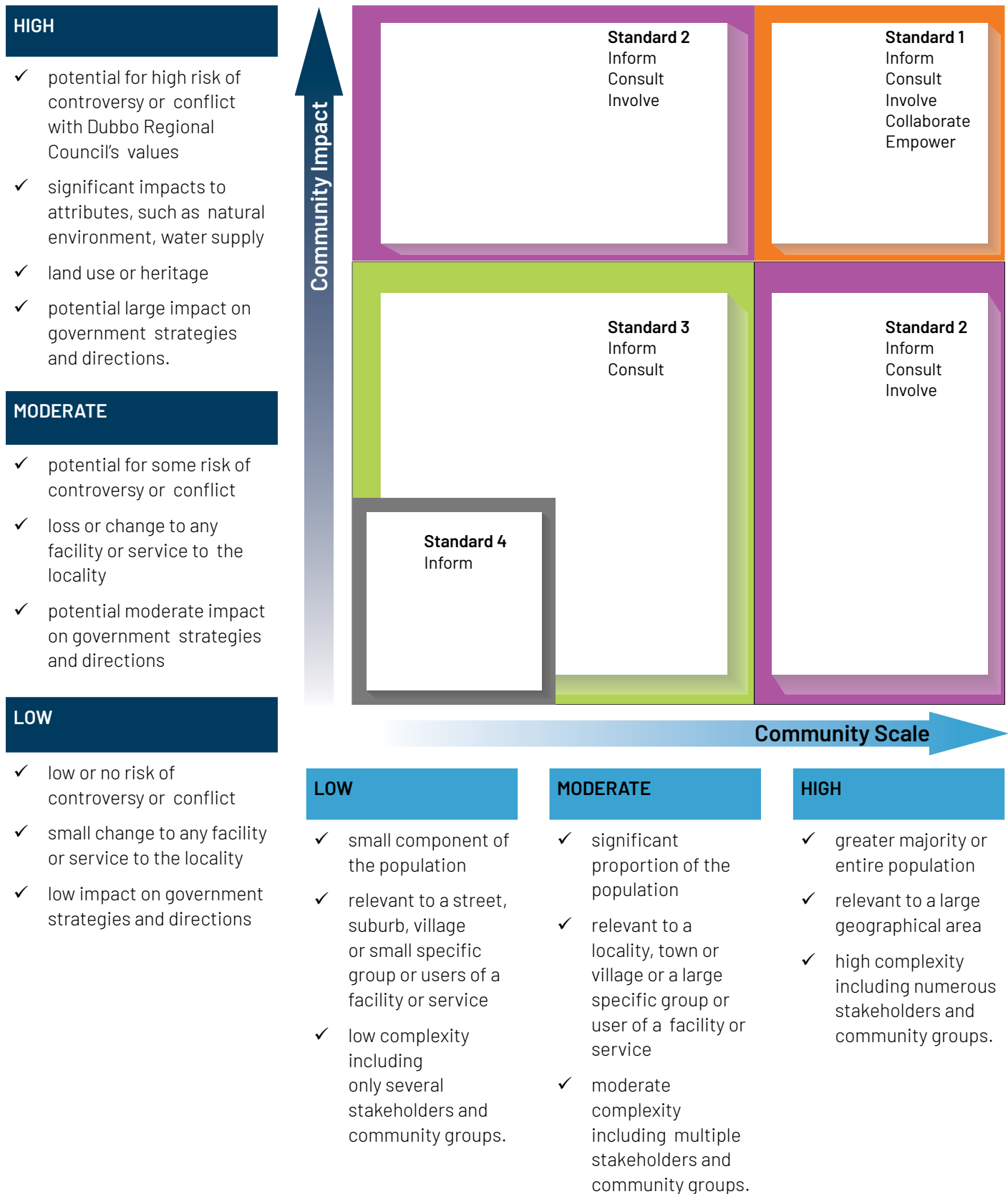


Levels of Community Participation

The International Association for Public Participation Spectrum (IAP2) has five levels of engagement that correspond to the community's increasing level of influence on decision-making. The IAP2 Spectrum helps to determine the appropriate scope of input from the community and the role that the community will have in the decision-making process.

