

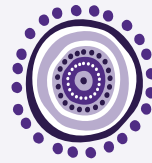


CUMBERLAND
CITY COUNCIL

Community Engagement Strategy

2025-2029

CLICK TO START >



Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians

Cumberland Council acknowledges the Darug Nation and People
as Traditional Custodians of the land on which the
Cumberland Local Government Area (LGA) is situated and
pays respect to Aboriginal Elders past, present and future.

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the First Peoples of Australia.

Cumberland Council also acknowledges other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples
living in the Cumberland Local Government Area and reaffirms that we will work closely with
all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to advance reconciliation within the area.



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Welcome
Belong
Succeed





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Introduction

About this Strategy:

The Cumberland City Council Community Engagement Strategy has been developed to guide engagement practices with the local community, businesses and stakeholders when Council is developing its plans, policies and programs. It outlines the guiding principles and approach for ensuring the community has an opportunity to have their say in a meaningful way. This Strategy reflects the various requirements for community consultation and engagement set out in Section 402A of the Local Government Act 1993 and Part 2 Division 2.6 Section 2.22 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

About Cumberland City

Cumberland City is located in Western Sydney and covers more than 72 square kilometres stretching from Rookwood Cemetery in the east, along the M4 Motorway and Western Rail Line in the north, and Prospect Creek in the south to Prospect Hill in the west. Cumberland City is strategically located in the Central City District, less than 5 kilometres south of Parramatta CBD and approximately 20 kilometres west of Sydney CBD. The new Western Sydney Airport at Badgery's Creek will be approximately 30 kilometres to the west of Cumberland City.

Cumberland City is one of the most culturally diverse and vibrant areas in NSW, known for its international food, welcoming community events and festivals, high-quality community programs and extensive networks of green spaces. The community is diverse with many young families who are professionals, speak multiple languages and have a range of backgrounds and experiences that contribute to Cumberland's unique flavour.

Cumberland City, is at the heart of Sydney and the entry point to Western Sydney, is experiencing significant growth. The current population is estimated at 250,476 in 2024, and it is projected to increase to around 302,453 by 2036, reaching over 340,000 by 2046. This area has a notably younger demographic, with more families and larger household sizes compared to the Sydney average. The growth is driven by factors such as its proximity to the Parramatta CBD, migration and new housing developments.

The land of the Cumberland plains where Cumberland City Council now exists forms part of the traditional home of the Darug Nation and People. The people of the Darug Nation are an integral part of the community of Cumberland City



Smoke Ceremony at the Civic Park Opening



Who We Are

Council area¹:
7,277 ha
(72.77 km²)

Total Population¹:
245,323



FOR EVERY 100 RESIDENTS:

OUR POPULATION¹

14 
are Children 0 - 9 years

11 
are Young People 10 - 19 years


63 
are Adults 20 - 64 years

12 
are Seniors 65+ years


OUR WORKFORCE¹ (Employment)

92 People are Labour Force Employed

WHERE WE WORK¹ (Top 3 Industries)

