Fairfield City Council

Community Engagement Strategy 2010

Informing the Fairfield City Plan

Working together to shape the future of Fairfield City

Acknowledgements

This Strategy has been developed in consultation with other government agencies and community organisations. Fairfield City Council wishes to acknowledge the following organisations for the guidance received in the development of this resource.

- International Association for Public Participation, 2009
- Housing NSW: Living Communities Project, 2010
- Oxfam: Sustain: Reaching the Parts, 2000
- Greater Shepparton City Council: Community Engagement Strategy, 2009
- LatrobeCity: Community Engagement Policy and Strategy, 2005
- City of Ryde: Engagement Policy, 2008
- North Yorkshire County Council: Community Engagement Strategy 2008
- Randwick City Council: Community Consultation principles, 2008
- Liverpool City Council: Community Engagement Tool Kit, 2006
- Brackertz N., Meredyth D: Social Inclusion of the Hard to Reach, 2008 Swinburne Institute for Social Research
- Logan City Council: Community Engagement Strategy, 2009
- Mosman Council: Community Engagement Strategy
- Cornwall Council: Community Engagement Strategy, 2009
- Community Indicators Victoria *www.communityindicators.net.au*

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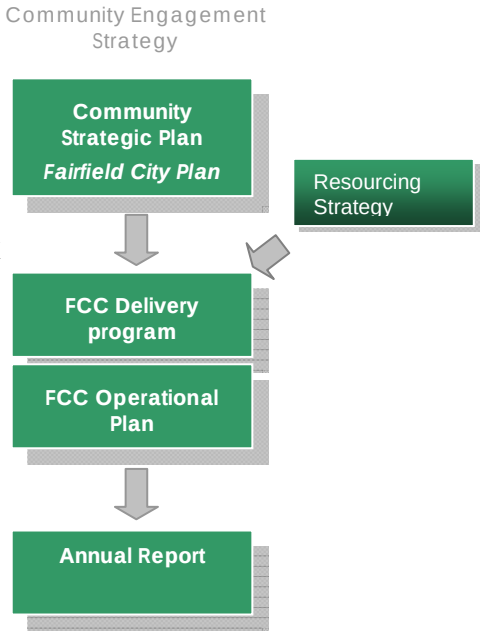
Executive Summary



The **Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework** (Local Government Amendment (Planning and Reporting) Act 2009) aims to improve Council's long term community, financial and asset planning. This approach acknowledges local government's unique position as the only agency with an interest in all aspects of Fairfield City. It formalizes the role of Council as the key advocate for the community in relation to all issues. The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework requires Council to develop a:

- Community Strategic Plan: 10 year plan identifying the community's main priorities and aspirations.
- Resourcing Strategy: long term financial plan; workforce plan and asset strategy.
- Delivery Plan: 4 year plan identifying Councils commitment.
- Operational Plan: 1 year plan outlining Councils' activities and budget.
- Annual Report: includes State of the Environment Report.

Community Strategic Plan: This Legislation requires Council to take leadership for the development of a Community Strategic Plan which covers all aspects of the LGA, including those issues that are the responsibility of the Federal and State Governments and the not-for-profit and private sectors. While Council has a custodial role in initiating, preparing and maintaining the Community Strategic Plan on behalf of the community, it is not wholly responsible for its implementation. Other partners, such as State agencies and community groups will also be engaged in delivering the long-term objectives of the Plan.

Fairfield Council developed and adopted a '**Fairfield City Plan**' in 2007. This was an important initiative by Council to document key issues and community and Council priorities and actions. The current Fairfield City Plan provides the overview of Council's aims and the directions it is pursuing and provides an important platform for the requirements of the Framework. The Community Strategic Plan must be a true reflection of long term broad community needs and aspirations, without regard to which delivery mechanism may be used or which

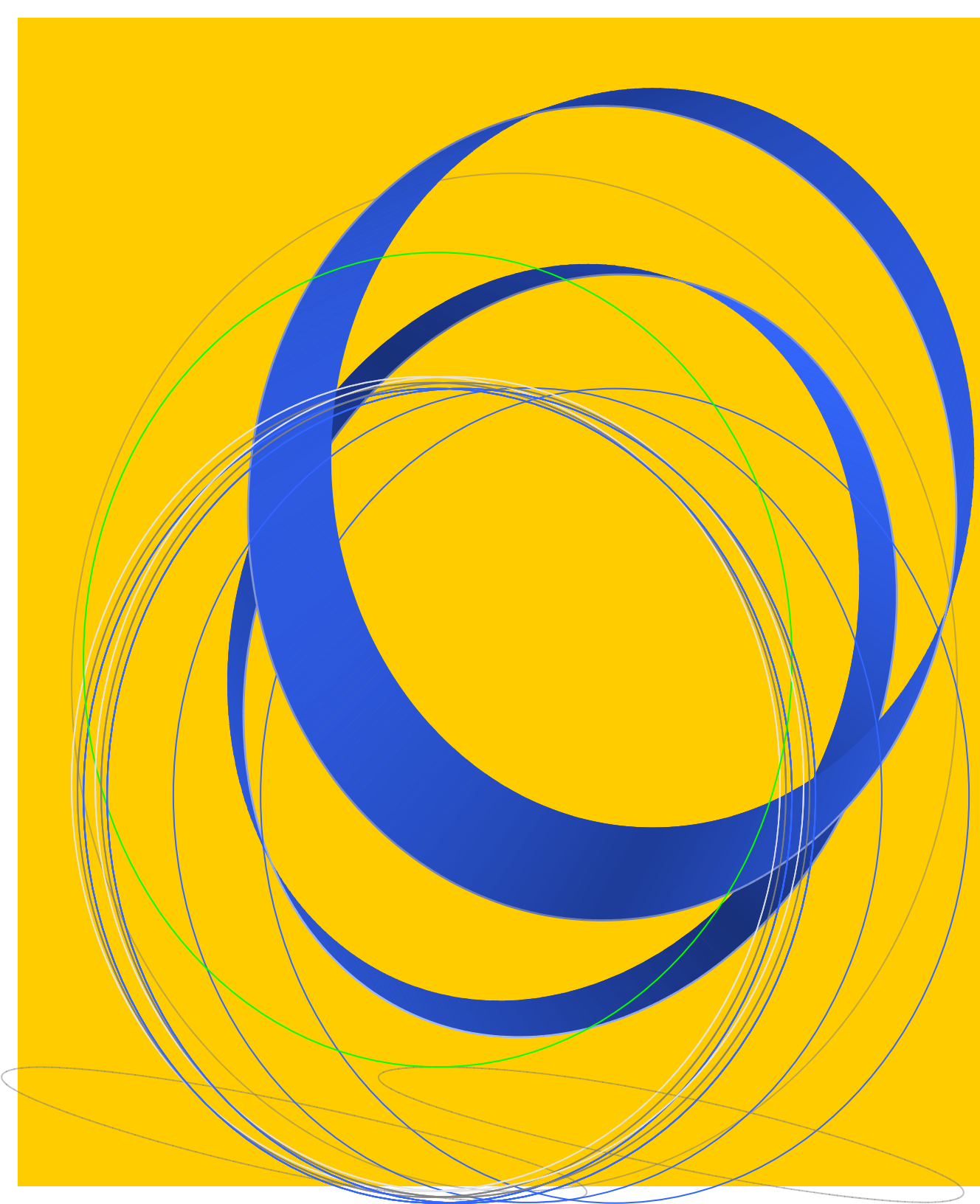
government agency is responsible for delivery. The Fairfield City Plan (Community Strategic Plan) will be revised to reflect these new requirements. The amended Local Government Act requires councils to develop a Community Engagement Strategy for the development, implementation and review of the Fairfield City Plan (Community Strategic Plan).