	STANDARD 4	STANDARD 3	STANDARD 2	STANDARD 1	
	Inform 	Consult 	Involve 	Collaborate 	Empower 
Goal	To provide information where the decision has already been made, in a timely manner	To obtain community feedback on ideas or projects to progress the decision-making	To work directly with the community throughout the process to ensure that concerns and aspirations are considered and understood	To partner with the community in each aspect of the decision including the development of options and identification of the preferred solution	To place final decision-making in the hands of the community
Promise	"We will keep you informed"	"We will listen to and acknowledge your concerns and provide feedback on how community input influenced the decision"	"We will work with you to ensure your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the options developed and provide feedback on how community input influenced the decision made"	"We will look to you for advice, so your innovations and recommendations are incorporated in the final decisions as much as possible"	"We will implement what you decide"
Role of the community	Listen	Contribute	Participate	Partner	Decide
INCREASING INFLUENCE ON THE DECISION					

Engagement Standard Matrix



Engagement Methods and Resourcing

Our engagement methods are outlined according to the level of community participation being sought, which can be determined by using the engagement standard matrix.

The following tables provide guidance on a range of engagement channels in accordance with the standard (1, 2, 3, 4). Methods from a lower level may also be utilised to support a higher level. For example, use of email campaigns to generate participation in a collaborative workshop.

KEY

Type	in person	online	traditional	
Time	0-5 hours	5-25 hours	over 25 hours minimum per task including preparation and staff time	
Cost	no cost	< \$1,000	\$1,001 - \$10,000	> \$10,000 minimum cost not including staff time
Action	required	recommended	optional	not required

INFORM					Suggested Action per Standard			
Engagement Method	In practice	Type	Time	Cost	1	2	3	4
Customer Experience	Information provided to Customer Experience Officers to respond to customer enquires.							
Dubbo Regional Council Website	Information is published on Council's website example project updates, latest news, water outages and scheduled maintenance.							
Media Release	Issued to news outlets.							
Social Media	Social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, TikTok and Twitter).							
Print and digital advertising	Digital marketing, newspapers, industry publications or television.							
Public notices	Placed in traditional media outlets such as newspapers, radio or community notices.							
E-newsletters	Council's project based or general e-newsletters. subscribers from Yoursay.dubbo.nsw.gov.au or dubbo.nsw.gov.au/newsletters.							
Presentations	Present to internal stakeholder groups. Include exit survey of engagement process at completion of event.							
Direct Mail	Addressed correspondence to a specific location, person or organisation.							
Letterbox Drop	Unaddressed bulk drop (letter, flyer and/or notification) to people with a letterbox in a determined area.							
Site specific promotions and signage	Circulate information or posters to frequently visited locations or site-specific areas such as libraries, or public spaces and facilities.							
Information in rates notice mail out	Provide information in annual or quarterly rate notices.							

KEY

Type	in person	online	traditional	
Time	0-5 hours	5-25 hours	over 25 hours minimum per task including preparation and staff time	
Cost	no cost	< \$1,000	\$1,001 - \$10,000	> \$10,000 minimum cost not including staff time
Action	required	recommended	optional	not required

Consult					Suggested Action per Standard			
Engagement Method	In practice	Type	Time	Cost	1	2	3	4
YourSay – Online Engagement Platform	Seek feedback using consultation tools such as mapping, voting tools, polls, surveys and discussion forums on yoursay.dubbo.nsw.gov.au .							
Meetings by invitation	Invite stakeholders to meet with staff and/or Councillors to discuss and exchange views. Include onsite/location based meetings, include exit survey of engagement at completion of event.							
Reference Groups	Invite people with an active interest in a decision or problem to be part of a meeting where detailed and robust conversation occurs to inform decision making, generally held in small groups of no more than 20 people, include exit survey of engagement process at completion of event.							
Externally facilitated 'design charrette' / high participatory workshop	Intensive, hands-on workshop bringing people from different disciplines and backgrounds together to with members of the community to explore design options for a particular area. Include exit survey of engagement process at completion of event.							
Community Survey	Council undertakes a community survey every two years to understand community priorities and overall level of satisfaction with Council's performance. These in-depth community survey's aim to randomly survey a proportion of the Local Government Area and are conducted via telephone and online.							