15 Health Care and Social Assistance 

10 Retail Trade 

8 Professional, Scientific and Technical Services 



OUR ETHNIC DIVERSITY¹

53 Born overseas

65 Who speak a language other than English at home

<1 Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander



COUNTRY OF BIRTH¹

9 India

7 China

5 Lebanon

4 Nepal

3 Afghanistan



LANGUAGES SPOKEN¹

14 Arabic

7 Mandarin

4 Nepali

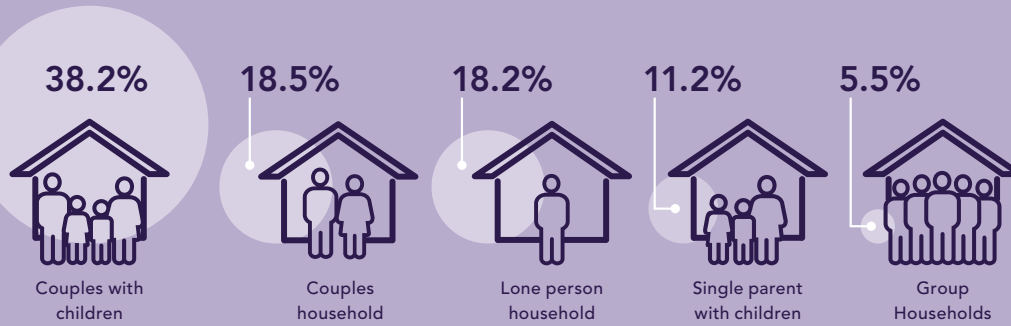
4 Cantonese

3 Tamil

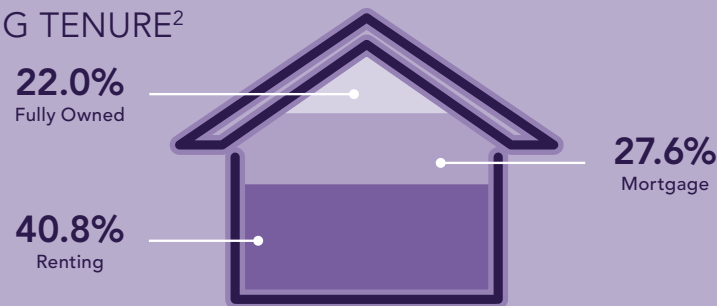
¹ Source: <https://profile.id.com.au/cumberland>



OUR HOUSEHOLDS²



OUR HOUSING TENURE²



Number of
Suburbs²:

28

COUNCIL SPECIFIC



21

Community Centres³



12

Education and Care
Centre-Based Services⁵



8

Libraries⁴



1

Family Day
Care Service⁵



47

Sportsgrounds with
185 bookable spaces
available⁵



5

Swimming Pools⁶

² Source: <https://profile.id.com.au/cumberland>

³ Source: <https://cumberland.bookable.net.au/#/>

⁴ Source: <https://www.cumberland.nsw.gov.au/locations-and-hours>

⁵ Source: <https://www.cumberland.nsw.gov.au/education-and-care-services>

⁶ Source: <https://www.cumberland.nsw.gov.au/swimming-pools>





Our Unique Neighbourhoods

The Cumberland City Council area consists of five wards—Greystanes, South Granville, Wentworthville, Granville, and Regents Park—each have distinct characteristics that contribute to the area’s diversity and future potential.



Greystanes Ward

Greystanes is known for its suburban, low-density residential character, with around 80% of dwellings being low-density. This makes it one of the least densely populated wards in Cumberland, offering a quieter, more family-friendly atmosphere.

The community here enjoys larger homes and green spaces, with significant emphasis on open spaces and natural areas.

Scenic Holroyd Gardens provides plenty of recreational opportunities, including playgrounds and walking paths. It is popular with families for picnics and outdoor activities.

The Prospect Creek Green Grid Corridor offers great potential for walking and cycling routes, linking parks and promoting active transport. A key local shopping centre in the area, Pemulwuy Marketplace offers a range of retail options catering to the community.

South Granville Ward

South Granville is predominantly low-density residential but includes areas of higher-density housing around Auburn and Guildford.

The ward is bisected by the Duck River Corridor, an essential environmental and recreational asset, offering walking and cycling paths, connecting various parks and natural reserves, enhancing the community’s green infrastructure.

The beautiful Auburn Botanic Gardens attracts visitors from across Sydney, known for its seasonal Sydney Cherry Blossom Festival and diverse plant life. The area’s industrial zones, particularly in Clyde and Regents Park, provide substantial employment opportunities.



Wentworthville Ward

Wentworthville is a blend of residential areas with a mix of low and high-density housing, particularly near transport hubs and town centres.

The northern part of this ward is defined by the Westmead Health and innovation Precinct, a renowned centre for medical and educational facilities and is a magnet for healthcare professionals and students. Westmead’s future growth as a medical and educational hub positions Wentworthville as a significant contributor to Sydney’s healthcare industry.

Wentworthville and the Wentworthville Shopping Plaza offer a wide variety of retail outlets catering to the growing South Asian population attracting people from all over Sydney.



Granville Ward

Granville is one of the densest wards in Cumberland, featuring high-density housing and commercial areas. The Merrylands Strategic Centre is a key part of this ward, serving as a major retail and commercial hub for the region.

