



Engaging the Community

Community Strategic Plan 2011/2021

The Community Strategic Plan will be central in guiding Tweed Shire Council's activities and projects for the next 10 years. Encompassing and building on the work from Tweed Futures 04/24, the Plan will be informed by the broad Tweed community and its stakeholders. This engagement strategy is specific to the Draft Community Strategic Plan and outlines how Council will engage on this shire-wide high impact project with stakeholders during the 42-day exhibition period.

Stakeholders

- Tweed Residents and Ratepayers (including non-resident ratepayers)
- Community organisations and Interest Groups
- Business and Industry
- Council committee and advisory groups
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents
- Youth
- Residents with a disability
- Schools and educational institutions
- Government agencies, adjacent councils and regional bodies

Engagement Outcomes

Following the 42-day exhibition period of the Draft plan, the final Tweed Community Strategic Plan 2011/2021 will be informed by: Written submissions to Council; Short phone submissions to Council; independent report from online consultation results; independent report from community phone survey results; feedback and comments from Community Information Sessions. Copies will be provided as attachments to the Council report.

Key Messages

- The Draft Tweed Community Strategic Plan 2011/2021 builds on the 2004 community consultation for Tweed Futures 04/24. Are we on the right track or are there other priorities the community would like Council to consider?
- Everyone has a right and will have the opportunity to participate and share their vision for the Tweed. What might be my vision may not be your vision, but together it makes our vision for the future of the Tweed.

Communication Objective

“To consult with stakeholders to ensure the Tweed Community Strategic Plan 2011/2021 reflects the long-term vision and aspirations of the community.”

Outcome

“An informed Tweed Community Strategic Plan shaped by the community — one that provides a balanced approach to the aspirations of the broad Tweed community and sets a clear 10-year direction for Tweed Shire Council to work towards delivering.”

Timeline

The recently introduced integrated planning and reporting framework requires NSW Council's to prepare:

- A **10-year 'Community Strategic Plan'**
- A **four-year 'Delivery Program'**
- An **annual 'Operational Plan'**

Tweed Shire Council elected to be one of the Councils to have the new reporting system **implemented by 30 June 2011**. Over the next 10 months, Council will be actively engaging with the community as it implements the new integrated planning and reporting.



Communication Challenges

Challenge/Issue	Impact/Implication	Overcoming the challenge
To engage with Tweed citizens who would not normally be part of the consultation process.	Without their participation, community input provided might not reflect the views of the entire shire. A poorly informed strategic plan will lead to high expectations and poor results when delivering the outcomes.	<p>Use well known community members as ambassadors for the Community Strategic Plan - follow up with use of 'voxpops' from everyday community members in the Tweed Link and other media.</p> <p>Extensive marketing to promote the draft plan is on exhibition for 42 days - have your say. Council going out to the community at markets, shopping centres, etc.</p> <p>Use a wide range of engagement methods based on social justice principles and incorporating the best of new technology and traditional methods to make it easy to have your say.</p>
Many people are time poor these days. How do you get the average person to provide their comments on their vision for the Tweed?	Unless they are engaged community input provided might not reflect the views of the entire shire.	Use engagement methods that are not resource or time intensive, provide 24/7 access and allow members of the community to contribute when, where and how it suits them. Council going out to the community. For example, 24/7 online forums with various discussions, 24/7 phone submissions, community information sessions that cover both business hours and after hours, Council stalls at shopping centres and markets.
The Draft Community Strategic Plan and associated reporting requirements are complex and might be difficult to digest for some members of the community.	Scale and complexity of the project could prevent participation and input from groups and individuals.	<p>Use plain english and no jargon to explain the process and reporting requirements.</p> <p>Create a list of Frequently Asked Questions.</p> <p>Design the Community Strategic Plan so it is enticing and easy to read with clearly defined themes. Break the plan and the process of its formulation into smaller, easily understood sections using graphics rather than text.</p> <p>Ensure background information with detail is easily accessible for those who wish to get more information.</p>
Misinformation in the community about the contents and purpose of the Draft Community Strategic Plan.	Can detract the community conversation from 'the big picture'.	<p>Invite media to attend a designated media briefing prior to the Community Strategic Plan going on exhibition.</p> <p>Use the Tweed Link to address issues of community concern.</p> <p>Proactively respond to incorrect information published by the media or as Letters to the Editor or in the online moderated discussion.</p> <p>Ensure background information with detail is easily accessible for those who wish to get more information.</p>

Sharing the vision - Have your say

The community engagement strategy for the Community Strategic Plan is based on social justice principles - ensuring equity and fairness and to provide opportunities for individuals, regardless of background or socio economic status, to participate in decisions that can affect their quality of life. The methods outlined are open to all stakeholders, with some targeted activities for certain audiences.



Council's Customer Service Centres in Tweed Heads and Murwillumbah will have a dedicated area for the Community Strategic Plan, internet access for the online forum as well as printed and electronic copies of the plan. Council's offices are open Mondays at 8am - 4.45pm and Tuesday - Friday from 8am - 4.30pm.



Tweed Heads, Kingsliff and Murwillumbah Libraries will have copies of the plan and offer free internet access. Several free internet sessions on how to participate in the online forum will be held at Tweed's libraries throughout the exhibition period. These will be advertised in the Tweed Link.

Phone Submissions

1300 139 255

Can't make it to one of the information sessions or don't have internet access? Then consider the dedicated **24/7 phone hotline** established to take short verbal submissions.