INVOLVE					Suggested Action per Standard			
COLLABORATE					Suggested Action per Standard			
Engagement Method	In practice	Type	Time	Cost	1	2	3	4
Working parties and advisory groups	Focus groups and conversations held at events such as community information pop ups.							
Standing and other Community Committees	Seek feedback using consultation tools such as mapping, voting tools, polls, surveys and discussion forums on yoursay.dubbo.nsw.gov.au .							

EMPOWER					Suggested Action per Standard			
Engagement Method	In practice	Type	Time	Cost	1	2	3	4
Community survey on a specific topic	Engage a vendor to survey a random sample of a specific topic.							
Elections and referendums	Council may seek community views on any issue through a non-compulsory poll of electors' options or it may hold a 'constitutional referendum' on certain electoral matters, in which voting is compulsory and the result is binding.							

Disclaimer: The above lists are Council's identified and preferred methods of community engagement and participation. Council is not limited to this list. Depending on project needs and industry trends alternative methods may be used as required in order to reach a range of people, interest, ages and communities.

Challenges to Engagement (Risk and Opportunities)

Council will need to overcome the following risks and challenges when undertaking engagement activities:



Limited participation

Engagement needs to be broadly promoted to ensure all members of the community have the opportunity to actively participate.



Accessibility

Engagement needs to take place in accessible locations across the region and use both technology and traditional methods.



Failure to engage with identified interest groups or specific sectors

Targeted engagement is needed to reach certain groups such as young people and minority groups.



Resource and timing constraints

We must allocate efficient resources to allow a range of opportunities and sensitivity to the timing of engagement delivery.



Scope creep and expectation management

It is important to provide context and scope to help manage community expectations and define engagement objectives.



Lack of internal engagement

Start the conversation early with Council staff around the opportunities for involvement.



Consultation fatigue

Program engagement activities to reduce the risk of community and key stakeholders feeling saturated.

Implementation – What We Engage On

The following table explains how we will engage with our community about plans and strategies, as well as other work we do, so our community knows what to expect from us. Planning-related projects have specific exhibition timeframes that must be met, which are outlined in the following pages.

PROJECT	Level of Engagement	How?	What?	Exhibition period (minimum requirement)
Council's key long-term plans - Community Strategic Plan - Delivery Program - Resourcing Strategy - Community Engagement Strategy, including Community Participation Plan - Local Strategic Planning Statement - Strategies - Master/Precinct plans - Flood studies and risk management plans.		Involve the community to ensure priorities are reflected in the decision. Provide a range of opportunities/channels for the community to share their views. Prior to public exhibition there may be multiple methods of engagement undertaken to develop a draft plan. Council's website. Written notification if directly impacted.	Directly reflect community concerns and aspirations in the finalised plan.	28 days.
Council's annual Operational Plan, Budget and fees and charges	Consult	Involve the community to ensure priorities are reflected in the decision. Provide a range of opportunities/channels for the community to share their views. Council's website.	Directly reflect community concerns and aspirations in the finalised plans.	28 days.
Crown Land Lease & Licences Crown Land managed by Council may enter a lease or licence agreement under the Crown Land Management Act 2016 act. The execution of Lease and Licence agreements are determined by Council.	Consult	Council's website. Public notification.	Acknowledge submission.	28 days.
Key Council policies - Code of Meeting Practice - Payment of Expenses and Provisions of Facilities to Councillors Policy - Others as required	Consult	Council's website.	Acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	28 days or 42 days as specified by legislative requirements or Council resolution.
New capital works (for example, consultation to prepare draft master plans prior to exhibition)	Involve	Involve the community to ensure priorities are reflected in the decision. Provide a range of opportunities/channels for the community to share their views.	Directly reflect community concerns and aspirations in the finalised plan.	Minimum 21 days.

