

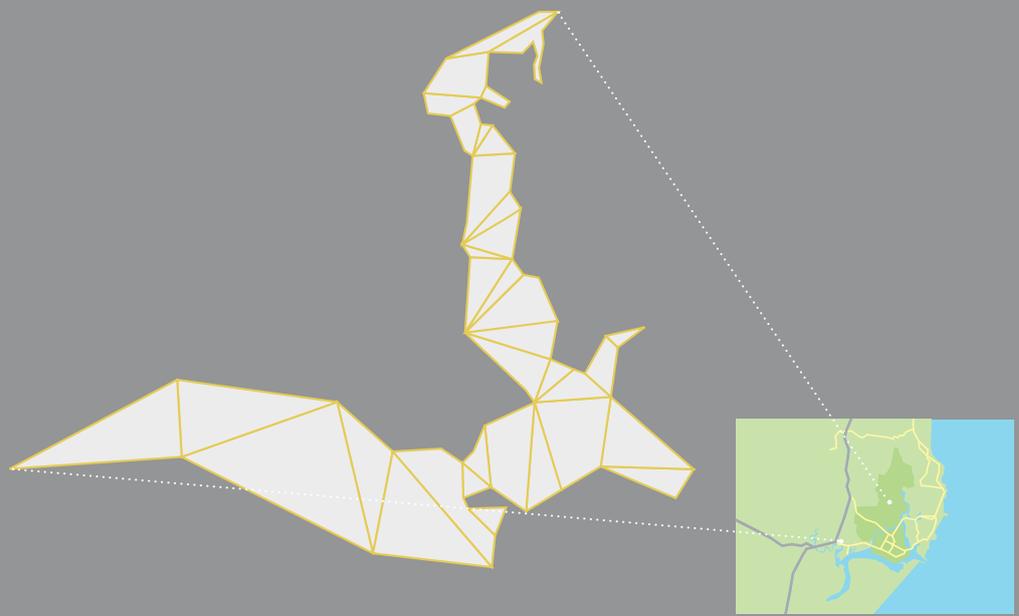
# *community engagement strategy*

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## 2022

ADOPTED 15 DECEMBER 2022

# our community our future



*Our design rationale for this document is based on a conceptual interpretation of its contents. To symbolise the strategic community approach, we have used segmented shapes to represent the elements of the community that fit into the geographic focus – Ballina. Together, the shapes form the Ballina River map. Every element impacts on the challenges, direction and ultimately the future of its entire form – our community. We hope you enjoy the journey and the view.*

Adopted 15 December 2022. First draft published August 2022  
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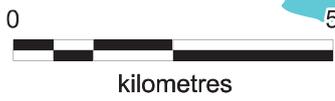
**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:** Ballina Shire Council acknowledges that we are here on the land of the Bundjalung people. The Bundjalung are the traditional owners of this land and are part of the oldest surviving continuous culture in the world.

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## ➔ RELATIONSHIP OF THIS CES:

*The Ballina Community Engagement Strategy (CES) is a key component in meeting Council's legislative requirements for community participation under the Local Government Act 1993.*



## message from our *mayor*



In local government we exist to serve our community therefore our community's needs, priorities and values guide us in everything we do.

This cannot happen without consistent and comprehensive community engagement.

We need to ensure the opinions of our community are heard by seeking feedback on our plans, significant projects, developments, and proposals.

We must also inform our community about what we do and how it might affect them.

Informing our community and getting feedback is only part of the engagement. Listening and responding are also critical to community engagement.

We can't always please everyone in the community. But we can strive to make sure everyone in the community gets the opportunity to have their say.

Community input and participation are vital in building a shire where people want to live, work, and visit.

Ballina Shire Council is committed to engaging with our community in a transparent, open, and accountable way.

This Community Engagement Strategy provides the framework for proactive, ongoing engagement that builds trust and understanding in our community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which reads "Sharon Cadwallader". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Cr Sharon Cadwallader**

*Mayor of Ballina Shire*



## introduction

Ballina Shire Council values input from the wider community as it helps to ensure that the services we provide are relevant, timely and of value.

A Community Engagement Strategy (CES) is a key component in meeting Council's legislative requirements for community participation under the *Local Government Act 1993* and *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

The legislation asks councils to actively engage with their local communities as a principle of good governance and recognises that community participation results in better outcomes.

