Community Engagement Strategy for the City of Logan

2020–2024

logan.qld.gov.au

CITY OF LOGAN

services offered.
Bicycle Tracks
NDIS
Accessibility
Lineable hubs
travel sp
TRANSPORT
1 MORE TO BE DONE FOR
2 COUNCIL TO PRESSURE STATE GOVT
ON USE OF EXISTING RAIL NETWORKS
AND RIGHT OF WAY
FOR YARABUBA / LOCAN VILLAGE
EXISTING RIGHT OF WAY?
WITH N.S.W. RAILWAYS
(WE'D ALLOW THEM TO SHARE OUT
RIGHT OF WAY TO THE PORT).
Safety of
park Parents
with multiple
young children
around parks
without adequate

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Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Acknowledgement

Logan City Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands across the City of Logan. We extend that respect to the Elders, past, present and emerging. They hold the memories, traditions, cultures and hopes of Australia's First Peoples.

Through meaningful community engagement with First Nations people we will continue to learn and grow in our understanding of reconciliation.

Introduction

We operate at a level of government that works closely with the community and the places they live, work and visit. The voice of our community is important to us at Logan City Council. If our community has ideas and proposals, or their needs relating to our services are not being met, we want to hear from them.

The Community Engagement Strategy (the Strategy) was developed after engagement with key Council staff and a desktop review of our existing Strategy 2017 to 2021. It is complemented by benchmarking with more than 20 other local governments around Australia.

The Strategy gives us an overview of the current context of the city and engagement practices. It provides direction and consistency for actions to strengthen practices for planning and implementing engagement programs in Logan.

Strategic alignment

The Community Engagement Strategy aligns with other key Council documents. This reflects the importance of community engagement as a core function of Council. The Community Engagement Framework is a key document that underpins our commitment and approach to community engagement.

Our City -a snapshot

The Strategy is responsive to the context and diversity of Logan as well as our strong commitment to the principles in the Local Government Act 2009 (QLD) of:

- democratic representation
- social inclusion
- meaningful community engagement.

326,615 residents

70 suburbs

12 Council divisions

Ranging from **apartment living to leafy suburbs and rural-residential homesteads** located in natural bushland

959 square kilometres

Top languages

English
Samoan
Persian / Dari
Arabic
Filipino / Tagalog
Hindi
Spanish
Punjabi
Khmer
Chinese (simplified and traditional)

217 nationalities and cultures

Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander **3.2%**

Needs assistance for disability **5.6%**

21,978 businesses

27.3% of residents were born overseas

Have a home internet connection **80.3%**

Projected population growth **500,000 people by 2040**

Age brackets and education demographics

Babies and pre-schoolers (0 to 4)	Primary schoolers (5 to 11)	Secondary schoolers (12 to 17)	Tertiary education and independence (18 to 24)	Young workforce (25 to 34)	Parents and homebuilders (35 to 49)	Older workers and pre-retirees (50 to 59)	Empty nesters and retirees (60 to 69)	Seniors (70 to 84)	Elderly (85 and over)
7.6%	**10.8%**	**8.5%**	**9.7%**	**14.1%**	**20.3%**	**12%**	**9.7%**	**6.3%**	**1.1%**

*Demography data from the 2016 Census.

Our vision for community engagement

We value meaningful engagement and the role it plays in creating a progressive community and Council. Through trust and active participation, we continue to shape a stronger, confident and more connected city.

Guiding principles for community engagement

Community engagement activities undertaken by us will encompass a set of guiding principles[1]:

1. **Integrity** – There is openness and honesty about the scope and purpose of engagement so that the community trusts the process.
2. **Inclusion** – There is an opportunity for a diverse range of values and perspectives to be freely and fairly expressed and heard.
3. **Deliberation** – There is:
   a. sufficient and credible information for discussion, choice and decisions
   b. space to weigh options, develop common understanding and appreciate respective roles and responsibilities.
4. **Influence** – People have input in:
   a. designing how they take part
   b. when policies and services reflect their involvement
   c. when their impact is clear and understood.
5. **Relationships** – There is respect for the relationship between us and the community so that we work to understand, develop and learn from engagement with our community.