PROJECT	Level of Engagement	How?	What?	Exhibition period (minimum requirement)
Planning proposal for the Dubbo Regional Local Environmental Plan 2022, subject to a Gateway Determination Planning proposals explain the intended effect of and justification for a proposed amendment the Dubbo Regional Local Environmental Plan 2022.	Consult	Council's website. NSW Planning Portal. Written notification/letter. If the planning proposal is site-specific (for example, area plans which only apply to certain sites within the region) we notify landowners and adjoining landowners. Minor amendments or general amendments that do not affect a specific site may not be notified by letter.	Acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	14 days, 28 days, 42 days or as specified by the Gateway Determination.
Naming of Roads	Consult	As required by Section 7 of the Roads Regulation 2018. Council's website.	Acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input was considered in the assessment.	14 days.
Land Re-classification Land that Council owns, and which: - has been either classified as 'operational' or 'community'; and - Council intends to re-classify the land to another classification, must be done in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993.	Consult	Council's website. Public notice.	Acknowledge submission	28 days and a public hearing scheduled for at least 21 days after public exhibition occurs.
Local Approvals Policy The local Approvals Policy identifies activities under Section 68 of the Local Government Act. Low impact activities that can be undertaken without approval from Council. Including (but not limited to): community events, footway dining and mobile vending, providing they meet certain criteria.	Consult	Council's website.	Acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	42 days.
Land Classification Land that Council owns/ manages, or will own/manage (eg. where Council is a Crown Land Manager of Crown Land), must be classified as either 'community' or 'operational' under the Local Government Act 1993.	Consult	Council's website. Public Notice.	Acknowledge submission.	28 days scheduled prior to a council resolution.

PROJECT	Level of Engagement	How?	What?	Exhibition period (minimum requirement)
Development Control Plans A Development Control Plan provides detailed planning and design guidance to support the aims, objectives and planning controls in the Dubbo Regional Local Environmental Plan 2022.	Consult	Council's website. If the Development Control Plan amendment is site-specific (for example, area plans which only apply to certain sites within the region) we notify landowners and adjoining landowners. Minor amendments or general amendments that do not affect a specific site may not be notified by letter.	Acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	28 days.
Development Contribution Plans Development contribution plans set out the framework and requirements to help fund, plan and deliver infrastructure and services to meet the needs of current and future residents.	Consult	Council's website. If the Contributions Plans amendment is site-specific (for example, area plans which may only apply to certain sites within the region) we notify landowners and adjoining landowners. Minor amendments or general amendments that do not affect a specific site may not be a notified letter.	Acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	28 days.
Planning Agreements A Planning Agreement is an agreement entered into between Council and a developer where the developer agrees to fund public amenities or infrastructure, dedicate land at no cost to Council, or provide monetary contributions or any other material public benefit, for a public purpose.	Consult	Council's website. Written notification/letter. Planning agreements must be exhibited alongside the associated development application or planning proposal. If it is not practicable for notice to be given at the same time as the development application or planning proposal, it must be given as soon as practicable.	Acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	28 days.
Development Applications Application for development consent (other than for complying development certificate, for designated development or for Regionally Significant Development)	Consult	Written notification/letter. Council's Application Tracker.	Acknowledge concerns and provide information on how public input was considered in the assessment.	14 days* *Council may extend the public exhibition period without further notification to those already notified. * Development applications considered to have negligible impacts are not required to be notified.
Integrated Development Applications Applicants that require concurrency from a state agency.	Consult	Written notification/letter. Council's Application Tracker.	Acknowledge concerns and provide information on how public input was considered in the assessment.	14-28 days.