This CES is a roadmap for creating and maintaining positive relationships and effective engagement with our community. It strives to embed best practice consultation across Council now and into the future.

The level that we engage with the community will vary substantially depending on the scale and scope of the project or plan.

Community, as referred to in the CES, includes anyone that is affected by the project or plan, and can include individuals, community groups, non-government organisations, NSW and Australian government bodies.

## what is community engagement?

Community engagement, also known as ‘public participation’, is about involving people in decision making and it is at the very core of the democratic processes in local government.

### WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Ballina Shire Council recognises that people have a right to be informed and to have a say on projects that are important to them, or which have an impact on their daily lives. Community engagement provides Council with a better understanding of community views and values and helps us to make more informed decisions and deliver better services.

### WHY DO WE NEED A STRATEGY?

The Community Engagement Strategy outlines our approach to engage with the community and stakeholders. It provides transparency and clarity for all stakeholders so they can understand their role in the decision-making process. The strategy outlines who, when and how we will engage on plans, policies, projects and service delivery.

### LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Council must comply with a legislation that sets out when we must initiate consultation. Section 402A of the *Local Government Act 1993* requires council to: *establish and implement a strategy (called its community engagement strategy) for engagement with the local community when developing its plans, policies and programs and for the purpose of determining its activities (other than routine administrative matters).*

### THIS DOCUMENT SITS ALONGSIDE THE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PLAN

The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) requires planning authorities to outline how and when the community will be engaged across planning functions like policy making and assessment. These requirements are outlined in our Community Participation Plan (CPP) which is available on Council's website [ballina.nsw.gov.au](http://ballina.nsw.gov.au)

Our Community Engagement Strategy (this document) has been developed in response to these requirements as well as those set out in the *Local Government Act 1993*. This strategy also covers non-planning matters.

TOGETHER

Incentives for all developers in planning (Section 106/2015)

Land not designated for out-of-use path ways

Development limited - not sufficiently enforced

Conflict between state & council approvals

State gov doesn't listen at local level re. state plan

Disassembling tax incentives (regulate zoning)

No restrictions short term letting

Relax height restrictions buildings

increasing disparity of incomes - low wages for many essential services

negative gearing - a goal of empty houses

Co-ordination between Council Dpts re. development infrastructure planning -> schools

Councils role in ensuring state working infrastructure in schools in development

\$20,000 cap limit infrastructure goal

development done privately - for profit

mass cut-fill - roads - rock walls

Local funding to encourage people to retain older buildings rather than sell to developers

State policy to encourage population shift away from coast

approve more housing diversity

sticking to 8.5/9m height limits

accepting that others want to live here

revisit urban planning controls to allow more...

Goal incentives to relocate / move to regional locations

Regional development supported by decentralization of gov jobs - departments

Greater gov involvement in supported housing for essential services - health, education, etc

Incentives to subsidize - reduced costs, cost cap on water

Higher developer contribution

Minimum houses - lot sizes

Allow more granny flats

Variation in block sizes

Compulsory variation in housing types in new developments

Downward wages lower in suburbs. Policy to support housing for essential services

Use of land in suburbs - low density

Use of land in inner city - high density

Use of land in rural areas - low density

Use of land in regional areas - low density

Diverse/innovative housing ideas eg. Muthiga occupancy based housing solutions

Support for innovative ideas/solutions

Early shift to designing people living more than just need for themselves

of... market

Luxury dwellings - unaffordable to low income earners

restrictive covenants that limit possibilities for affordable housing

lack of diversity of housing types, lot sizes

lack of satellite villages (to allow local development without connection or infrastructure)

asking for large sizes

design for large houses, social context

isolated development (without connection or infrastructure)

Additional amenities - toilets, saunas

Reserve traffic in CBD - one way traffic flow

Beach access for impaired users

Good reliability path ways - eg. for carts, plans to park security (cont)

Smaller residential lots - eg. 400 sqm

accessible housing for later in life

higher density near village centres

Chaper housing for our children

intergenerational housing design

having near public transport routes - encourage community - walk/cycle/other public transport

Winter land development

adequate supply - affordable

space for trees & gardens aesthetically pleasing

local services adequate eg. schools, preschool, supports

appropriate scale + intimacy - light, good ventilation, sun

design to happy life to be

Social housing options - Duplex options - non traditional 3 bedders

More 1-2 bedroom options - Young people share housing

Community based initiatives to service housing

Co-ownership between housing styles

Open space & recreational facilities

Environmentally sensitive construction of housing

Infrastructure planning prior to residential development

To be able to live in any city going to the other side of the city in 15 min

ALONE

# 02

## engagement aims

Our community engagement aims:

### Build relationships

Act in an honest, open and respectful way to build strong relationships, partnerships and trust with our stakeholders.