The area's central location and proximity to the Parramatta CBD, dense population, and community infrastructure make it a critical player in Cumberland's overall growth strategy.

Merrylands Stockland Mall offers a diverse range of retail outlets, dining options, and entertainment facilities. The Granville Centre and Library and the Granville Swim Centre are key community spaces and recreational sites for the local community.

Granville Park and the Eric Tweedale Stadium are popular sporting fields and open spaces for outdoor activities and are home to the Parramatta Women's NRL team and the Parramatta Two Blues rugby team.



Regents Park Ward

Regents Park is primarily a low-density residential area but features higher-density developments around key centres like Lidcombe. Industrial areas, especially in the northern part of the ward, are connected to major transport corridors, making it an essential employment hub.

A major retail destination is Lidcombe Sopping Centre and Costco and there is an array of delicious Korean and Japanese food outlets around Lidcombe train station. One of the largest cemeteries in the Southern Hemisphere, Rookwood Cemetery is located nearby and is known for its historical significance and beautiful grounds.

Sporting facilities offering multiple fields and courts for various sports are located at Wyatt Park. The area is home to significant industrial and employment lands forming part of the larger industrial precincts connected to Parramatta Road. The mix of industrial, residential, and recreational spaces creates a unique blend of economic and community-focused opportunities.





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What is Community Engagement

Community engagement is a broad term that covers the interactions between Council, communities (which could be suburbs or other geographical locations, or groups of people with a common interest or identity) and other stakeholders.

Community engagement allows community members to actively contribute to Council decisions and actions by creating an inclusive environment in which community feedback is embraced, considered and acted upon. It serves as a response to increasing community concern about low levels of trust and confidence in government and addresses the escalating expectation that all levels of government be responsive to the community, and accountable for levels of service and spending.



Harmony Week - Beat to the Harmony Drumming Circle



Who do we Engage With?

A key component of community engagement is identifying and understanding key stakeholders who will be impacted by or who have an interest in a decision. Our engagement seeks to reach a wide range of people in the community, as well as people in or with Council.

Cumberland City Council engages with a range of communities, businesses and stakeholders. Groups that may be identified during a community engagement process include:

People who live, work, study or visit Cumberland City

Investors (existing / new / potential)

Businesses operating in Cumberland City

Active industry groups or associations

Community, sporting, cultural and environmental groups

Advisory committees of Council

Children, young people, students, families, retirees and mature aged people

Indigenous, culturally diverse and vulnerable communities

Not-for-profit and non-government organisations

Voluntary groups

Service providers

Government agencies and representatives

Neighbouring / other local councils



Seniors Festival Bus Trip to Alison Homestead



Community Engagement Commitments

Our Community Engagement Strategy is built upon the Core Values, Code of Ethics and spectrum created by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2). Council's commitment to the community is to guide the planning, development, implementation, evaluation, and continuous improvement of community engagement processes.





How we Engage

The IAP2 Participation Spectrum shows that differing levels of public participation are legitimate depending on the goals, timeframes, resources and levels of impact of the decision to be made.

The five levels of public participation are: **Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate and Empower**

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
COUNCIL'S ROLE	We will provide the community with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	We will obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	We will work with you throughout the process to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	We will work together with you in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	We will help work towards the level of capacity to help the community lead and decide on a matter.
COMMUNITY'S ROLE Example of our engagement levels	LISTEN E.g. Projects by the State Government that affect the local community.	CONTRIBUTE E.g. Participating in an online engagement activity on Council's Have Your Say website.	PARTICIPATE E.g. Providing input to develop options for an infrastructure project for Cumberland.	PARTNER E.g. When developing a long term vision and strategic plan.	LEAD E.g. Building capacity skills of small business employees through skills-based training or community members joining the advisory committees which directly influence change.