The **Community Engagement Strategy** provides a framework to guide and support Council to ensure that together we shape the future of Fairfield City. The development of the Community Engagement Strategy is built on years of activity. The first step in the process is to review what we have previously heard our community say about the future of the City. The engagement process will reality check, update, revise and fill gaps so we have a comprehensive picture of the community's vision for Fairfield City.

Council has and will continue to value its work with the community, organisations (government and non-government) and businesses to deliver outcomes, through listening and responding to community concerns and aspirations.

An expert advisory group will be established which will ensure that the Community Engagement Strategy is effective and meeting its planned objectives. The Community Engagement Strategy embraces a range of engagement methods to ensure that key stakeholders are heard and involved in the ongoing delivery and monitoring of the Fairfield City Plan. The Strategy adopts four key priority areas. A summary of activity includes:

1. **Implementation / Evaluation:** Ensuring that the Strategy is implemented in an effective and efficient manner.
2. **Inform:** Keeping the Fairfield Community informed and updated.
3. **Consult / Engage:** Understanding the community's views, priorities, interests, ideas and aspirations.
4. **Involve / Collaborate:** Involving the community in shaping the future of the City.



Community Engagement Broad Overview

1

Introduction

VISION

Working together to shape the future of Fairfield City

1.1 Purpose of this Document

The revised Local Government Act requires councils to develop a Community Engagement Strategy for the development and review of the Community Strategic Plan. Community Engagement is an essential part of the way Fairfield City Council does business. Fairfield City Council recognises that to best meet the needs of our community, that planning and decision making is based on the needs and aspirations of our community. The Community Engagement Strategy outlines the principles, guidelines and actions Council will undertake in order to ensure that the community is engaged in the development, implementation and assessment of the Community Strategic Plan. The Community Engagement Strategy provides a framework to guide and support Council.

1.2 Links to Council Policy

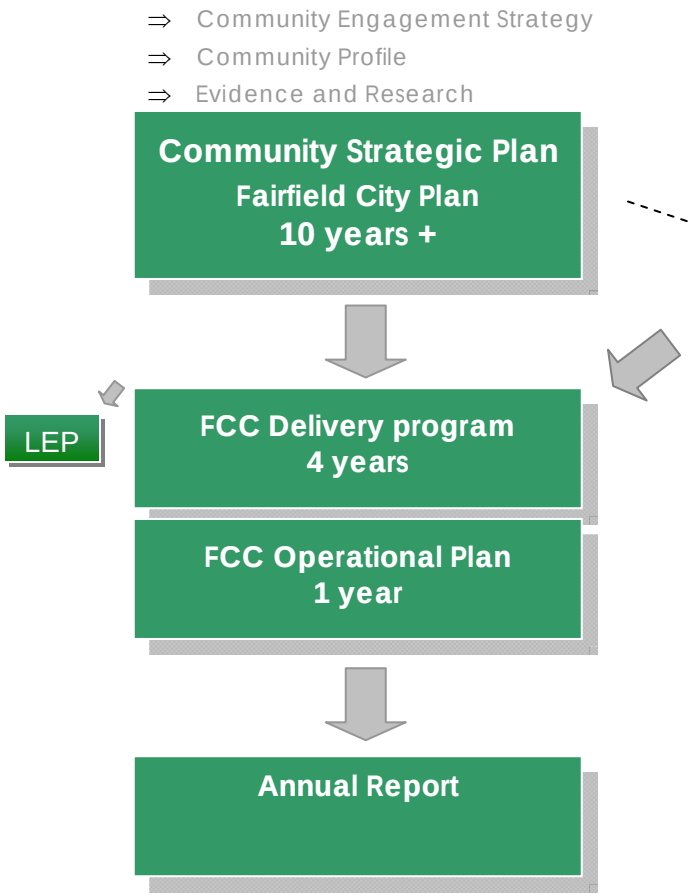
Fairfield City Council is committed to community engagement.

Fairfield City Council is committed to effective and appropriate community engagement, ensuring that, together we shape the future of Fairfield City. Council values its work with the community organisations and, business to deliver outcomes, through listening and responding to community concerns and aspirations.

The Community Engagement Strategy builds on this Policy and is a key element of the Community Strategic Plan.

2

Legislation



2.1 Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework has been developed as part of the Local Government Reform Program and changes the Local Government Act 1993 to improve Council's long term community, financial and asset planning. The Integrated and Reporting Framework requires each council to develop:

- **Community Strategic Plan**: a 10 year plan identifying the community's main priorities and aspirations for the future, and must address social, environmental, economic and civic leadership issues for the City and will be delivered in partnership between Council, State agencies, community groups and individuals. Referred to as the Fairfield City Plan.
- **Resourcing Strategy:** long term financial plan; human resources plan and asset plan.
- **Delivery Plan:** a 4 year plan identifying a statement of commitment to the community from each newly elected council.
- **Operational Plan:** developed for each year to outline the specific details of councils' activities and the budget.
- **Annual Report**: includes State of the Environment Report

2.2 Requirement for Community Engagement Strategy

The revised Local Government Act requires councils to develop a Community Engagement Strategy for the development and review of the Community Strategic Plan.

Social Justice Principles

The Community Engagement Strategy is based on the following principles.