### Right to be involved

Believe stakeholders have a right to be involved in decisions that affect them.



### Clarity of purpose

Well planned with a defined purpose and stages for community input.



### Accessible and inclusive

Seek views representative of the community and provide a range of activities to ensure that the broadest possible ranges of stakeholders can participate.



### Timely and coordinated

Engage early and provide enough time for our stakeholders to provide input so that view can be considered.



### Tailored

Use a range of communication and engagement methods that suit the purpose and type of project we are consulting on. Consider the impact, complexity, risk, and timing and range of stakeholders involved.



### Transparent

Make decisions in an open and transparent way and provide feedback to stakeholders to explain decisions.



### Learning from practice

Evaluate our engagement activities and learn from feedback.



# *social justice* *principles*

Our approach reflects the social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights.

- ▶ Better **understand** the needs of the community.

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- ▶ **Educate** the community and stakeholders about the potential issues that may impact Ballina Shire over the next 10 years.

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- ▶ Obtain **input** into a 10 year vision for the shire including future priorities, needs and aspirations.

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- ▶ **Inform** the community and stakeholders (target audiences) of the opportunities to participate in the development of plans, policies and programs.

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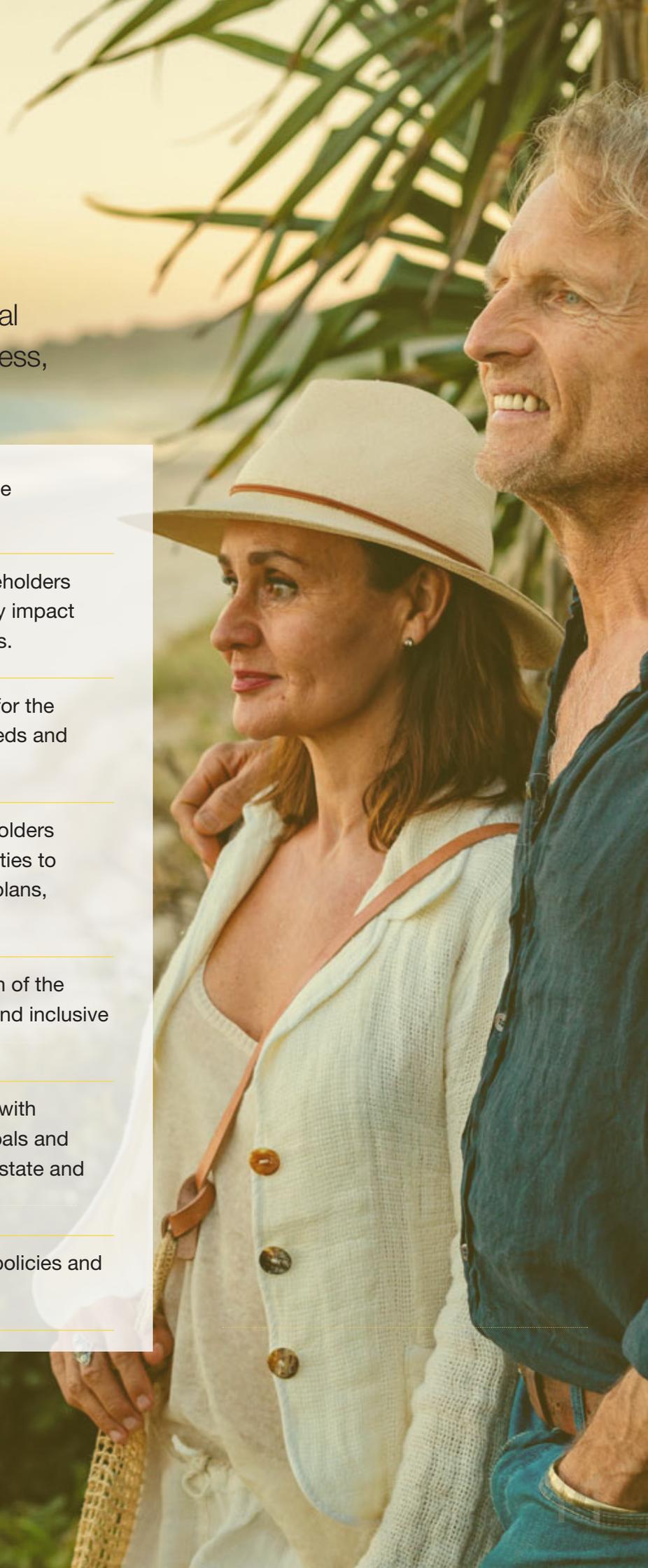
- ▶ **Engage** with a broad cross section of the community that is representative and inclusive of our demographics.