← LOWER LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT

MEDIUM LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT

HIGHER LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT →

EXAMPLES OF ENGAGEMENT METHODS Specific methods to be tailored for each project/consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adverts • Fact sheet • Newsletter • Social media • Website • Translated material • Letters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to 'inform' methods • Public exhibition • Dedicated hotline • Onsite display/signs/posters • Surveys • Focus groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to 'inform' and/or 'consult' • Workshops • Webinars • Pop Up Stalls • Meetings with Council staff • Public meeting/ Online seminar • Meetings with key stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to 'inform' and/or 'consult' and 'involve' • Participatory decision making • Co-design • Working groups • On-going feedback (e.g panels, key stakeholders/reference groups) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Advisory Committees
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NOTES:

Timeframes for engagement are in calendar days and include weekends and public holidays. For public exhibitions identified in this table, the period between 20 December and 10 January inclusive will not be included in the calculation of minimum exhibition periods. The potential for extension of public exhibition or engagement activities is at the discretion of Council officers with this delegation. Refer to Clause 308 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 for specific notification requirements. Cumberland City Council is committed to transparent and meaningful community engagement. The figure above demonstrates how we will bring our 'commitment to the community' to life.



When we Engage

The following table outlines how and when we will engage the community on a range of plans, proposals and projects, as well as other work we do, to provide guidance to the community on what to expect from Cumberland City Council regarding community engagement. Planning related proposals and projects have specific exhibition timeframe which must be met, and these are also outlined in the table.

When	Why	Engagement Level	What	Examples	Exhibition Period
Council's key long-term plans: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Strategic Plan • Delivery Program • Community Engagement Strategy / Community Participation Plan • Local Strategic Planning Statement 	Gauge community feedback on Council long-term plans. In addition to minimum statutory requirements, ensure stakeholders are informed and are given the opportunity to provide feedback via innovative engagement methods	Involve	Acknowledge community feedback and ensure these are input into Council's engagement evaluation report and in the finalised plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper advertisements • Community newsletter • Social media • Media releases • Website information • Fact sheets • Public exhibition • Focus groups • Surveys • Workshops • Public meeting/ Online seminar • Pop up consultation sessions 	Minimum 28 days
Council plans, strategies and concept designs	Gauge community feedback on Council plans, strategies and concept plans. In addition to minimum statutory requirements, ensure stakeholders are informed and are given the opportunity to provide feedback	Consult	Acknowledge community feedback and ensure these are input into Council's engagement evaluation report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper advertisements • Social media • Community newsletter • Media releases • Website • Fact sheets • Information • Public exhibition • Letters to impacted residents and businesses • Surveys • Flyers and signage with QR codes to website information • Pop up consultation sessions 	Minimum 28 days



When	Why	Engagement Level	What	Examples	Exhibition Period
Council's Annual Operational Plan and Budget	Gauge community feedback on Council long-term plans In addition to minimum statutory requirements, ensure stakeholders are informed and are given the opportunity to provide feedback via innovative engagement methods	Involve	Acknowledge community feedback and ensure these are input into Council's engagement evaluation report and in the finalised plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper advertisements • Social media • Community newsletter • Media releases • Website information • Fact sheet • Public exhibition • Focus groups • Surveys • Workshops • Public meeting/ Online seminar • Pop up consultation sessions 	Minimum 28 days
Council's other key policies	Gauge community feedback on Council key policies In addition to minimum statutory requirements, ensure stakeholders are informed and are given the opportunity to provide feedback	Consult	Acknowledge community feedback and ensure these are input into Council's engagement evaluation report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper advertisements • Social media • Community newsletter • Media releases • Website information • Fact sheets • Letters to impacted residents and business • Public exhibition • Surveys • Flyers and signage with QR codes to website information • Pop up consultation sessions 	Minimum 28 days
Council's key land use planning instruments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Proposals/ Local Environmental Plans • Development Control Plans • Local Infrastructure Contribution Plans • Voluntary Planning Agreements 	Gauge community feedback on Council's long-term plans In addition to minimum statutory requirements, ensure stakeholders are informed and are given the opportunity to provide feedback. The scope of engagement will be determined based on a various of deliberations. This can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complexity • potential impacts • scale of project 	Consult Involve	Acknowledge community feedback and ensure these are input into Council's engagement evaluation report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper advertisements • Community newsletter • Social media • Media releases • Website information • Fact sheets • Public exhibition • Focus groups • Surveys • Workshops • Public meeting/ Online seminar • Pop up consultation sessions • Flyers and signage with QR codes to website information • Convert project to 'Stay Informed' for ongoing updates once any work commences 	Minimum 28 days or: (a) if a different period of public exhibition is specified in the gateway determination for the proposal—the period specified (b) if the gateway determination specifies that no public exhibition is required because of the minor nature of the proposal—no public exhibition



