

Update on progress of Integrated Community Engagement Framework

Tuesday, 21 November 2023
City Finance and Governance Committee

Strategic Alignment - Enabling Priorities

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Public

Approving Officer:
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council is committed to seeking community feedback to ensure decisions made reflect community views. Clear, purposeful community engagement enables the community to inform Council's decision-making processes and contribute to the development of strategies, policies, and projects resulting in better outcomes for the city.

Council and members of the community have suggested ways to improve conduct of community engagement and how feedback can inform decision making. A review of community engagement is being undertaken to reflect the changing needs of the community, meet legislative requirements and focus on best practice. Completion of this review includes the introduction of a legislative Community Engagement Charter, in accordance with the legislated Local Government Reform work being undertaken by the Local Government Association.

An Integrated Community Engagement Framework was endorsed by Council at its 26 September 2023 meeting to frame improvements to seeking, considering and sharing community feedback in a timely and meaningful manner. The framework approach is insights-driven, focused on conducting more face-to-face engagement, undertaking a business/resident precinct engagement approach, and bringing together consultation results to inform key decisions and opportunities to shape the city's future.

Significant strategy and policy decisions requiring community participation are central, including Council's Strategic Plan 2024-2028, Council's City Plan and Council's Integrated Transport Strategy. A program of forecast engagement activities for strategy, policy and projects for 2023/24 was included in the integrated approach.

This report updates on progress of the approach and shares key insights and learnings since the Integrated Community Engagement Framework has been in place.

RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendation will be presented to Council on 28 November 2023 for consideration

THAT THE CITY FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL THAT COUNCIL

1. Notes the update on the progress of the Integrated Community Engagement Framework.

IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS

City of Adelaide 2020-2024 Strategic Plan	Strategic Alignment – Enabling Priorities
Policy	Council's Community Consultation Policy is relevant to the consideration of information within this report
Consultation	There is no consultation required as a result of the decision of this report, however, the report contains information about consultation activities that are occurring, or will occur as a result of Council considering other decision-making reports
Resource	Activities outlined in this report will be conducted using existing resources or approved budgets. There are no additional resources required as a result of this report
Risk / Legal / Legislative	There are no additional risks identified as a result of this report
Opportunities	There are no additional resources required as a result of this report
23/24 Budget Allocation	There are no additional budget resources required as a result of this report
Proposed 24/25 Budget Allocation	There are no additional budget resources required as a result of this report
Life of Project, Service, Initiative or (Expectancy of) Asset	Not as a result of this report
23/24 Budget Reconsideration (if applicable)	Not as a result of this report
Ongoing Costs (eg maintenance cost)	Not as a result of this report
Other Funding Sources	Not as a result of this report

DISCUSSION

Background

1. At its 18 April 2023 City Finance and Governance Committee meeting, a workshop on Community Engagement improvements was undertaken.
2. As a result of Council Member and community feedback, an Integrated Community Engagement Framework (the Framework) was proposed at the 19 September 2023 City Finance and Governance Committee and was endorsed by Council at its 26 September 2023 Council meeting.
3. The Framework seeks to ensure that the community is aware of significant decisions of Council in advance, and their ability to provide input into multiple decisions at one time, with a focus on making it easier to participate in decision making. The Framework supports the significant plans and strategies that Council considers and develops to ensure cohesion and clarity for the community.
4. Importantly, the Framework enables the integration of some of the key strategy and policy decisions that Council is currently considering including the Strategic Plan 2024-28, the City Plan and the Integrated Transport Strategy as well as other key policies and projects. To support the Framework, an Integrated Community Engagement Program 2023/24 has been developed to show the planned timing for these strategies, policies and projects and has been provided as **Attachment A** to this report.
5. The Framework supports the following:
 - 5.1. Ensuring that each engagement is conducted in a way that is informative, interactive and inclusive of people in the City of Adelaide and broader South Australia.
 - 5.2. Planning our engagement activities in line with our Strategic Plan, Annual Business Plan and Budgets, project delivery and Policy/Strategy review cycles in advance.
 - 5.3. Communicating in advance the big decisions of Council when the community's participation will be sought.
 - 5.4. Planning a business/resident precinct-based approach (based on the precinct areas supported by Council's Place Coordinators) for engagement activities that relates to each area, occurring on a quarterly basis in their community.
 - 5.5. Bringing known data and insights to these engagements and subsequent decisions to assist the community to provide informed and connected responses.
 - 5.6. Creating a cycle of conversations to ensure the community is asked once and their feedback can be used multiple times - leveraging from conversations and information we have already captured to inform other decisions.
 - 5.7. Sharing with the community what we have heard and how it has impacted decision making (or will impact it in the future).
 - 5.8. The use of technology to support these processes.