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- ▶ **Create** collaborative partnerships with government agencies to ensure goals and strategies are inclusive of existing state and regional plans.

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- ▶ **Meet** requirements of legislation, policies and procedures.





# who we are

If we are to effectively engage, we need a clear picture of who we are.

## TRADITIONAL OWNERS OF THE LAND

We seek to address the legacy of our past and ensure a great quality of life for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. 3.3% of our community identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

## IDENTIFICATION OF STAKEHOLDERS

Our largest population cohort lives on the Ballina Island, followed by East Ballina with our rural hinterland having the least population.

In 2022 the total population of Ballina Shire Council was estimated to be 46,000 people. It is expected to increase by over 6,384 people to 49,013 by 2026, at an average annual growth rate of 1.41%. This is based on an increase of over 2,758 households during the period, with the average number of persons per household falling from 2.33 to 2.32 by 2026.

We are an ageing population, with a higher proportion (25%) of people over the age of 65.

Our median age is 48 years, 5 years older than the median age in Regional NSW.

## CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS

In 2016, households in Ballina Shire have a median income of \$1,152, this was \$14 less than Regional NSW. Within the Shire, median household incomes range from a low of \$794 in Ballina (Island) to a high of \$1,692 in Rural North.

More than 35% of people are considered lower middle income households.

Based on Ballina Shire's population in 2016, there are approximately 6% living with disability or needing assistance in their daily life in our shire. Nearly 20% of households are considered low income and earn less than \$650 per week.

Housing affordability and homelessness will be issues to address. It is important for us to provide access to all sectors of the community to participate in engagement.

## who we engage with

A vital component of the community engagement process includes identifying and understanding key stakeholders who will be impacted by or who have an interest in a decision. Our engagement aims to reach the community to ensure a range of views are heard.

EXTERNAL GROUPS	INTERNAL GROUPS
RESIDENTS	MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS
WORKERS - TRAVEL TO SHIRE FOR WORK	COUNCIL STAFF
BUSINESS INDUSTRY GROUPS	STANDING COMMITTEES
CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COMMERCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE</li> <li>• ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE</li> <li>• FINANCE AND FACILITIES COMMITTEE</li> </ul>
ORGANISATION WITH A COUNCIL DELEGATE	ADVISORY COMMITTEES
COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE</li> <li>• AUSTRALIA DAY COMMITTEE</li> <li>• DONATIONS WORKING PARTY</li> <li>• ECONOMIC ACTIVATION GROUP</li> <li>• PUBLIC ART ADVISORY PANEL</li> <li>• LOCAL TRAFFIC COMMITTEE</li> <li>• WATERWAYS ADVISORY GROUP</li> </ul>
SPORTING ORGANISATIONS	ACCESS REFERENCE GROUP
STATE AGENCIES	WARD COMMITTEES
MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENTS	
SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION PROVIDERS	
VISITORS	
TOURISM INDUSTRY GROUPS	
UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS</li> <li>• PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES</li> <li>• MIGRANTS AND NEW AUSTRALIAN CITIZENS</li> <li>• YOUTH</li> <li>• SENIORS</li> </ul>	

NOTE: Above are not listed in any order of priority.