When	Why	Engagement Level	What	Examples	Exhibition Period
Road closures	Gauge community feedback	Consult	Acknowledge community feedback and ensure these are input into Council's engagement evaluation report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper advertisements • Social media • Media releases • Website information • Fact sheets • Public exhibition • Focus groups • Surveys • Public meeting/ Online seminar • Pop up consultation sessions • Flyers and signage with QR codes to website information • Letters to impacted residents • Convert project to 'Stay Informed' for ongoing updates once any work commences 	Minimum 28 days
Lease agreements	Gauge community feedback on proposed lease agreements	Consult	Acknowledge community feedback and ensure these are input into Council's engagement evaluation report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper advertisements • Social media • Website information • Public exhibition • Surveys • Public meeting/ Online seminar • Pop up consultation sessions • Flyers and signage with QR codes to website information 	Minimum 28 days
Maintenance, capital works and service delivery initiatives	Share information on current activities and plans and ensure stakeholders are informed of Council's proposal	Inform	Keep community informed via updates on proposal/project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper advertisements • Social media • Media releases • Community newsletter • Website information • Fact sheets • Pop up consultation sessions (if required) • Flyers and signage with QR codes to website information • Letters to impacted residents and businesses • 'Stay Informed' project page with ongoing updates throughout the project 	Minimum 7 days in advance of assigned work



When	Why	Engagement Level	What	Examples	Exhibition Period
General initiatives and proposals	Gauge community feedback on general initiatives and proposals by Council not identified in the table	Consult	Acknowledge community feedback and ensure these are collated into Council's engagement evaluation report and in the finalised initiative or proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper advertisements • Social media • Media releases • Community newsletter • Website information • Fact sheets • Public exhibition • Surveys • Flyers and signage with QR codes to website information • Pop up consultation sessions 	Minimum 14 days
Development applications (including court appeals and reviews)	Gauge community feedback on development applications In addition to minimum statutory requirements, ensure stakeholders are informed and are given the opportunity to provide feedback	Consult	Acknowledge community feedback and ensure these are input into Council's engagement evaluation report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper advertisements • Social media • Media releases • Community newsletter • Website • Fact sheets • Letters to impacted residents and businesses • Public exhibition • Surveys • Flyers and signage with QR codes to website information • Pop up consultation sessions 	Minimum 14 days or as required in the Cumberland Development Control Plan 28 days for integrated development, threatened species development, category 1 remediation work, environmental impact statements (Division 5.1 of EP&A Act 1979), designated development and state significant development The Cumberland Development Control Plan also outlines other requirements associated with the notification of development applications
Modification of development applications (including court appeals and reviews)	Gauge community feedback on application for modification of development consent In addition to minimum statutory requirements, ensure stakeholders are informed and are given the opportunity to provide feedback	Consult	Acknowledge community feedback and ensure these are input into Council's engagement evaluation report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper advertisements • Social media • Media releases • Community newsletter • Website • Fact sheets • Letters to impacted residents and businesses • Public exhibition • Surveys • Flyers and signage with QR codes to website information • Pop up consultation sessions 	Minimum 14 days or as required in the Cumberland Development Control Plan No notification is required if the proposed modification is to correct anomalies or will have minimal environmental impact The Cumberland Development Control Plan also outlines other requirements associated with the notification of development applications