Equity – *there should be fairness in decision making, prioritising and allocation of resources, particularly those in need.*

Access – *all people should have fair access to services, resources and opportunities to improve their quality of life.*

Participation – *everyone should have the maximum opportunity to participate in decisions which affect their lives.*

Rights & Responsibilities – *equal rights should be established and promoted, with opportunities provided for people from diverse cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds to participate in community life.*

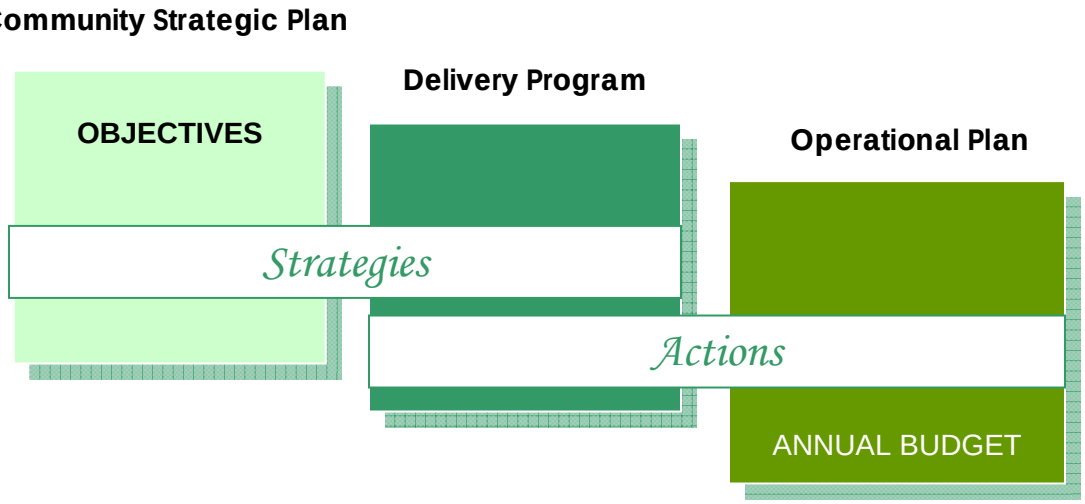
Local Government Act states:

"Council must prepare and implement a Community Engagement Strategy for engagement with the local community in developing and reviewing the Community Strategic Plan".

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

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

It is essential that all members of the community have a right, and a responsibility, to contribute to their community's future.



3

Community Engagement

Fairfield City Council is committed to engaging with the community, organisations (government and non-government) and businesses

3.1 Definition of Community Engagement

For the purposes of this Strategy, *'community engagement'* is any process that involves the public in problem solving or decision making and uses public input to make decisions (International Association of Public Participation - IAP2).

In general terms it is an inclusive process to ensure the community have the opportunity to participate in decisions that may impact on their lives.

3.2 Definition of Community

The word 'community' is a very broad term used to define groups of people; whether they are stakeholders, interest groups, citizen groups, etc. A community may be a geographic location (community of place), a community of similar interest (community of practice), or a community of affiliation or identity (such as business or sporting club).

3.3 Levels of Participation

There are degrees of participating ranging from a high degree of participation through to a low degree as described below in the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Participation. The Community Engagement Strategy aims to achieve the 'Involve' level demonstrating that we are actively working with the community to ensure its concerns and ideas are captured in the Community Strategic

Community Engagement

Plan. The Community Engagement Plan incorporates a journey to ultimately achieve a 'collaborative' level where the community would be involved in ongoing delivery and monitoring of the Fairfield City Plan.

It is to be noted that except in very limited circumstances it is only the elected body of Council which is 'empowered' to make decisions and implement actions within the terms of the Local Government Act 1993.

INCREASING LEVEL OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
Objectives:	Objectives:	Objectives:	Objectives:	Objectives:
To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives, or decisions.	Work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public and private concerns are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decisions in the hands of the public.

Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Participation

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Objectives

The aim of the Community Engagement Strategy is to:

- Inform the community on issues relating to social, environmental, economic and civic issues.
- Build respectful and trusting partnerships with the community to enhance our understanding and respond to concerns and aspirations.
- Improve the quality and quantity of community engagement through current activity and the development and implementation of new approaches.
- Ensure all communities within Fairfield City are able and have the opportunity to participate.
- Ensure that community concerns and aspirations for the future of Fairfield City are contained in the Fairfield City Plan and guide future decisions about the City.
- Enable the community to be involved in the ongoing delivery and monitoring of the Fairfield City Plan.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Community Engagement Strategy.

The Fairfield City Plan (CSP) will address

- *Community Wellbeing*
- *Places & Infrastructure*
- *Environmental Sustainability*
- *Local Economy & Employment*
- *Good Governance & Leadership*

5

Principles of Engagement

Changing the way governments and the community work together

The following five guiding principles have been developed to guide Council in their practices of community engagement.

Changing the way government and community work together

- New and more efficient ways to involve the community in planning and decision making processes
- Genuine engagement with opportunity for feedback

Listening, understanding and acting

- Listening to and understanding the community's view and concerns to ensure better decision making

Open, interactive and inclusive processes

- Open and accountable engagement practices
- Everyone involved is treated fairly and equally
- Connecting with the hardest to reach
- Range of transparent processes
- Honesty, Integrity and respect

Evidence based

- Establish good engagement practices that are based on sound research and quality information

Well informed effective communication

- All information is clear, concise, transparent and accessible

6

Opportunities and Challenges

6.1 Opportunities

The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework acknowledges local government's unique position as the only agency with an interest in all aspects of the City. It also formalizes the role of Council as the key advocate for the community in relation to all issues. This Legislation requires Council to take leadership for the development of a Community Strategic Plan (Fairfield City Plan) which covers all aspects of the LGA, including those issues that are the responsibility of the Federal and State governments, the not-for-profit and private sectors. This provides many opportunities to focus on the needs of the whole community.

The opportunities are endless.

6.2 Challenges

The City of Fairfield has many processes and systems already in place to ensure that the views of the community are heard. It should be acknowledged that due to the timeframe this Community Engagement Strategy is a stepping stone to best practice engagement principles which will lay the foundation for future Engagement Strategies.

Community Engagment Local Overview

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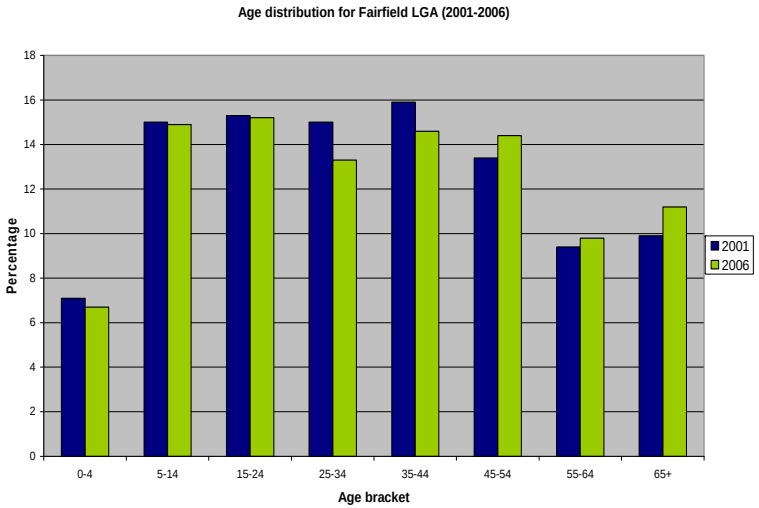
Our Community