Primary focus of the Framework

6. The Integrated Community Engagement Program 2023/24 will enable the community's feedback from each activity to inform the next planning or engagement activity, and will focus on three primary engagements:
 - 6.1. The Strategic Plan's role in setting Council's vision, aspirations and key actions for outcomes for the city over the next four years. Community engagement on the Draft Strategic Plan 2024-2028 took place between 27 October and 20 November 2023.
 - 6.2. The City Plan's role in articulating the built form of the city and guide decision making for the future needs of the city over the next ten years. Community engagement on the City Plan is planned to occur in early 2024.
 - 6.3. The Transport Strategy's role in articulating the city's transport needs to facilitate movement into and across the city to deliver high quality, accessible and inclusive infrastructure. Community engagement on the Transport Strategy is planned to occur from April 2024.
7. The feedback gathered from each project will be used in the development of the other key projects. This ensures a consistent narrative for community members and ensures that any insights gained is shared across Council to inform other services, projects and decisions.

Update on the progress of the Framework

Strategic Plan 2024-2028

8. The Strategic Plan 2024-2028 plays a central role in defining the Council's vision, aspirations, and key actions for the city over the next four years. Consultation on the Draft Strategic Plan 2024-2028 took place from Friday 27 October to Monday 20 November 2023. Feedback, research and insights from previous engagement activities of Council were considered in the development of the Draft Strategic Plan, along with the direction and decisions of Council.
9. Key themes that emerged from the community that could inform other strategies and projects include:
 - 9.1. Urban greening
 - 9.2. Housing affordability
 - 9.3. Health and wellbeing
 - 9.4. Infrastructure and transport (including public transport)
 - 9.5. Climate change
 - 9.6. Economic development
 - 9.7. Community connections
10. In addition to the YourSay online consultation and email submission opportunities, eight in person sessions were held to provide community members with the opportunity to talk to a staff member and provide feedback on the Draft Strategic Plan 2024-2028.
11. The below table summarises the date and times of each session:

Date	Time	Session
Tuesday 31 October	1530 – 1730	Rundle Mall
Wednesday 1 November	1300 – 1500	North Adelaide Library
Thursday 2 November	0900 – 1100	Central Market
Wednesday 8 November	1000 – 1200	Hutt Street Library
Thursday 9 November	1100 – 1300	Melbourne Street, North Adelaide
Tuesday 14 November	1000 – 1200	25 Pirie Street
Wednesday 15 November	1200-1400	25 Pirie Street
Thursday 16 November	1430 - 1630	Minor Works Building

12. The insights gathered from the Draft Strategic Plan 2024-2028 engagement activities will be used to inform the development of City Plan and the Integrated Transport Strategy. Information gathered on the Draft Strategic Plan 2024-2028 will also be complemented by other sources of community feedback such as through media channels, other Your Say engagement activities and from City of Adelaide surveys from residents, businesses and city users.

City Plan

13. The City Plan is Council's primary development and spatial planning tool. It articulates the current built form of the city and guides decision-making for future needs for the city. Informed by the State Government's 30 Year Plan for Adelaide, the City Plan spatial tool can identify future amendments to the Planning and Design Code.
14. Stages 1 (City Plan Report digital tool) and 2 (Targeted Stakeholder Engagement) have been completed, with additional phases of community engagement scheduled to continue until June 2024.
15. 1302 engagements occurred during City Plan Studio. 536 stakeholders participated in a range of activities including 'opening night' attended, by the Minister for Planning and Lord Mayor, five themed forums and less

formal drop-in sessions. Stakeholders could contribute to the engagement in a variety of ways with 1156 stakeholders engaged online.

- 16. Key themes and priorities that have emerged from the City Plan targeted stakeholder engagement include:
 - 16.1. Magnet City
 - 16.2. New Urban Form
 - 16.3. Urban Forest and Climate
 - 16.4. Park Lands Legacy
 - 16.5. Futures and Connecting People and Places
- 17. The below table summarises the attendance for each session:

Session	Attendees		Totals
	Government	External	
Forum Series			
Magnet City	12	26	38
New Urban Form	11	25	36
Urban Forest & Climate	25	25	50
Park Lands Legacy & Futures	14	18	32
Connecting People & Places	24	24	48
			204
Drop-In Sessions	81	29	110
Group Bookings	167	55	222
Total attendees	334	202	536

- 18. Recognising the importance residents' voices throughout these three projects, a concerted effort has been made that any feedback gathered from residents through the City Plan project builds on what we've already heard from the Draft Strategic Plan 2024-2028 consultation. This will also be taken in consideration with feedback from the community gathered through the annual Resident Survey.