When	Why	Engagement Level	What	Examples	Exhibition Period
Re-exhibition of any amended development application/ modifications (including court appeals and reviews)	Gauge community feedback In addition to minimum statutory requirements, ensure stakeholders are informed and are given the opportunity to provide feedback	Consult	Acknowledge community feedback and ensure these are input into Council's engagement evaluation report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper advertisements • Social media • Community newsletter • Media releases • Website information • Fact sheets • Letters to impacted residents and businesses • Public exhibition • Surveys • Flyers and signage with QR codes to website information • Pop up consultation sessions 	Council may re-exhibit at its discretion, depending on extent of changes and impacts. Further information is provided in the Cumberland Development Control Plan
Council-related development applications	Manage conflicts of interest that may arise in connection with council-related development applications where Council is the consent authority	Consult	Acknowledge community feedback and ensure these are input into Council's engagement evaluation report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management plan or statement of exclusion • Newspaper advertisements • Social media • Community newsletter • Website information • Fact sheets • Letters to impacted residents and businesses • Public exhibition • Surveys • Flyers and signage with QR codes to website information • Pop up consultation session 	28 days minimum public exhibition period for a council-related development application as per amendment of Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979



Feedback and Public Exhibition / Participation

What is Public Exhibition/ Participation?

Public exhibition/participation can be any process that directly engages the public in decision-making and gives consideration to public input in making that decision. This process is usually used when a draft document or proposed project is made available to stakeholders for comment and feedback.

The community, businesses and stakeholders are encouraged to provide feedback to Council, usually in the form of a written submission.

How will I Be notified?

Cumberland City Council is dedicated to closing the loop on engagement with our stakeholders. Although the level of engagement may differ between exhibited projects, Council is committed to:

- Keeping Council's Have Your Say Platform updated via a 'Stay Informed' section
- Advertise the public exhibition period via different channels
- Option for stakeholders to subscribe to the Cumberland Conversations Electronic Direct Mail (EDM)
- Via Council's Community Podcast 'Cumberland Conversations'.

Feedback

Council's Community Engagement Strategy is modelled on the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) standard. The standards describe the important elements of any engagement process and developed in response to requests for a set of 'standardised principles'. A critical component is receiving feedback from our community stakeholders. Feedback for Council exhibitions can be submitted by:

1. Completing an online submission or survey via the Have Your Say platform, which can be found on the Cumberland City Council website www.cumberland.nsw.gov.au
2. Emailing Council via council@cumberland.nsw.gov.au
3. Posting your feedback by mail to The General Manager, Cumberland City Council, PO Box 42, Merrylands NSW 2160.

Council will capture the full name and contact details of the person submitting feedback as part of the process to ensure consistency in quality and support those carrying out the process in line with the Privacy Act 1988. This also enables council officers to provide updates and outcomes to relevant stakeholders. Submissions that don't include information provided above or received through social media or other channels will be collated as a general sentiment as part of the engagement process.



Inclusive Participation

What is Public Exhibition/ Participation?

Cumberland City Council recognises that some communities are 'harder to reach' as they may have barriers to participation, such as age, experience, language and accessibility. Council seeks to provide opportunity for these communities to participate and provide feedback by:

- Ensuring a variety of engagement methods are available
- Avoiding technical jargon and using easy to understand language
- Providing information in accessible formats
- Translating resources and information in key languages used in Cumberland City
- Ensuring venues are accessible
- Consider age appropriate engagement and participation activities

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

Cumberland City Council is committed to working closely with community, stakeholders and staff to create a culture of genuine and relevant engagement, both within our organisation and the community, inclusive of our Indigenous stakeholders.

Without genuine engagement of Indigenous people it will be difficult to meet the Council of Australian Government targets for overcoming Indigenous disadvantage. To achieve this, community engagement needs to develop a relationship built on trust and integrity and create a sustained relationship between groups of people working towards shared goals.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities

Cumberland is considered to be a hub of multiculturalism in Sydney, celebrating its rich cultural diversity and history. According to 2021 Census data, 52.2% of Cumberland City residents were born overseas, compared to 37.1% for Greater Sydney. This makes Cumberland one of the most culturally diverse areas in Australia, with residents hailing from countries such as India, China, Lebanon, and many more.

To reduce social inequality, it's essential that Council is responsive to the needs of our diverse communities. This includes a process which must start with engaging the communities themselves, to ensure our diverse range of voices are heard and considered during decision making.