PROJECT	Level of Engagement	How?	What?	Exhibition period (minimum requirement)
Designated Development Applications Refers to high-impact developments (for example if it is likely to generate pollution) or are located in or near an environmentally sensitive area (for example wetland).	Consult	Written notification/letter. Council's Application Tracker.	Acknowledge concerns and provide information on how public input was considered in the assessment.	28 days.
Council related Development Applications Council-related development application means a development application, for which a council is the consent authority, that is— a made by or on behalf of the council, or b for development on land, other than a public road within the meaning of the Local Government Act 1993— I. of which the council is an owner, a lessee or a licensee, or II. otherwise vested in or under the control of the council.	Consult	Written notification /letter. Council's Application Tracker.	Acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input was considered in the assessment.	28 days.
Modified Development Applications - Notification for all Modified Applications being Section 4.55 (1) modifications involving minor error, misdescription or miscalculation (1A) modifications involving minimal environmental impact (2) other modifications involving greater than minimal environmental impact will be at the discretion of the Statutory Planning Services Team Leader.	No requirement.	Council's application Tracker.	Acknowledge concerns and provide information on how public input was considered in the assessment.	No requirement.

Disclaimer: For any inconsistencies, refer to the EP & A Act 1979 and regulations 2021.

- Note:**
- ✓ For complex applications Council may also notify and advertise in local print media.
 - ✓ Where alterations or additions are proposed in statutory planning functions, the level of notification will be at the discretion of the Manager Building and Development Services.

Circumstances Where Notification is Not Required

Some minor development is of a scale and nature that does not require formal notification of adjoining properties.

Provided the proposal complies with all applicable development controls (LEP, DCP and other relevant policies) and/or is considered unlikely to detrimentally impact adjoining properties, no formal notification period applies.

This applies to development such as:

- ✓ Residential dwellings
- ✓ Alterations and additions
- ✓ Residential sheds and garages
- ✓ Rural buildings
- ✓ Landscaping
- ✓ Fences
- ✓ Pools
- ✓ Change of use
- ✓ Strata subdivisions of existing developments
- ✓ Boundary adjustments where no additional lots are created.

Where required by the plan, written notice of an application will be sent to adjoining owners of land subject of the application. This includes persons who own land that share a common property boundary with the site and land directly on the opposite side of a creek, road, pathway or similar thoroughfare.

As a minimum immediate adjoining properties are identified through Council's property system. Council at its discretion will further notify beyond, depending on the complexity of the application.

Exempt and Complying Development

Some development, such as exempt and complying development under the State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008, does not allow opportunities for community engagement.

Public Exhibition Notification and Timeframes

The process of public exhibition and notification is an important part of how DRC engages with the community on planning decisions. This provides a regular and valuable way for the community to participate in the decision making process by making comments on development proposals or draft plans during the public exhibition period.

Council's public exhibition processes are determined by the type and locality of the draft strategic plan or proposed development. This influences who Council notifies, where the information is available and the timeframe the documents will be publicly available.

Disclaimer:

Council may go beyond these timeframes and, at its discretion, may provide additional notification or longer timeframes to those property owners and occupiers, community groups, organisations and agencies that, in the opinion of Council, may have an interest in the strategy, plan or development proposal.



What is Public Exhibition?

Public exhibition means making documents, including draft plans, strategies, policies or development applications, available for the community to view and comment on through a formal submission. The public exhibition process typically involves notifying the community that documents are available to view publicly. Depending on the type of development application or plan, notification can be provided through Council's YourSay engagement platform, yoursay.dubbo.nsw.gov.au and/or by mail (letter or email) to members of the community, adjoining landowners and residents or to relevant agencies and community groups.

How are exhibition timeframes determined?

The Local Government Act (1993) also specifies minimum mandatory exhibition timeframes for some planning related matters such as Plans of Management (POMs). For proposals and plans not covered by these Acts, Council has its own standard minimum exhibition timeframes outlined in this strategy. The EP&A Act (1979) details the types of proposals and plans that must be considered. Schedule 1 of the EP&A Act (1979) sets the minimum statutory exhibition timeframes for these plans and proposals.

What is a submission?

When comments on an engagement project, draft document or development application are provided to Council they are known as a formal submission. A submission outlines the support or concerns that an individual or group has relating to the engagement project. Submissions are encouraged to be made via the online engagement platform YourSay – yoursay.dubbo.nsw.gov.au or in writing.