## what we engage on

PROJECT	LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT	TIMEFRAME
INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING DOCUMENTS	 Involve	28 days
COUNCIL POLICIES	 Consult	28 days or 42 days as specified by legislative requirements or Council resolution
MASTERPLANS TO INFORM FUTURE WORKS E.G. PLAYGROUNDS, PEDESTRIAN ACCESS, COASTAL MANAGEMENT	 Involve	At least 28 days
COUNCIL STRATEGIES	 Involve	At least 28 days
RECLASSIFICATION OF LAND	 Consult	28 days
DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS	 Consult	14 days Council may extend the public exhibition period without further notification to those already advised
PROJECT AND SERVICE DELIVERY	 Inform	7 days
EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS	 Inform	As soon as practicable e.g. weather events impacting roads and services, water outages
ROAD NAMING PROPOSALS	 Consult	21 days with a further 21 days after Council and Geographical Names Board approval

\* timeframes listed in the Community Participation Plan

PROJECT	LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT	TIMEFRAME
DONATION REQUESTS	 Inform	28 days
AUSTRALIA DAY NOMINATIONS	 Inform	at least 3 months
LEASES, TENDERS, EOI	 Inform	14 days
COMMITTEE AND WARD REPRESENTATION	 Inform	28 days
LOCAL STRATEGIC PLANNING STATEMENT	 Involve	At least 28 days *
PLANNING PROPOSAL TO MODIFY THE BALLINA LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN (BLEP)	 Consult	28 days * or as specified by the gateway determination, which may find that no exhibition is required for a minor proposal
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PLAN	 Consult	28 days *
DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTION PLANS	 Consult	28 days *
VOLUNTARY PLANNING AGREEMENTS	 Consult	28 days *

\* timeframes listed in the Community Participation Plan

## how we engage



### engaging in person

Engagement or participation is not only about having your say, it is also about listening to others to understand their point of view. In person engagement activities allow an opportunity for discussion.

- Exhibition documentation displayed in Ballina's Customer Service Centre
- Community workshops and stakeholder meetings and information sessions enable the community to understand and be understood by others when sharing their views
- Council deputations allow community members to address Councillors on items for consideration at a council meeting
- Committees provide a meeting forum for community group representatives to raise issues relevant to the Committee's Terms of Reference
- Direct contact, either in person or over the phone, with individual community members and groups on specific projects and plans.





## engaging online

Online communication and engagement is growing and can allow people who may otherwise be excluded from in-person engagement activities to have their say.

- Council's online engagement platform **[yoursayballina.com.au](https://yoursayballina.com.au)** provides the community with a central place online to have their say on a range of projects open for feedback
- Council's website provides information to the public on all Council projects and services
- Social media keeps the community up to date on Council news and provides the community access opportunities to learn more and have their say on Council matters
- eNews provides a fortnightly update on council news including council meetings, Community Connect Magazine, exhibition material, and development proposals.



## engaging traditionally

There is still a need and appetite for traditional methods of engagement. Some traditional methods are outlined under engaging in person.

- Print publications distributed to our stakeholder groups include Ballina Shire Council's Community Connect, Ballina and Lennox Wave, Koori Mail, Northern Rivers Review, and specific industry and special interest publications
- Direct mail to residents and groups, including Community Connect and rates notices. Drop spots at frequently visited locations
- Onsite or physical displays and signage at events or key locations.



# levels of community participation

In developing the Community Engagement Strategy, the International Association for Public Participation Spectrum (IAP2) is used, with the following levels of community participation.

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
GOAL	To provide balanced and objective information in a timely manner	To obtain feedback on analysis, issues, alternatives and decisions	To work with the public to make sure that concerns and aspirations are considered and understood	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision-making	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public
PROMISE	<i>"We will keep you informed"</i>	<i>"We will listen to and acknowledge your concerns"</i>	<i>"We will work with you to ensure your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the decisions made"</i>	<i>"We will look to you for advice and innovation and incorporate this in decisions as much as possible"</i>	<i>"We will implement what you decide"</i>
METHODS	Customer service website, media release, social media Community Connect, print and digital advertising, eNews, presentation, direct mail, letterbox drops local drop spots, Rates notice, information session, street stall, signage site tour, email, phone messages	YourSayBallina Meetings by invitation Reference Group Design Charrette	Standing and Other Committees Reference Group Citizen Panel	Community Survey Polls and Referendums Election of Councillors	

**INCREASING LEVEL OF IMPACT**

It is anticipated that by using different techniques Council will be able to connect with the broader community and stakeholder agencies and in particular reach silent and under-represented groups. A determined effort will be made to reach people who would otherwise not attend public meetings or be reached via other forms of traditional consultation.