Age Distribution for Fairfield LGA 2001-2006



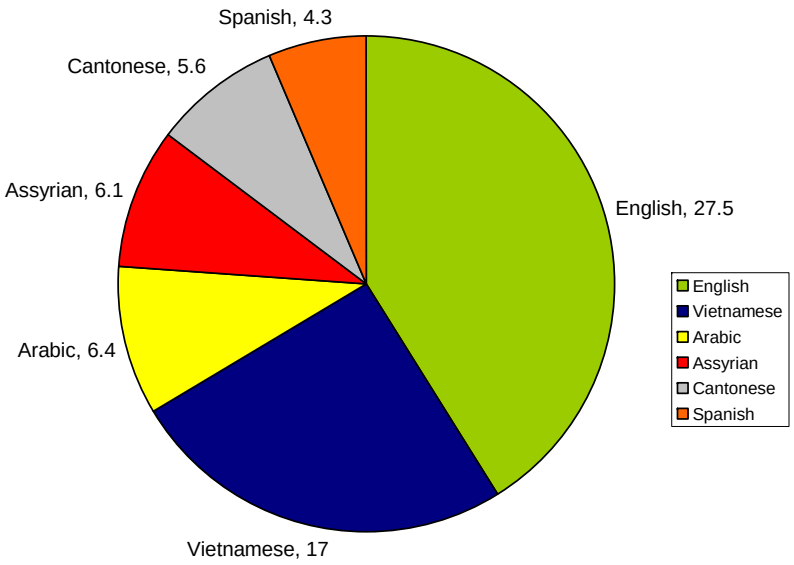
7.1 Our Community

The following provides a snapshot of our community, which highlights key target groups ensuring that the hard to reach are engaged in the process.

- Fairfield local government area (LGA) comprises 27 suburbs of various sizes. As at 30 June 2008 Fairfield City had a population size of 190,657 residents.
- In the 2006 Census 21.6% of the population usually resident in Fairfield LGA were children aged between 0-14 years, and 21.0% were persons aged 55 years and over. The median age of persons in Fairfield LGA was 34 years, compared with 37 years for persons in Australia.
- Population projections for Fairfield indicate that by 2012 there will be over 25,500 people living in Fairfield LGA aged over 65 years, with 3,009 of those being aged over 85 years.
- Overall, 51.5% of the population was born overseas, and 49.0% were from a non-English speaking background, compared with 23.8% and 16.8% respectively for New South Wales.
- Fairfield is one of the most culturally diverse areas in Australia with the highest number and proportion of people speaking languages other than English (72%). Almost a third of all residents speak a language other than English at home (72.5%). Fairfield LGA has more residents, who speak English poorly or not at all than any other Australian LGA.

Our Community

Language Spoken at Home in Fairfield LGA (2006)



- Fairfield has a high level of economic disadvantage compared to the rest of Sydney and Australia. The 2006 SEIFA Index of Relative Social-economic Disadvantage shows a score of 876 for Fairfield LGA.
- Unemployment is set at 8.1% for the December quarter 2008, up from 7.3% in September 2008.
- Overall, 25.6% of the population held educational qualifications, and 60.8% had no qualifications, compared with 40.7% and 45.5% respectively for New South Wales.
- Internet connection of households in Fairfield City compared to New South Wales shows that there was a larger proportion of households with either no internet connection or a dial up connection, but a smaller proportion of households with broadband connectivity. Overall 56.8% of households had no internet connection or a dial up connection, and 33.7% had broadband connectivity, compared with 53.0% and 38.5% respectively in New South Wales.
- The population in Fairfield City compared to New South Wales shows that there was a smaller proportion of persons who volunteered for an organisation or group. Overall, 7.5% of the population reported performing voluntary work, compared with 17.1% for New South Wales.

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Key Stakeholders

8.1 Our Whole Community

The Community Engagement Strategy targets the whole of the community including those who live, work and play within the Fairfield City. This includes: residents, ratepayers, landowners, organisations, businesses, government agencies and anyone who has an interest in the City of Fairfield.

8.2 Ensuring we reach the hard to reach

The Community Engagement Strategy will engage with hard to reach groups and the disengaged to ensure that all those affected have the opportunity to be heard. These include:

- Young people;
- Older people;
- Migrants and refugees;
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; and
- People with a disability.

8.3 Community Stakeholders

Includes those with an interest in the City whether they live, work or play. The Community Engagement Strategy will be inclusive and provide opportunities for residents, community groups, sporting clubs or interest groups to participate.

Key Stakeholders

8.4 Business Stakeholders

Businesses are a key group and are directly affected by decisions and plans. The Chamber of Commerce and Town Centre Committees will provide a forum to ensure the views of businesses are heard.

8.5 Government Agencies

State and Federal Government agencies will be engaged at a number of levels including: reviewing state and regional priority plans, on the ground service providers and manager and regional agreements.

8.6 Non-government and not-for-profit organisations

Fairfield City is home to many NGO's. These organisations are instrumental in reaching the community and providing feedback and advocating for community needs.

8.7 Councillors

The role of Councilors includes: promoting and leading community engagement and considering advice on resource implications and discussing this with the community prior to making decisions.

8.8 Our staff

Includes staff and volunteers in all elements of the new Integrated Planning Framework.

EVALUATION

9 Current Engagement Activity

The development of the Community Engagement Strategy is built on years of activity. Fairfield City Council has a wealth of information which continues to inform the direction for the City. The Community Engagement Strategy recognises that the key to success does not necessarily mean more community engagement. Harnessing the success of existing networks and information provides the foundations to build upon. The Community Strategic Plan endeavours to take a more holistic view of what the community wants for Fairfield City.

9.1 Key Documents

The following are key documents which continue to inform on priorities for the City. These include:

- Fairfield City Plan, 2006
- Management Plan 2009 - 2010
- Strategic Planning Community Consultation, 2007;
- Bonnyrigg Visioning Statement, 2009;
- Residential Strategy 2009;
- 'Have your say' icon on website;
- Bonnyrigg Living Communities Project;
- Draft Community Engagement Resource Manual, 2005;
- Local Environmental Plan (LEP), 2009;
- Development Control Plans (DCP);
- Environmental Management Plan 2006 – 2016;
- Vision, Outcome, Indicators, 2005; and
- Image Survey, 2005, etc.

Current Engagement Activity

9.2 Advisory Committees

Council has established a number of Advisory Committees which provides formal direct input into the direction of Council. These include:

- Council's Advisory Committees;
- Mayor's Crime Prevention Reference Group;
- Town Centre Committees;
- Heritage Committee;
- Five Creek Catchment Committee;
- Fairfield Employment and Training Partnership; and
- Traffic Committee, etc.

9.3 Committees and Networks

Council facilitates and participates in a range of networks which provides information and direction. These include:

- Fairfield Migrant Interagency;
- Keeping Australia Working Advisory Committee;
- Children's Network and Families NSW;
- Health Partnership (MOU Developed);
- Housing NSW (MOU Developed);
- Home and Community Care Forums;
- Cabramatta Creek Flying Fox Committee;
- DoCS Multicultural Reference Group; and
- Alcohol Accord, etc

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Methods of Engagement

Role of Councillors

Is to provide a leadership role in guiding the development of the Community Strategic Plan for Fairfield City and to be responsible for monitoring the implementation of Fairfield City Council's Delivery Program.