Are Submissions Public Documents?

In accordance with the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009, submissions to documents on public exhibition are public documents and may be viewed by the public and published on Council's website, listed on Council's DA Online tracker portal and/or included in Council meeting reports and agendas.

If you do not want your submission to be publicly available, a written request for confidentiality will be required.

Council may also determine a submission is not suitable for public viewing and publication. This could be because it contains personal, private or defamatory material. Further information about how Council manages submissions can be found in the "Privacy, Copyright, Disclaimer" section of Council's website, dubbo.nsw.gov.au or in the "Privacy Plan" on Council's YourSay Engagement Platform, yoursay.dubbo.nsw.gov.au.

Personal Information

- ✓ A submission should include your name, address and preferred contact method. YourSay or email correspondence for Development Applications are preferred.
- ✓ Persons have the right to remain anonymous if they so choose by refraining from submitting their personal information, however, the submission may be given less weight in the overall assessment and consideration.
- ✓ Please be aware that these details may be publicly available.
- ✓ All submissions are publicly available under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 No 52.
- ✓ Effort is made to redact submissions where personal details are included; however, this may not always be possible.

Disclosing political donations

The Local Government and Planning Legislation Amendment (Political Donations) Act 2008 imposes disclosure obligations on submitters in relation to political gifts and donations. Detailed information about your obligations under the Act can be found in the "Code of Conduct" section of Council's website, dubbo.nsw.gov.au



Key Points to Note About Public Exhibitions

- ✓ Development Applications (DA'S) may be notified for longer than the minimum days if deemed necessary.
- ✓ Notification periods may be extended in consideration of the mailing process aiming to ensure that people notified receive the full notification period to consider the proposal.
- ✓ Timeframes are in calendar days and include weekends.
- ✓ If the exhibition period is due to close on a weekend or a public holiday, the exhibition may finish on the next business day.
- ✓ The period between 20 December and 10 January (inclusive) is excluded from the calculation of a period of public exhibition.
- ✓ Council is not able to make available for public inspection any part of an Environmental Impact Statement whose publication, in the opinion of Council, would be contrary to the public interest because of its confidential nature or for any other reason.

Here Are Some Tips to Writing an Effective Submission

- ✓ Include the name of the Engagement Project, Draft Strategic Plan or the DA reference number and the property address the DA relates to (this information is usually included in the notification material).
- ✓ Clearly state the reasons for objecting or supporting the Engagement Project, Draft Strategic Plan or Development Proposal and why. Give details about how you arrived at your assertions.
- ✓ Be brief and to the point or include a single page summary sheet where the submission is lengthy because of a number of issues covered.
- ✓ Be specific to the Project, DA, Strategic Plan or Strategy and avoid generalising.
- ✓ Be well researched and based on facts, not on hearsay. Talk to Council staff who are dealing with the application/project prior to writing your submission and make sure you understand what is proposed.
- ✓ Avoid statements which are defamatory or offensive.
- ✓ Suggest changes that might resolve the problems identified.
- ✓ Include your name and contact details as well as a daytime telephone number, as a Council staff member may need to clarify matters you raised in your submission.



Should I Sign a Petition?

You may find that someone has started a petition to object to a Council proposal. Someone may also ask you to sign a pro forma letter. Council will consider petitions and letters received. However, an individual letter about how the proposal will affect you gives Council a much clearer picture of the likely impacts.

Where should I send my submission?

Unless otherwise stated on the exhibition, a submission should be sent:

-  **Online** – yoursay.dubbo.nsw.gov.au
-  **By Post** – PO BOX 81, Dubbo NSW 2830
-  **In Person** – Customer Experience Centres Cnr Church and Darling Street, DUBBO
Cnr Nanima Crescent and Warne Street, WELLINGTON
-  **By email** – council@dubbo.nsw.gov.au

All submissions should be addressed to the Chief Executive Officer



Your submission must be received at Council's Customer Experience Centres by the date and time specified in the exhibition notification. If you are sending your submission through the mail, make sure you allow sufficient time for delivery on the closing date of submissions.