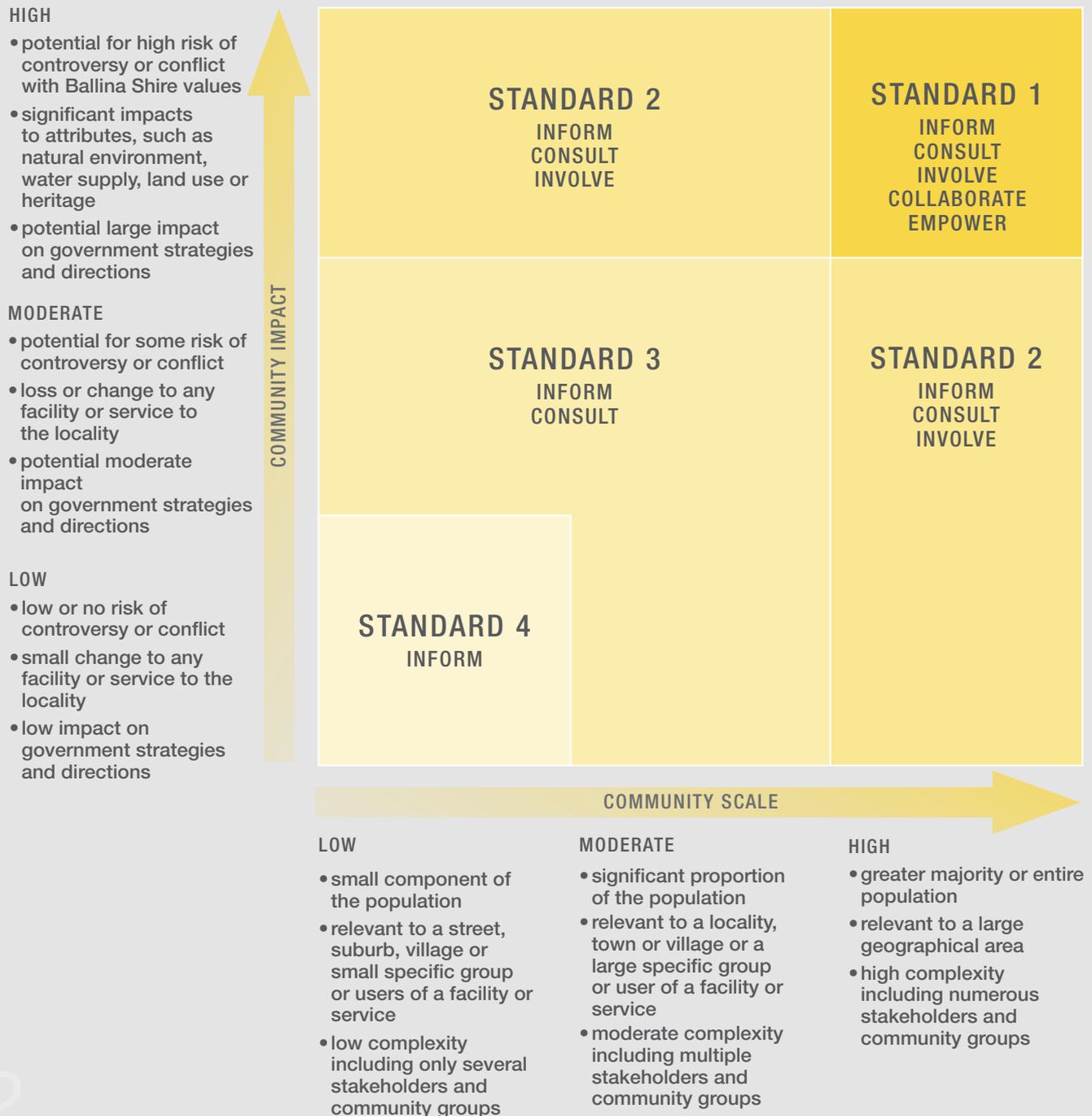
**→ ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES**

*The engagement activity to be used at the various stages of engagement is provided in the following engagement tools*

04

# engagement standards matrix

The level of community participation (inform, consult, involve, collaborate, empower) can be determined by assessing the impact and scale a particular engagement project will have on our community.