These guiding principles need to be at the centre of engagement planning and implementation. They will also form the indicators from which engagement practice can be measured and evaluated.

[1]Adapted from International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)'s Core Values

The role of the Mayor and Councillors

The Mayor and Councillors are an important and valuable channel through which the community can share thoughts and feedback on issues important to them. Our elected members are appointed to Council to represent their communities and are proud to do so.

Community members can participate in formal engagement opportunities in a range of ways. Providing feedback directly to their local Councillor is one of those options. Elected members, in turn, will pass on views shared with them to the Council's Community Engagement Team. The responses will be combined with feedback from all other channels, and all input is recorded, tracked and given equal weight in formal decision-making processes.

Where are we now?

We are on a path to strengthening community engagement practice through a number of resources and initiatives.

Our Community Engagement Team

We have a small, passionate team of staff in the (corporate) Community Engagement Program. These team members provide a foundation for the organisation to receive best practice engagement advice. They empower branches to engage meaningfully with our internal and external stakeholders and help with:

- designing community engagement activities
- creating an online and in-person engagement presence
- providing support for projects to achieve their branch engagement requirements and goals.

As part of the approach to empower our branches, a key initiative has been to build a community of staff that is well educated and trained in best practice engagement (capability uplift). To date, 149 staff members have received in-house IAP2 (International Association for Public Participation Australasia) training in Engagement, of which 80% are still employed by us. We continue to deliver this training every second year.

The Customer Experience and Community Engagement Branch Business Plan 2019 / 20 details the purpose and Community Engagement Program service listings as:

Community Engagement
To lead Logan City Council's engagement with stakeholders and the community, shaping engagement excellence for local government practice throughout Australia.

Corporate CE Team

- Engagement Advice
- Engagement Support
- Engagement Training

Our Online Engagement Platform

In November 2017, we upgraded our digital engagement capabilities with the implementation of new, interactive community engagement software. 'Have Your Say' (**logan.qld.gov.au\haveyoursay**) is our online hub for community and stakeholder engagement. It allows stakeholders to:

- complete surveys
- discuss and comment on projects in a public forum
- share ideas
- identify solutions to city-wide challenges.

Changing the way we look at engagement

In progressing a vision of being an 'Innovative, Dynamic, City of the Future', the Community Engagement Team investigated opportunities for new and unique tools to further support practices and processes. In 2018, the team introduced COLBIE (City of Logan Bot for Innovative Engagement) to our workforce and the community.

We invested in COLBIE to help achieve our goal of engaging better with children, youth and young adults. (This followed the development and release of the Listen2Connect engagement guidelines for children, youth and young adults.) What we have found is COLBIE gives us a great starting point and shows we are modern and interesting. When we have COLBIE with us, children and youth have confidence to give us their important and valued thoughts and ideas.

Community Engagement Framework

Our recently developed Community Engagement Framework connects the community with Council and its decision making (the 'why' and how' of engagement).

The Framework is centred on the globally recognised International Association for Public Participation's (IAP2) practice framework, the Design Plan Manage model:

Practice guidelines

Additional practice guidelines have been developed or reviewed to refine engagement practice approaches for specific sectors of the community like:

- Culturally and Linguistic Diverse community
- Listen2Connect – engaging children, youth and young people.

Transition to Council Plan

In May 2019, Council's Elected Member representation was dissolved and an Interim Administrator was appointed. An Interim Management Committee (IMC) was appointed to support the Administrator in their functions and duties.

A Transition to Council Plan was developed by the IMC to provide direction to a series of projects and actions to review and strengthen (where required) our:

- governance
- strategic planning and performance
- community engagement practices and processes.

A revised Community Engagement Strategy was a key component of the Transition to Council Plan.

Employment + Financial Security
Challenges
Possibilities
PLEASE MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING 1.5m
THANK YOU

The Strategy

How did community help inform the strategy?

Because this strategy will guide how we connect with and listen to the community, it was important locals helped influence its scope and direction.