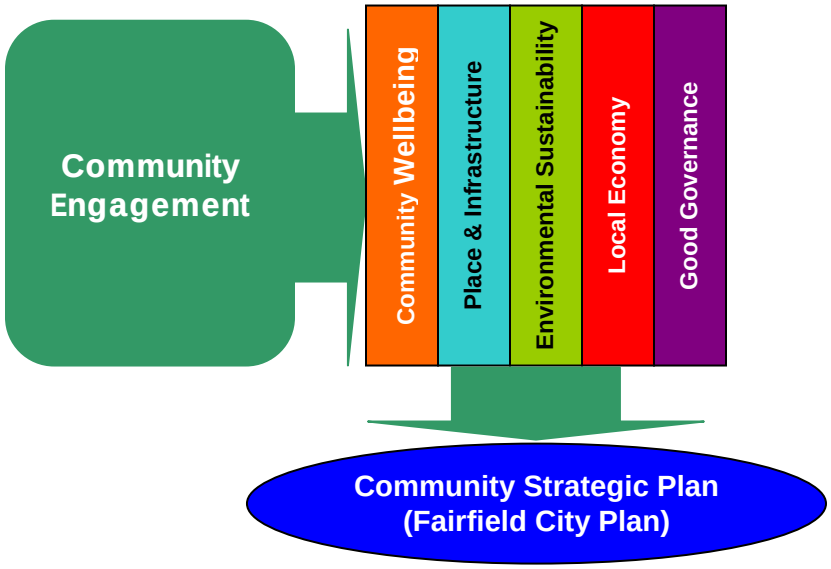
Fairfield City Council will adopt a range of engagement methods to ensure that the Fairfield Community are heard. Attachment one (1) outlines the range and types of engagement practices which will be embraced. In summary they range from:

- Information posters and City Life newsletters;
- Media and Communications Plan;
- Surveys;
- Focus groups;
- Advisory Committees;
- Meetings and forums;
- Bilingual Community Educators;
- Community feedback register; and
- more (see attachment 1).

Council will establish an expert Community Engagement Steering Committee which will guide the implementation to ensure that best practice approaches are adopted. The Committee will have accountability to ensure that the Community Engagement Strategy is effective and meeting its planned objectives.

11

Competing Priorities



11.1 Competing Priorities

We will work to ensure that the full diversity of voices in the community are heard, and to build a shared sense of responsibility for achieving balance among competing priorities. The Fairfield City Plan identifies the community's main priorities and aspirations for the future. It is expected that the Fairfield City Plan will be delivered in partnership between Council, state agencies, community groups and individuals.

It will be Council's role to advocate to all partners the priorities for the City. Despite the demands of complex and often competing priorities, managing the diverse needs of numerous stakeholders is paramount.

11.2 Scope of Engagement.

It is important to be clear and transparent with the community about the amount of influence they have (negotiable and non-negotiable). The community should be informed at each stage on the level of input and change as a result of their participation. It is our responsibility to record each consultation to ensure that it is meaningful. The community should be provided with feedback as to how they have influenced the final outcome.

12

Resourcing

Council as part of its Management Plan 2009 – 2010 has committed to increasing its community engagement, which is expected to bring significant long-term benefits, but will have some short and medium-term challenges, particularly planning and budgetary implications.

12.1 Budgets

Community engagement will provide value to the community, but it does come at a cost. Staff time allocated to develop surveys, focus groups and other engagement methods all cost time and money to prepare, implement and understand. Fairfield City Council has allocated resources for the implementation of the Community Engagement Strategy, including staff time.

In the 2009/2010 financial period Council has allocated a budget of $5,000 for the implementation of the Community Engagement Strategy.

12.2 Managing the Community Engagement Strategy

A Community Engagement Steering will be responsible for advising, implementation, consultation, monitoring and evaluation.

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Timeframe

13.1 Timeframe

The *Local Government Amendment (Planning and Reporting) Act 2009* was agreed to by the Governor on 9 October 2009. The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework will be phased in over the next three years with Fairfield City Council electing to participate in Group 2. This means that the Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program should be adopted by 30 June 2011.

To meet this timeframe the following milestones are identified:

Dec 2009	Community Engagement Strategy Adopted
Feb 2010	Service Statements Completed
	Documentation to support consultation developed
Feb / April 2010	Community Consultations
April / June	Review City Plan (Community Strategic Plan in line with the community's main priorities and aspirations)
August 2010	Exhibit City Plan
Nov 2010	Adopt City Plan
Feb 2011	Workshop priorities for Delivery Program
April 2011	Exhibit Delivery Plan & Operational Plan
June 2011	Adopt Delivery Plan & Operational Plan

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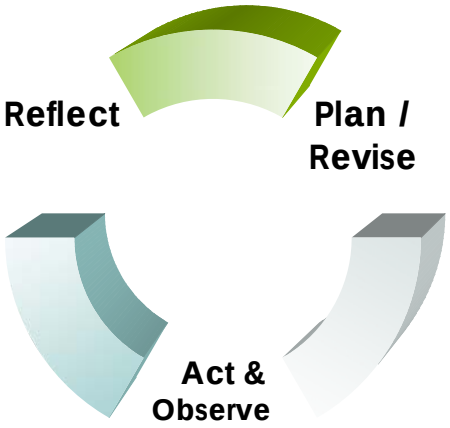
Evaluation and Monitoring



The Community Engagement Strategy is only effective if it achieves its objectives. The following aspects will be monitored and reviewed to ensure that we build our expertise and continue to refine our approaches and techniques:

- Participants have a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of the engagement, including the level and method.
- The engagement takes place when there is a real opportunity to influence the outcome.
- Adequate resources (time, budget, technology, etc.) and expertise are provided to achieve success.
- That we reach a broad representation of the Fairfield Community.
- Principles for engagement have been embraced;
- That we use a range of engagement methods appropriate to the target group.
- Adopt a Participatory Action Research methodology to ensure that we continue to improve and learn from our experiences.

Council should consider the future development of a 'State of the City Report' which will monitor and record a number of indicators tracking the City's progress.

Community Engagement Strategies & Actions 2010

IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

GOAL 1: Ensuring that the Community Engagement Strategy is implemented in an effective and efficient manner.