# engagement methods and resourcing

Our engagement methods are outlined according to the level of community participation, which can be determined by using the matrix on the previous page. The following tables suggest engagement channels according to the standard level (1, 2, 3, 4).

INFORM						SUGGESTED ACTION			
ENGAGEMENT METHOD	IN PRACTICE	TYPE	TIME	COST	STANDARD (SEE PAGE 22)				
					1	2	3	4	
<b>CUSTOMER SERVICE</b>	Information provided to customer service officers to respond to customer enquiries.		+	-	■	■	■	■	
<b>BALLINA SHIRE COUNCIL WEBSITE</b>	Information is published on Council's website e.g. project updates, latest news, water outages.		+	\$	■	■	■	◻	
<b>MEDIA RELEASE</b>	Issued to news outlets.		+	-	■	■	◻	⊖	
<b>SOCIAL MEDIA</b>	Social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter).		+	\$	■	◻	■	⊖	
<b>COMMUNITY CONNECT MAGAZINE</b>	Council's quarterly magazine and official location for community notifications.	 	++	\$\$	■	◻	◻	⊖	

TYPE	 in person	 online	 traditional
TIME	 0-5 hours	 5-25 hours	 over 25 hours <i>minimum per task including preparation and staff time</i>
COST	 no cost	 <\$1,000	 \$1,001-\$10,000  >\$10,000 <i>minimum costs not including staff time</i>
ACTION	■ required	◻ recommended	◻ optional      ⊖ not required

## 04 engagement methods and resourcing cont.

INFORM						SUGGESTED ACTION			
ENGAGEMENT METHOD	IN PRACTICE	TYPE	TIME	COST	STANDARD (SEE PAGE 22)				
					1	2	3	4	
					<b>PRINT AND DIGITAL ADVERTISING</b>	Digital marketing, newspapers, industry publications, radio, community service announcements (CSAs), bus shelters, cinema.		++	\$\$
<b>ENEWS</b>	Council's project based or general eNews. Subscribe at <a href="http://ballina.nsw.gov.au/eNews">ballina.nsw.gov.au/eNews</a>		+	\$	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>PRESENTATIONS</b>	Present to internal stakeholder groups. Include exit survey of engagement process at completion of event.		++	-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>DIRECT MAIL</b>	Addressed correspondence to a specific location, person or organisation.		++	\$\$\$	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>LETTERBOX DROP</b>	Unaddressed bulk drop (letter, flyer, notification) to people with a letterbox in a determined area.		++	\$\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>LOCAL DROP SPOTS</b>	Circulate information or posters to frequently visited locations such as libraries and the Visitor Information Centre.		++	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>INFORMATION IN RATES NOTICE MAILOUT</b>	Provide information in annual or quarterly rates notices.		++	\$\$\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

- TYPE** in person    online    traditional
- TIME** 0-5 hours    5-25 hours    over 25 hours    *minimum per task including preparation and staff time*
- COST** no cost    <\$1,000    \$1,001-\$10,000    >\$10,000    *minimum costs not including staff time*
- ACTION**  required     recommended     optional     not required