Transport Strategy

- 19. The development of an Integrated Transport Strategy is underway as an update to the Smart Move Transport and Movement Strategy 2012-2022. This strategy is designed to align with modern transport principles and evaluation frameworks, with the primary goal of achieving evidence-based and cost-effective transport solutions for the City.
- 20. The Integrated Transport Strategy will serve as a guide, offering clear strategic directions and policies, and will play a pivotal role in facilitating effective decision-making, continuous action, and rigorous evaluation to drive meaningful change in our transportation system.
- 21. The insights gathered from both the City Plan and the Draft Strategic Plan 2024-2028 will serve as valuable foundations for the further development of the Transport Strategy. To build upon these insights, consultation for the Transport Strategy is scheduled for April 2024.
- 22. The draft Integrated Transport Strategy is planned for consultation in May and June 2024 and will build upon what we heard through the City Plan and Draft Strategic Plan consultation processes to ensure that our transportation initiatives are aligned with community needs and expectations.

How the Framework has been applied

- 23. Since the adoption of the Framework a hybrid approach of online and in-person engagement methods has been applied to improve inclusivity and accessibility to the process. This enables the City of Adelaide to maximise participation, capture a diverse range of perspectives, and foster a more equitable and informed decision-making process. Ideally the community are, and feel more involved, in the business of Council and that their trust in Council's processes and decisions builds over time.
- 24. An increase in the number of face-to-face or in-person engagement opportunities enables a broader range of engagement methods for people to participate and share their input.

25. Interactive community pop-up discussions in community centres, libraries, key city locations, neighbourhoods and precincts has supported accessibility and enabled more inclusive engagement. This approach has further promoted a sense of community and complemented the existing suite of online engagement tools.
26. Participants have engaged in one-on-one or group conversations with City of Adelaide representatives, utilise interactive feedback displays, or completed in-person surveys.
27. City of Adelaide staff have been invited to attend an increasing number of resident, precinct and neighbourhood group meetings and events as a direct result of City of Adelaide's outreach through this Framework.
28. The Framework and reframing of Council's approach to community has further supported participation as community and neighbourhood sessions now provide details on other current and upcoming projects in the local area. Community feedback on a variety of activities is sought at the same time, providing an integrated perspective on our role in shaping the future of Adelaide. This approach enables the community to have a comprehensive understanding of how all projects contribute to the city's future.
29. Projects that were highlighted through this process included the Urban Greening Strategy, Main Street Revitalization, City Plan, and Transport Strategy.
30. Complementing the face-to-face engagement is a significant improvement to the City of Adelaide YourSay website and community newsletter, which has received positive feedback from the community via social media posts. A unified voice across platforms has been an integral part of the integrated approach and have resulted in a significant and steady uplift in participation due to improvements in functionality, visual elements and messaging.
31. The participation rates on the Your Say engagement platform continues to increase year on year. Coupled with the integrated community engagement insights gathered from surveys and other sources, this will further enhance Council's decision making into the future.

Key Insights and Learnings from the Framework

32. Through all engagement activities conducted since the beginning of this term of Council (November 2022 – November 2023) the following insights have been captured:
 - 32.1. 268,302 visitors to YourSay
 - 32.2. 2,098 contributions through our YourSay online community
 - 32.3. 51 engagement activities conducted
 - 32.4. 418 questions asked throughout engagement activities
 - 32.5. Over 20 in person community sessions for the draft Business Plan and Budget (28 attendees), Kadaltilla Annual Community Forums (400 attendees over four sessions), City Plan (536 attendees over two weeks) and Strategic Plan (77 attendees over six sessions as of 14 November 2023).
33. Further data and insight into the number of residents and ratepayers that are registered on the Your Say platform have been provided as **Attachment B**.
34. To ensure the continuation of an integrated approach to community engagement by the City of Adelaide, the following learnings have been identified and will inform principles to be applied to any future engagement activities:
 - Considering projects in holistic manner and linking them to the strategic context and outcomes.
 - Sharing data and insights from previous engagement activities prior to commencing a new project or activity to build on what we have already heard.
 - Developing a question repository to track and search for the questions that community have already been asked through City of Adelaide engagement and research activities. The intention is to streamline participation and prevent duplication, whilst gaining insights from previous consultations.
 - Ensure that community engagement processes are inclusive and accessible. This is achieved by delivering hybrid community engagement approaches, which combines both online and offline methods to facilitate effective and inclusive communication that meets the needs of the community. This approach enables a broader representation of voices, captures a rich set of insights, and promotes sustained involvement, ultimately leading to more informed and inclusive decision-making.
35. Additional updates will be provided to Council as the Framework continues to be implemented.

Council's Community Engagement Review and related Legislative Amendments

36. Alongside the application of the Framework, Council continues to undertake a review of community engagement to best reflect the changing needs of the community, meet legislative requirements and focus on best practice.
37. The Administration is aware that a legislated Community Engagement Charter (the Charter) is being developed by the Local Government Association and the Office of Local Government and is awaiting a participation review or general consultation process (the community at large) prior to proclamation. As this Charter will likely impact community engagement policies and frameworks, the Administration has paused bringing the review back to Council. It is expected this will be available in late 2023 or early 2024.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Program of planned engagement activities for 2023/24

Attachment B – Community Engagement Data and Insights

- END OF REPORT -