Objections relating to a DA or Strategic Planning document received after the exhibition period has concluded may not be taken into consideration by Council in the assessment of the DA or finalisation of the Draft Strategic Plan.

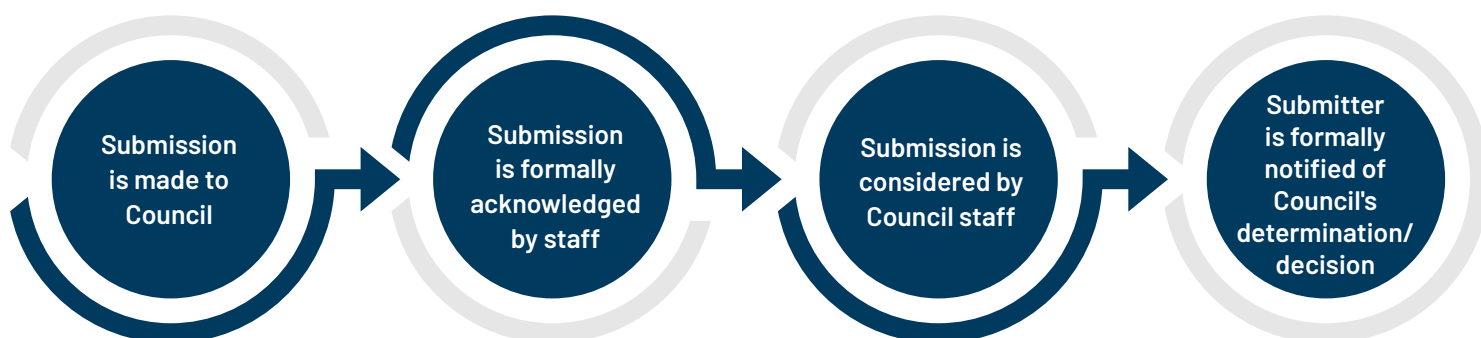
If for some reason you cannot meet the submission deadline, talk to the Council staff member handling the application/project before the closing date for submissions.

What Happens to My Submission?

You will receive notification that your submission has been received. Your submission, along with others received, will then be considered as part of an assessment of the project, DA, preparation of a strategic plan or finalisation of a draft document.

You can continue to track the process of a DA via the Online DA Tracker planning.dubbo.nsw.gov.au

You can also contact Council to find out the progress of a project or draft strategic plan after the exhibition period has closed or visit yoursay.dubbo.nsw.gov.au.



How We Consider and Respond?

We want to ensure community feedback is considered when decisions are made.

Once feedback has been considered, Council staff will recommend next steps or outcomes.

As part of the process to close the loop, we will:

-  Update the YourSay engagement project page outlining engagement outcomes and next steps.
-  Email those who provided feedback with the outcomes of the consultation and link to the project page. Prior to Council considering the matter, we will email people who have provided feedback (and who have not opted out of receiving updates) that a report will be submitted to council.
-  Submissions from the community on planning matters receive a response and notification of either the determination or when the matter is to be considered by the elected Council. In this correspondence, information is provided on how their feedback has been considered.

When an item is placed on exhibition the resulting report to Council will provide the findings of the community engagement. The council report will be a high level summary of engagement and may include:

-  Engagement and communications methods used;
-  Participation and engagement data and sentiment;
-  Information about submissions/feedback received.

The report will summarise the submissions and provide a staff response. Submissions may be provided as an attachment.

Engagement outcome reports will be provided to the elected Council to allow transparency of community feedback to assist them in making decisions that are reflective of the community's views, or to understand the community perspective on an issue or project.

Following a Council meeting, those who provided feedback (and who have not opted out of receiving updates) will be emailed Council's resolution. The YourSay project page be updated and a link to Agenda and Minutes will be accessible.