Action	Activity	Action By	Timeframe	Performance Targets
Build on Council's commitment to public participation	Develop a Community Engagement Strategy	Manager, Policy and Community Development	Dec 2009	• Policy adopted
	Inform Council staff of the Policy and support implementation in practise	Steering Group	Ongoing	• # correspondence • # of staff briefings
	Embed community engagement competencies into annual skills and competencies	Human Resources	July 2010	• Evident in core competencies
	Submit the adopted Community Engagement Strategy to the Department of Local Government	EM – City Outcomes	As required	• Plan submitted in accordance with the Local Government Act
Improve the quality and quantity of community engagement through current activity and the development and implementation of new approaches	Establish the Community Engagement Steering Group to guide the implementation to ensure that best practice approaches are adopted	Manager, Policy and Community Development	Nov 2009	• Committee established
	Establish a Project Manager responsible for overseeing all elements of the Strategy	Manager, Policy and Community Development	June 2009	• Accountability established

	Allocate sufficient resources	Council	Ongoing	• evident in work plans • Appropriate resources allocated
	Provide training on effective engagement for staff	Steering Group	Ongoing	• # staff trained • # supported
	Map existing community planning mechanisms and documents outlining community priorities and aspirations	Steering Group	Dec 2009	• Database developed •
	Manage and coordinate engagement activities to ensure consistency, quality, partnership participation and reduce duplication	Steering Group	Ongoing	• Systems established • Guidelines Developed
Develop a framework and supporting tools that are based on good engagement practices	Develop documents and packages for • Focus group methodology • Surveys • Undertake training of facilitators • Evaluation and reporting	Manager, Policy and Community Development	Dec – Jan 2009 - 10	• Tools developed and trialed • # of staff trained
	Identify networks and committees to conduct focus groups activities	Steering Group	Dec – Jan 2009 - 10	• # of committees identified
	Investigate alternative social media methods which support engagement to inform future Strategies	Steering Group	2012	• Agreed methods identified
	Provide flexibility to adjust methods based on feedback and evaluation	Steering Group	Ongoing	• Action research methodology adopted

Ensure knowledge retention and knowledge sharing within and between organisations	Disseminate findings widely	Steering Group	Ongoing	• # disseminated
	Establish a recording system to capture key findings and record all community engagement activity	Steering Group	March 2010	• Recording system established • # of documents
	Establish a resource bank on Objective which includes: • Identification of staff mentors • Resources and Tools • Bank of consultation reports	Steering Group	Ongoing	• Resource bank established and accessible
Assess existing assumptions, provide feedback on priorities and review the City Plan	Analyse findings from the survey and focus groups highlighting the community's key priorities and aspirations	Manager, Policy and Community Development	Apr 2009	• Report developed • Priorities identified
	Modify the City Plan to reflect the views and aspirations of the community	SPA: Corporate Planning	Apr 2009	• City Plan modified
Measure the uptake and effectiveness of the Community Engagement Strategy	Undertake a comprehensive evaluation of the Community Engagement Strategy	Steering Group	June – July 2010	• Inclusion of CES in key documents • Evaluation report
	Ensure that the consultations reach and are reflective of the City's community	Steering Group	Ongoing	• Evident in report • Monitor reach
	Identify how the community prefer to be consulted/engaged; the support they need; and best communication pathways to inform future Strategies	Manager Policy and Community Development	Ongoing	• Gaps and needs identified •

	Develop self-evaluation and reporting tools	Manager Policy and Community Development	Jan 2010	• Tools developed • 100% of focus groups self reported
Ensure the effectiveness of the Fairfield City Plan and Operational Plan	Establish a rolling four year research program to capture the community image survey. Conducted in 1997, 2000, 2003, 2004 & 2005 using CATI	Steering Group	2012 4 year rolling program	• # satisfaction • Priorities identified
	Consider the case for the development of a State of the Community Report to monitor and record indicators tracking the City's progress	SPA: Corporate Planning	2012 4 year rolling program	• Report developed
Champion successful methods and share finding from consultations	Lunchtime Showcases: develop a series of workshops showcasing effective methods and present findings	Steering Group	Ongoing	• # of sessions • # attending • % satisfaction
	Highlight findings and methods in staff newsletters	Steering Group	As required	• # articles • Feedback
	Submit where appropriate for awards and recognition for which best practices has been demonstrated	Steering Group	As required	• # of awards
	Investigate opportunities to present best practice methods at conferences and forums	Steering Group	As required	• # paper submitted • # papers accepted

INFORM

GOAL 2: Keeping the Fairfield community informed and updated

Activity	Action	Action By	Timeframe	Performance Targets
Raise the communities awareness about the opportunities to be involved in decisions that affect them	Develop a creative and inclusive communications plan which includes: • Local newspapers • Community radio • Website – information and have your say icon • E-mail bulletins • Interested community based organisations • Staff networks, Staff language aids • Events	Communications Department Manager, Policy and Community Development	Dec 2009	• Communications Plan developed • # activities • Evidence of effectiveness
Increase the community's capacity to influence decisions that affect their community.	Develop material to inform the community including: • Media Releases • Backgrounder • Fact sheets: purposes of the theme, data, priorities and challenges • Q & A on how to have your say (internal & external) • Newsletter articles	Steering Group	Dec 2009	• All material is targeted at a grade 8/9 reading level • # resources developed • # articles • Customer feedback • # complaints / complements • # translated material
	Translated appropriate material	Council	Jan 2009	
	Ensure Plain English philosophy	Steering Group	Dec 2009	

Understand the communities main priorities and aspirations	Feedback – how decisions were made and why	Steering Group		• Evident in Communications plan
	Establish an e-distribution link	IT Department	Feb 2010	• # of correspondence • # registering
	Ensure that Fairfield City Plan goes on public exhibition	Leadership and Governance	April 2011	• # of submissions • # promotional articles • # circulated through e-list
Increase accountability of service providers towards the communities they serve	Develop Service Statements for Fairfield City Council to ensure we are clear on services and service standards	Enterprise performance Department	Feb 2009	• Service Statements developed

CONSULT and ENGAGE

GOAL 3: Understanding the community's views, priorities, issues, interests, ideas and aspirations

Activity	Action	Action By	Timeframe	Performance Target
Adopt a ranges of consultation methods to ensure a that all stakeholders (defined pg 9) are adequately represented and that their views and aspirations are identified	TARGET: COUNCILLORS Undertake a consultation with Councillors to identify priorities for the City	EM: City Outcomes	Feb 2009	• # Councillors • Priorities identified
	TARGET: WHOLE COMMUNITY **Survey** the Community using both qualitative and qualitative methods through (self selection) • Internet (SurveyMonkey) • Events and Functions • Participatory methods – citizen researchers • Community based groups • City Life and newspaper • Listening Posts e.g. libraries	Steering Group	Feb – Mar 2009	• # of surveys completed • range of surveys translated • # surveys in LOTE • # events • # citizen researchers • # listening posts • Website hits • Priorities identified
	TARGET: HARD TO REACH Undertake **focus groups** with Council's Advisory Groups to explore priorities for the City (short, medium and long) • Youth Advisory Committee • Multicultural Advisory Committee • Arts Advisory Committee • Aboriginal Advisory Committee • Mayor's Crime Prevention Committee	Community Development Team	Feb – Mar 2009	• # of focus groups • # of participates • Representative of the City • Priorities identified