Cumberland City Council aims to embed transparent and genuine engagement with our community and have taken steps in embedding methods set out by the Ethnic Community Services Co-operative as best practice. This includes:

1. Get to know our community – resources as community profiles provide valuable information about who lives in our local community,
2. Take time to build trust – for many CALD communities, personal connections based on trust are essential to building rapport. We will work in partnership with local community organisations that have links with the target community or connect with key community leaders who could help to promote our programs,
3. Assume nothing, Be curious – We are committed to gaining cultural knowledge such as awareness of etiquette around gender and fasting days.
4. Communication matters – Council is using interpreters and other translation methods to ensure language in brochures and forms is in plain English. Council will commit to exploring ways of making material available in different languages where appropriate. Council's main website and Have Your Say websites are also able to be translated through it's 'language' tab,
5. Reflect on your practice – Council is committed to continuous improvement where we continually reflect on the ways in which our past experiences have affected our values and the way in which we work.

Young People

Council is committed to building a city that is welcoming and inclusive of young people. We provide opportunities for young people to become involved through youth led and co-design initiatives, online engagement and advisory committees/ youth groups.



Children

Listening to the voices of children in matters that affect them is about respecting their rights. Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) highlights that all must have respect for the views of the child.

This challenges historical stereotypes of children being innately vulnerable, dependent and having limited valid input in decision making. When considering child protection, child participation and involvement is considered a fundamental standard. Child Safe Standards, Standard 2 is 'Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously'. A child having a space to have their voices heard is an important strategy around keeping them safe.

Community Development

Community development principles tell us that community members are the experts in their lives and this is also true for all residents. Enabling community input into decision making also fosters the community's investment in the projects and outcomes.

Given the diverse priorities and needs of residents in these communities, it can be challenging to reach everyone in a timely manner. Council will aim to have several community engagement pop up events throughout the calendar year to assist with extending the reach when engaging with the community for feedback.

Smart Places Strategy and Action Plan

As part of our Smart Places Strategy and Action Plan, the community has identified digital inclusion as a priority. Digital inclusion is about ensuring all community members have the access, skills, and confidence to engage digitally. Increased digital inclusion will foster Smart Communities in Cumberland that embrace technologies that celebrate our diversity, enhance city safety and drive cohesion and dialogue.

Council will aim to leverage digital tools to increase community engagement opportunities through trialling portable translation / interpretation devices at engagement activities and using digital platforms such as the virtual engagement rooms to support consultation approaches.

These will offer alternate and additional pathways for Council to engage with our diverse community.

Business and Place Liaison

Including businesses in the community engagement processes is crucial because they play a vital role in the local economy, employment, and social fabric of our community.

Engaging businesses ensures that their needs, concerns, and insights are considered in decision-making processes, fostering better collaboration between public and private sectors.

Businesses often have valuable perspectives on local infrastructure, workforce development, and market trends, which can lead to more informed and sustainable development strategies. Additionally, their participation can help align community goals with economic growth, leading to projects that benefit both residents and the business community. Involving businesses also encourages corporate social responsibility, strengthens partnerships, and enhances community resilience during times of change.



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Objectives

Cumberland City Council actively strives to engage and listen to our diverse community through a variety of engagement methods. While engagement does not necessarily aim to achieve consensus amongst all participants, it is ideal for gaining a better understanding of critical issues and attitudes. An important part of engagement with the community is that we ensure it is respectful and meaningful, we are clear about how feedback and input will be used to support decision making, and our engagement objectives are clear. In doing this, Cumberland City Council's Community Engagement Strategy seeks to deliver on the following key objectives:

OBJECTIVE 1: Build Capacity

Council will work closely with community, stakeholders and staff to create a culture of genuine and relevant engagement, both within our organisation and the community

OBJECTIVE 2: Inform and Involve

Council will create and promote inclusive opportunities for effective participation and collaboration for community members who live, work and play in Cumberland, and ensure our communities are engaged and informed

OBJECTIVE 3: Accountable and Transparent

Council will ensure accountability and transparency, and show how community and stakeholder participation was used to inform and influence decision making by closing the loop. Council will lead with integrity and ensure that we 'close the loop' on the outcomes of engagement