Evaluation and Measurement

To measure and evaluate the effectiveness of our engagement, we assess:

- ✓ Measurable participation levels in engagement activities;
- ✓ The methods used and if they were appropriate and relevant to the stakeholders;
- ✓ If the responses were relevant to the plan or project;
- ✓ Verbal and written feedback from the community on the effectiveness of the engagement activities used and adequacy of the material and information to give informed feedback;
- ✓ Achievement of the engagement aims in the Community Engagement Strategy;
- ✓ General and targeted monitoring to ensure diverse participation including input from under represented groups.

These evaluation results will be used to continually improve our engagement methods and inform future engagement strategies.

In line with the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IP&R) this strategy will be reviewed within three months of the Local Government Election, as part of the broader review of the Community Strategic Plan, or as required in the event of legislative changes or requirements.



Our Commitment to Engagement

This strategy provides a vision and framework to support community engagement, and delivering on this will require ongoing strengthening of capability within the Council and the community to support effective engagement.

Putting our commitment into action

Action	Objectives	When
Launch an online engagement platform.	Improve Council's online engagement by providing a platform that is equipped with a range of engagement tools to gather community feedback in real-time.	April 2023
Champion engagement across the organisation.	Harnessing organisational culture to support the consistent delivery of engagement activities across Council, and include as desired leadership quality and capability.	Ongoing
Creation of internal dashboard that exhibits customer and community satisfaction as a key performance indicator.	Centralised overview of key performance indicators council wide.	September 2024
Establish centralised collection of community data and insights to support Council decision making and Council initiated projects for grants.	Insights and data support decision making and prioritisation.	September 2024
Promotion of the YourSay platform as central engagement.	Community access to information is vital to gain community input.	Ongoing
Build internal capability in data collection and survey design to ensure research method and channels utilised across the organisation are optimised.	Ability to gain quality input and as required representative input is important in ensuring data integrity and utilisation.	December 2023
Increase accessibility needs through engagement activities.	Identify assistive technology that is inclusive and encourages participation. Implement software to support equity.	June 2024
Provide transparent communication of engagement results, from initial high level snapshots to post Council decision making communications.	Engagement snapshots provided to participants within a week of public exhibition period closing, providing participant with overviews of engagement activities and next steps.	July 2023
Provide staff with information and education on the value and worth of community engagement.	Ensure staff are familiar with Council's objective for community engagement, the level of engagement required, and the methods of engagement available to them and how to access and use these methods. Increase number of face to face interactions/consultations.	Ongoing
Staff to be trained in facilitation.	Improve confidence and capability of staff to facilitate face to face interactions with groups. Increase number of face to face interactions/consultations.	Ongoing
Budget and resourcing.	Allocation of meaningful budget and resourcing to satisfy community engagement aims and standards outlined in this strategy.	Ongoing
Improved clarity and communication of sought community participation as part of Council reports and resolution.	Being clear on level of community participation (input level based on ability to influence) will ensure appropriate engagement methods and expectation management of Councillor and community.	October 2023
Consistent provision of community engagement outcomes to Council.	Consistent presentation of data, including considered responses support transparency and informed decision making through the lens of risk, opportunity, impact and benefit.	August 2023
Assessment of the Community Consultation Committees against the resolutions of Council and in alignment of adopted Engagement Strategy.	Examining current engagement practices is critical to ensuring outcomes in line with expectations and enabling opportunity to explore potentially better methods to achieved desired outcome.	November 2023
Biennial Community Satisfaction and Needs Survey undertaken to receive insight to satisfaction and service level expectations and willingness to pay.	Survey design and subsequent outputs to assist in finalising draft operational plan and budget, and inform future four year delivery program.	April 2024

Disclaimer: The actions outlined in this strategy will feed into the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework, and progress against those actions will be reported to the elected Council and the community through that framework.

Ready to have YourSay?

“Join our online community to share
your views, keep up to date and help
shape our region.”



For more information on Council's projects visit:
yoursay.dubbo.nsw.gov.au



or scan the QR code

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Previous Cover



Cnr Church and Darling Streets, Dubbo
Cnr Nanima Crescent and Warne Street, Wellington

Ph: (02) 6801 4000
dubbo.nsw.gov.au