	Target: Business Stakeholders Undertake **focus groups** with Council's Town Centre Committees and Chambers of Commerce • Fairfield • Bonnyrigg • Cabramatta • Smithfield Wetherill Park **Survey** using both qualitative and qualitative methods through (self selection)	Place Managers	Feb – Mar 2009	• # of focus groups • # of participates • # of surveys • Priorities identified
	TARGET: GOVERNMENT AND NON-GOVERNMENT LOCAL PROVIDERS Undertake **focus groups** at selected networks and meeting	Identified Council staff	Feb – Mar 2009	• # of focus groups • # of participates • Priorities identified
	TARGET: COUNCIL STAFF Undertake **focus groups** with staff	Steering Group	Feb – Mar 2009	• # of focus groups • # of participates • Priorities identified
	Place the Fairfield City Plan on Pubic Exhibition in accordance with the Local Government Act	Council	Aug 2010	• # of submissions • Review of feedback

INVOLVE / COLLABORATE

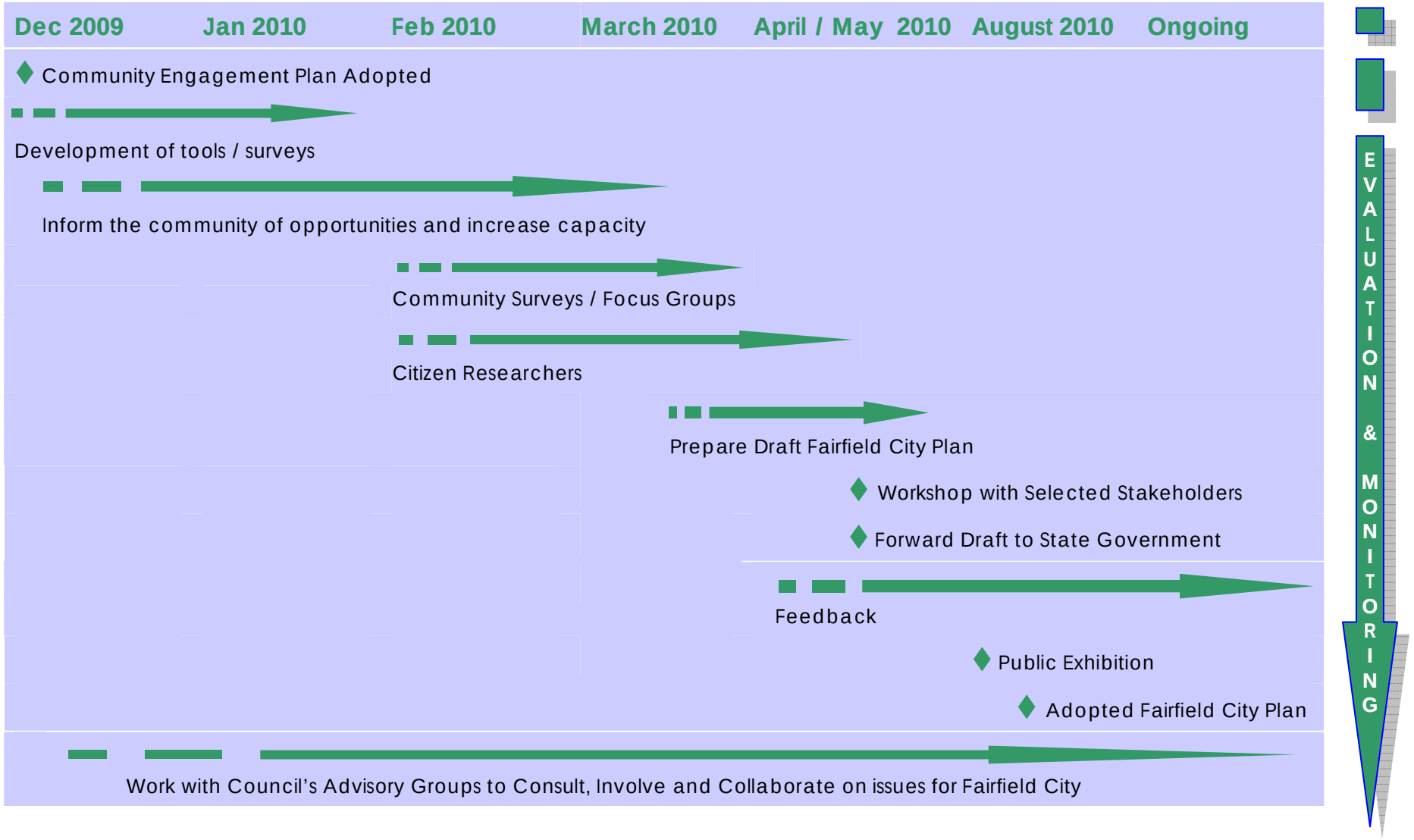
GOAL 4: Involving the community in shaping the future of the City

Activity	Action	Action By	Timeframe	Performance Targets
Review and improve representation on Council's Advisory Committees to reflect the make up of the local community	Draft Policy: Multicultural diversity on Council Advisory and Stakeholder Groups	SPA; Cultural Development	Feb 2010	• Policy developed • Policy adopted • Committees reviewed
	Review the Terms of Reference to standardise and ensure that they cement the role that the Committee plays with both the Community Engagement Strategy and the implementation and monitoring of the Fairfield City Plan	Manager Policy and Community Development	Feb 2010	• TOR Reviewed • TOR agreed • TOR endorsed by Council
	Review Advisory Committees and identify gaps such as Aged and Disability	Team leader Community Development	Sept 2010	• Review undertaken • Recommendations endorsed
Support and mentor members of the community to operate as citizen researchers	Work with organisations to develop an information network	Steering Group	Ongoing	• Agreed framework developed
	Provide support and training	Steering Group	Ongoing	• # of people trained • # of people supported
	2009 Everyone Belongs Conference: opportunity for young people to be heard and influence decisions	Youth Advisory Committee / SLASA	Dec 2009	• 300 young people engaged • Conference outcomes

	Our Neighbourhood Photography Competition: 15 participants between the ages of 12-18 years will comment on their local environment and document their responses through the use of still photography, video and audio	Fairfield City Museum and Gallery	Nov – Dec 2009	• Identification of our current environment • Understanding of how resident see our City • # of participants
	Work with organisations, networks and Advisory Committees to encourage additional focus groups and surveys	Steering Group	Feb – Mar 2009	• # citizen researchers • # of focus groups • # of participates • Priorities identified
	Communities for Children: consultations with parents and service providers identifying priorities for children aged from birth to 12 years	The Smith Family	Sept – Dec 2009	• # of focus groups • # of participates • Priorities identified and used to inform
Establish clear lines of communication with Councillors, State and Federal Government to ensure the communities priorities and aspirations feed into decision-making processes	Liaise with the appropriate State and Federal Government Departments to advocate the priorities of the community	City Manager	May 2010	• Draft Fairfield City Plan circulated for comment • # of comments
	Encourage a coordinated approach to Fairfield City ensuring that the community aspirations are evident in: • Policy development • Legislation • Projects and grants • Operations and resources	City Manager	Ongoing	• Evident in State / Federal and Local Government Plans and Policies
	Conduct liaison meeting with relevant State and Federal Government Departments	City Manager	As required	• Outcomes from meetings