You can share your vision for the Tweed over the phone from anywhere, at a time that suits you, all for the cost of a local call.

Written Submissions

The traditional methods of input are still available. Written submissions can be emailed to tsc@tweed.nsw.gov.au, faxed to (02) 6670 2429 or posted to General Manager, Tweed Shire Council, PO Box 816, Murwillumbah 2484

www.ourtweedvision.com.au



An independently moderated online forum hosted by leading online engagement specialist Bang The Table will host the main community conversation for the Draft Tweed Community Strategic Plan 2011/2021.

With the site **open 24/7**, residents can have their say on the plan at a time that suits them, **engage in two-way discussion** with other stakeholders (anonymously if you like), learn more about the plan or just observe the community conversations.

The website will be the central point for all information relevant to the draft plan. It will feature the plan and background information, as well as key dates and information on other ways you can have your say. The site features vodcasts from community members, an electronic library, pictures and, most importantly, discussions on the plan and the four themes.

Once the exhibition period closes and submissions are being considered, an independent report by Bang The Table will be available on the site for users to view and will be attached to the relevant Council report.

Tweed Link

The Tweed Link is one of Council's primary communication tools and this year's winner of an RH Dougherty Award for Reporting to Your Community.

A full-colour Tweed Link issue due out on 28 September will be dedicated to the Draft Community Strategic Plan 2011/2021.

Regular articles and advertising about the plan, how to have your say, updates on the online forum and much more will feature in Tweed Link issues throughout the exhibition period.

Distributed to 38,500 households across the Tweed and with a weekly readership rate of 79%, more than 67,000 residents read the Tweed Link each week. The Tweed Link is also available online, via hardcopy and electronic subscription and available on audio tape.



Council in the community

Council will be at various places around the Tweed to let you know about the strategic plan, including shopping centres, community halls and markets. Stop by and find out more about the community strategic plan and how you can have your say to share your vision.

Community information sessions about the Draft Community Strategic Plan will be held in Tweed Heads, Tweed Heads South, Kingscliff, Pottsville, Murwillumbah, Chillingham and Uki. Councillors and Council officers will be available to answer questions and assist with explaining the plan. Sessions are open house and some will be open until 7pm to allow residents to attend at a time that suits them.



Advertising and Media

To ensure the broad Tweed community and other stakeholders are aware Council is seeking their input to the Draft Community Strategic Plan Council will **promote the plan through the Tweed Link, other local newspapers, industry magazines and publications, television, radio and social networking sites.**

Local media play an important role in informing the Tweed community in a factual and timely manner. Media Organisations will be invited to attend a dedicated **media briefing.**

Posters encouraging the community to share their vision will be at prominent sites around the Tweed, including community notice boards, shops, libraries, Council offices and shopping centres.

Phone Survey

As another method to engage with residents who may not otherwise get involved in the discussion process, Council will conduct an independent phone survey. If you get a call about the Draft Plan please take the time to let us know your vision and thoughts on the future of the Tweed. The sample size of the phone survey reflects the broader Tweed community within a +/- 5% variation and with 95% accuracy.



Measuring Success

It is important to evaluate the methods of engagement used so Council can determine their effectiveness and consider their benefit for future use. Evaluation methods include:

- Independently Moderated Online Forum (Bang The Table) – When the online forum concludes, registered users will be asked to complete an online survey to provide feedback. Evaluation will include the number of users who access the unique site directly or via Council's webpage at www.tweed.nsw.gov.au
- Submissions - the number of written submissions and short phone submissions.
- Phone survey – the sample size of the phone survey reflects the broader Tweed community within a +/- 5% variation and with 95% accuracy.
- Social Networking Site advertising – number of 'click throughs' to the online forum.

Targeting stakeholders

Tweed Residents and Ratepayers

- Direct mail to non-resident ratepayers.

Interest groups (including ratepayer and progress associations, environment groups, business and industry peak bodies).

- invitation to representatives from regularly consulted community groups and organisations to attend a briefing session with the Australian Centre For Excellence in Local Government, to initiate the formal collaborative program and actively engage with representatives who advocate for the community.

Community organisations

- Direct mail to more than 600 registered groups on the Community Directory, ranging from sporting clubs and businesses, to religious and ethnic groups and schools.

Business and Industry

- Correspondence with Tweed Tourism members.

Council Committees and Advisory Groups

- Draft Community Strategic Plan included as an agenda item for meetings during the exhibition period.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents

- Include on agenda with Aboriginal Advisory Committee.
- Advertisement in Koori Mail.

Youth

- Direct mail to all Tweed secondary schools and tertiary educational facilities.
- In conjunction with Council's Youth Officer coordinate a meeting by invitation with Tweed-based youth workers and providers.
- Article in the Tweed Youth Times newsletter.
- In conjunction with Council's Education Officers, encourage discussions at schools and offer the opportunity to have Council present at school assembly.

Residents with a disability

- Draft Community Strategic Plan will be available on audio tape and distributed through community services for the vision impaired.
- In conjunction with Council's Aged and Disability Officer, coordinate a meeting by invitation with Tweed-based service providers.

Schools and educational institutions

- Direct mail to all Tweed secondary schools and tertiary educational facilities.
- Posters up on campuses to encourage students to have their say.

Government agencies, adjacent councils and regional bodies

- Meetings by invitation with NSW Government agencies and affiliated services including emergency services, police, fire and ambulance.