We asked our community for their thoughts and ideas on our three main strategic areas:

1. The Logan Engagement Model – How the community participates in Logan City Council engagement.
2. Holistic Engagement Services – How the Council strengthens its services in engaging the community.
3. Knowledge and best practice – How Council continuously improves in engaging the community.

We used a range of engagement methods to ensure all community members who wanted to have a say could do so. We held online focus groups and in-person stakeholder meetings as well as a Have Your Say survey.

What did we hear?

We heard three clear messages from the community:

1. Engagement must be authentic. We must have clarity on why we are engaging and where that sits on the IAP2 spectrum.
2. Close the loop. We need to clearly communicate outcomes and next steps for all projects.
3. Train staff. We must ensure our staff have the knowledge to provide innovative and practical engagement.

How do we make this happen?

Our next step is to develop a Strategy Implementation and Action Plan. This will outline practical actions and guide how we deliver the Community Engagement Strategy 2020 to 2024 over the next four years. The action plan will be regularly reviewed to ensure we are on track, and adapted where necessary to meeting changing community needs.

Advancing the practice at Logan – the focus for the future

Community engagement practice will become more proactive and consistent, strengthened by the new Framework and leadership across all levels in the organisation. Future actions can be considered in these three main areas:

- How the community participates in engagement.
- How we strengthen our services in engaging the community.
- How we continuously improve in engaging the community.

Logan engagement model
How the community participates in Logan City Council engagement

Focus areas	Initiatives

Online platform	• Further enhance the use of the online platform by:
	  • developing a value proposition for the platform
	  • engaging more strategically with the registered participants

Understand and communicate influence	• Consistently communicate the level of influence community and stakeholders have in an engagement process.
Community visioning	• Engage the community to establish a community vision for Logan that will guide strategic planning for the future.
Preferred method of engagement	• Consistently identify and address the community's preferred methods of engagement.

Holistic engagement services
How the Council strengthens its services in engaging the community

Focus areas	Initiatives
Minimum standards	• Introduce a 'quality assurance standard' for Logan by adapting the IAP2 Quality Assurance Standard to fit the local context. The standard would include suitable indicators, measures and tools for measuring engagement practice.
Digitising the Community Engagement Framework	• Establishing a suitable digital version of the Framework so that it is accessible and that the supporting practice guidelines, tools and templates are embedded to allow greater integration into the practice.
Integrating the value of community engagement practice to Council's staffing profile and induction programs	• Introduce a segment about Council's Community Engagement Framework and related policy in the Staff Induction Program. • Provide practical guidance on how staff will acquire the knowledge and skills to engage effectively.
On boarding and monitoring the Community Engagement Framework and Guiding Principles for Community Engagement.	• Implementing an action plan to onboard the new Community Engagement Framework for consistent application across the Branches • Establish a monitoring framework to oversee the application of the Framework over time. • Integrate the Guiding Principles for Community Engagement into the engagement planning process.
Community engagement education for staff	• Establish a learning environment where staff can access training and collaboration opportunities and build engagement knowledge and networks. • Break down silos to communicate across branches who engage with the community.

Knowledge and best practice
How Council continuously improves in engaging the community

Focus areas	Initiatives
Deliberative processes: • community juries • participatory budgeting • community reference panels	Develop a specific plan and roadmap to: • explore the potential applications of but not limited to community juries, participatory budgeting, community reference panels • identify lead projects suitable to trial • build awareness and capacity to implement • implement, evaluate and extend.
Community engagement training	• Continue the biennial program of community engagement training (IAP2 Certificate in Engagement – entry level program) • Introduce targeted training programs to build specific skills like Conversation Design, Managing Conflict in Engagement and Engagement Facilitation.
Practice guidelines Supporting resources and tools	• Establish additional Practice guidelines resources and tools to respond to demand like managing challenging conversations, engaging communities using digital platforms and social media.
Multi-disciplinary teams	• Identify and deliver projects using cross functional multi-disciplinary project teams.

Logan City Councils Community Engagement Program would like to pay special thanks to the Logan community members, community organisations and Council staff who helped create this Strategy. We look forward to collaborating with you again soon.

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