	Communiqué (two-way) to be issued between State / Federal / Local Government outlining key outcomes and directions being taking in Fairfield City	Mayor	As required	• # received • # distributed
	Council to provide a formal submission to local members on key priorities for the City in the lead up to state government budgets	Mayor	Lead up to each budget	• # of submissions • # of priorities
Ensue a coordinated local response to the Fairfield City Plan	TARGET: RESIDENTS, BUSINESSES, GOVERNMENT AND NON-GOVERNMENT LOCAL PROVIDERS Facilitate a workshop exploring the key priority themes and feedback from the consultations using 'world café' techniques. Final Draft Fairfield City Plan review	Manager, Policy and Community Development	May 2009	• # and range of participates • Agreed priorities
	Conduct an annual forum to: • partner with stakeholders • report back on achievement • identify priorities, partnership and opportunities • Support collective action	Manager, Policy and Community Development	Annually	• # of participants • Annual forum • % Satisfaction • Record of achievement across the sector

Key Milestones



The following outlines the various methods of engagement referred to throughout the Community Engagement Strategy. The list is by no means comprehensive, but a guide to inform the different methods to be used in the first period of engagement.

Level of Participation	Methods of Engagement	Description	Strengths	Challenges
Inform	**Letter**	Personally addressed letter distributed through mail.	• Effective to inform residents of affected area.	• Cost • Assumes literacy • Limited feedback opportunity
Inform	**Rate Notices**	Insert fact sheets / survey into rate notices with quarterly payment.	• Board reaching	• Cost • # Rental properties • Assumes literacy
Inform	**City Life**	Produced quarterly provides an opportunity to inform every household and business in Fairfield City. It may also contain written surveys.	• Broad reaching • Profile • Cost effective	• Assume literacy • Limited word length
Inform	**Fact Sheets / Q&A Sheets**	Provide simple information on statistics, services and what we have heard to allow for informed decision.	• Simple • Plain English	• May miss detail • Assumes Literacy
Inform	**Community Newsletters**	A number of newsletters exist within the community including schools and community organisations. Provides an opportunity to reach a broader audience: Ads or surveys	• Broad reaching • Cost effective	• Lead time • Assumes literacy • Limited word length
Inform / Consult	**Print Media:** • Champion • Advance • Ethno specific	Print media can be used in numerous ways including: advertisement; media release; public notices; surveys; and discussion forums.	• Time commitment • Broad reaching	• Cost • Assumes literacy • Limited content and feedback
Inform	**Radio media:** • 2GLF • Ethno specific	Radio media provides a number of opportunities such as radio ads, radio interview or talk back.	• Cost effective • Reaches the hard to reach	• Limited feedback opportunity

Level of Participation	Methods of Engagement	Description	Strengths	Challenges
Inform / Consult	**Electronic Media:** • Web pages *Future may include: Facebook, Bang the Table, YouTube etc.*	Information will be placed on Council's website which provides information, surveys and opportunity for feedback.	• Cost effective • Inform and consult • Time commitment • Easily translated into a range of languages	• Assumes literacy • Poor internet access in Fairfield City
Consult	**Surveys** **General Community**	This is a statistically valid survey to obtain qualitative and quantitative data. Can be completed on-line, by phone, written, print or written media. Provides opportunity to hear from the broader community	• Broad reaching • Random • Give a voice to broader community • Confidential • Translated	• Getting the questions right • Analysis • Time consuming • Capacity to draw out issues
Inform / Consult	**Listening Posts**	Space at libraries, childcare and leisure centres for people to have their say about Fairfield City - could be electronic or written	• Time commitment • Access to the community	• Assumes literacy
Inform / Consult	**Focus Groups and Workshops** **Existing business, community and staff**	Discussion groups with about 15 -20 people. Focus groups will occur with a number of existing community groups representing the Fairfield Community.	• Capacity to draw out issues • Opportunity to clarify • Opportunity to prioritise • Inclusive, interactive	• Requires an experience facilitator • Only reach those connected to Council or a Community Organisation
Inform / Consult	**Bi-lingual Community Educators**	Bilingual Community Educators are trained to provide information or to gather information. It is an effective tool to reach people who speak a language other than English at home.	• Trained facilitator • Breaks down language and cultural barriers • Access to the community	• Time consuming • Getting the questions right • Compiling information
Inform / Consult	**Events and Festivals**	Council and the community hold numerous events throughout the year. These provide a venue to reach the broader community.	• Cost and convenience	• Getting the questions right

Level of Participation	Methods of Engagement	Description	Strengths	Challenges
Inform / Consult	**Community Mapping** Participatory Appraisal	Technique to enable people to analyse issues in their community and develop solutions to the problems they face.	• Strengths based approach • Inclusive • Fun	• Time consuming • Compiling information
Inform / Consult	**World Café**	Technique used for large focus groups or forums where a number of simultaneous conversations occur in response to predetermined questions. Participants change tables during the process.	• Effective for NGO and government consultations. • Quick	• Requires an experience facilitator • Getting the questions right • Compiling information
Inform / Consult	**Forums**	Bring people together to discuss direction and set priorities. A forum with identified key stakeholder will occur late in the process.	• Capacity to draw out issues • Opportunity to clarify	• Requires an experience facilitator
Inform / Consult / Collaborate	**Councillor Forum**	The Councillors will be engaged throughout the Community Engagement Strategy.	• Provide a voice • Opportunity to clarify	• Time constraints
Inform / Consult / Collaborate	**Advisory Committees**	Fairfield City Council has a number of Advisory forums which represent place, population groups and issues. These Committees will be involved in both collection of information, determining priorities as well as delivery and monitoring of the Community Strategic Plan.	• Collaboration • Report to Council • Representative of the community • Open and inclusive	• Requires literacy • May not liaise with constituencies • Time
Inform / Consult / Collaborate	**State Government**	A meeting / forum will be held with senior regional managers to provide advice and set direction and priorities for Fairfield City.	• Agreement and partnership	• Competing priorities
Inform / Consult	**Public Exhibition**	The final draft Community Strategic Plan and other documents will be exhibited for 28 days prior to adoption.	• Forum • Formal response to all submissions	• Requires literacy • Limited to those with the capacity to respond

Engagement methods may include, but not limited to those listed above.

Fairfield City's Contact Details

Telephone the Call Centre:	*9725 0222 – leave a message after 5pm.*
Contact your Local Councillor:	*Telephone numbers are available by contacting Fairfield City Council on 9725 0222*
Write a Letter:	*To The City Manager PO Box 21 Fairfield NSW 1860*
Post Comments on Council's Website:	*www.fairfieldcity.nsw.gov.au*
Language Aids:	*Fairfield City Council has many language aids. Call 9725 0222 and ask for your preferred language.*