OBJECTIVE 4: Continuous Improvement

Council will strive for continuous improvement by implementing a continuous improvement program, incorporating community and stakeholder input, to reflect evolving best practice and the needs of the community



OBJECTIVE 1: Build Capacity

We will:

- Educate staff and stakeholders about community engagement and its use by Council
- Provide IAP2 or similar training to increase the capacity of staff when undertaking community engagement
- Build a whole of organisation approach to ensuring community engagement processes and procedures are included in our planning and delivery of programs, projects and services
- Embed community engagement into our organisation's culture
- Identify emerging methods, channels, tools and technologies to support engagement with our communities, business and stakeholders.

OBJECTIVE 2: Inform and Involve

We will:

- Clearly communicate and promote engagement opportunities
- Develop partnerships and relationships with individuals, community leaders, groups, services and other agencies in Cumberland
- Create more opportunities for listening and to provide feedback
- Tailor engagement activities to our culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

OBJECTIVE 3: Accountable and Transparent

We will:

- "Close the loop" in a variety of ways, including public reports and email, with a focus on how feedback was considered
- Be transparent in reporting to the community on opportunities to be involved in Council's decision-making processes
- Ensure that decision making is responsive to the needs of residents and seeks to be receptive to their diverse opinions.

OBJECTIVE 4: Continuous Improvement

We will:

- Continually develop and improve Council's community engagement practices and capacity through regular review and evaluation
- Gather feedback about the effectiveness of consultation and communicate outcomes to all stakeholders
- Undertake industry and market research to ensure that engagement is responding to local needs.



Measuring our Success

Statutory roles and responsibilities

This Strategy reflects the various requirements for community consultation and engagement set out in the Local Government Act 1993 (The Act). The Act defines the following roles and responsibilities:

- Councillors represent the collective interests of residents, ratepayers and the local community; and facilitate communication with the community
- The Council as a whole consults regularly with community organisations and other key stakeholders, and keeps them informed of its decisions
- The Mayor, as leader of the Council and as a community leader, promotes partnerships with key stakeholders. Together with the General Manager, ensures adequate opportunities and mechanisms for engagement between the Council and the local community
- The General Manager advises the Mayor and Council on appropriate forms of community engagement in different situations and prepares a Community Engagement Strategy

The objective of community participation plans is to provide transparency and accountability on project and policies being undertaken by undertaking consultation in an appropriate manner and timeframe.

Council is now legislated under the Children's Guardian Amendment (Child Safe Scheme) Bill 2021 to ensure children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously. Core components of this include that children are able to express their views, and are provided opportunities to participate in decisions that affect their lives.

In supporting these roles and responsibilities, Council's Place and Engagement team will provide an end to end service to teams within Council to ensure quality and meaningful engagement on the range of activities undertaken, and subject matter experts being responsible for complying with legislative requirements and providing technical advice as part of engagement activities.

Evaluation

Progress in measuring and implementing Cumberland City Council's Community Engagement Strategy is essential in order to identify areas for improvement and will be done in a number of direct and indirect ways.

Council will report quarterly on its effectiveness in implementing its outlined goals and objectives and show progress towards set targets.

As well as the above reporting in line with our Community Strategic Plan, Council has diverse methods of evaluation and assessments to ensure accountability of the outcomes of the Community Engagement Strategy. These include but are not limited to:

- Reviewing the Community Engagement Strategy at the start of each term of Council
- Commissioning periodic audits to check progress against the objectives identified in this strategy and community feedback
- Using information from surveys by Council with the community to assess the effectiveness of engagement being undertaken in Cumberland City
- Providing an annual evaluation which reviews participation levels in engagement activities

Community Participation Plan

This Strategy serves as Council's Community Participation Plan (CPP) in accordance with the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, Division 2.6 and Schedule 1 and applies to the exercise of planning functions by Cumberland City Council and other relevant consent authority's of the LGA.

Council will undertake public notification of determinations and reasons for decisions for development consents, modifications and reviews as required by Schedule 1.

This Strategy will be reviewed periodically.



CUMBERLAND
CITY COUNCIL

Community Engagement Strategy 2025-2029

Cumberland City Council

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