INFORM



ENGAGEMENT METHOD	IN PRACTICE	TYPE	TIME	COST	SUGGESTED ACTION			
					STANDARD (SEE PAGE 22)			
					1	2	3	4
<b>RATES NOTICE ADVERTISING</b>	Use advertising space on the back of the payment slip on rates notices. Annual notice will reach all ratepayers, but reach will reduce each quarter depending on outstanding rates due.		+	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>INFORMATION SESSIONS</b>	Stakeholders invited to receive information about an upcoming project. Includes onsite/location based meetings.		++	\$\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>STREET STALLS</b>	Physical presence at key locations with high pedestrian traffic such as central business areas, markets and events.		++	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>SITE SIGNAGE</b>	If there is a specific site, erect signage to inform the public about project information and timeframes.		+	\$\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>SITE TOUR</b>	Provide an informative/guided tour.		+	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>COUNCIL EMAIL FOOTERS</b>	Provide a 'call to action' link and image in Council emails.		+	-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>ON HOLD TELEPHONE MESSAGES</b>	Short message to customer 'on hold' information.		+	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>LIVE TRAFFIC</b>	Publish road status due to weather events, projects and incidents <a href="http://livetraffic.com.au">livetraffic.com.au</a>		+	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- TYPE** in person    online    traditional  
**TIME** 0-5 hours    5-25 hours    over 25 hours    *minimum per task including preparation and staff time*  
**COST** no cost    <\$1,000    \$1,001-\$10,000    >\$10,000    *minimum costs not including staff time*  
**ACTION** required     recommended     optional     not required

# 04 engagement methods and resourcing cont.



ENGAGEMENT CHANNEL	IN PRACTICE	TYPE	TIME	COST	ACTION TO BE TAKEN			
					STANDARD (SEE PAGE 18)			
					1	2	3	4
<b>'YOUR SAY BALLINA' ONLINE ENGAGEMENT PLATFORM</b>	Seek feedback using consultation tools such as mapping, voting tools, polls, surveys, discussion forums on <a href="http://yoursayballina.com.au">yoursayballina.com.au</a>		+++	\$\$	■	■	◻	⊖
<b>MEETINGS BY INVITATION</b>	Invite stakeholders to meet with staff and/or Councillors to discuss and exchange views. Include onsite/location based meetings. Include exit survey of engagement process at completion of event.		+	-	■	■	◻	⊖
<b>REFERENCE GROUPS</b>	Invite people with an active interest in a decision or problem to be part of a meeting where detailed and robust conversation occurs to inform decision making, generally held in small groups of no more than 20 people. Include exit survey of engagement process at completion of event.		+++	\$\$\$	■	◻	◻	⊖
<b>DESIGN CHARRETTE</b>	Intensive, hands-on workshop bringing people from different disciplines and backgrounds together with members of the community to explore design options for a particular area. Include exit survey of engagement process at completion of event.		+++	\$\$\$	◻	◻	⊖	⊖

- TYPE**
 in person
 online
 traditional
- TIME**
 0-5 hours
 5-25 hours
 over 25 hours *minimum per task including preparation and staff time*
- COST**
 no cost
 <\$1,000
 \$1,001-\$10,000
 >\$10,000 *minimum costs not including staff time*
- ACTION**
 required
 recommended
 optional
 not required

# 04 engagement methods and resourcing cont.

INVOLVE		COLLABORATE						
ENGAGEMENT CHANNEL	IN PRACTICE	TYPE	TIME	COST	ACTION TO BE TAKEN			
					STANDARD (SEE PAGE 18)			
					1	2	3	4
<b>STANDING AND OTHER COMMITTEES</b>	Add an item to engage relevant standing or other committee agenda. See page 14 for list of committees.		+++	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>CITIZEN PANEL</b>	The public are invited to apply to join the group. The intention is a cross-section of people that provides a well-informed, representative and balanced community view. The group operates under an agreed Terms of Reference to consider a particular matter. Include exit survey of engagement process at completion of event.		+++	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>COMMUNITY SURVEY</b>	Council undertakes a community survey every two years to understand the communities priorities and overall level of satisfaction with Council's performance. These in-depth community surveys randomly survey 500 residents via telephone (mobile and landline). Survey results can inform engagement projects.		+++	\$\$\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- TYPE** in person    online    traditional
- TIME** 0-5 hours    5-25 hours    over 25 hours *minimum per task including preparation and staff time*
- COST** no cost    <\$1,000    \$1,001-\$10,000    >\$10,000 *minimum costs not including staff time*
- ACTION**  required     recommended     optional     not required

## 04 engagement methods and resourcing cont.

EMPOWER						ACTION TO BE TAKEN			
ENGAGEMENT CHANNEL	IN PRACTICE	TYPE	TIME	COST	STANDARD (SEE PAGE 18)				
					1	2	3	4	
<b>COMMUNITY SURVEY ON A SPECIFIC TOPIC</b>	Engage vendor to survey a random sample on a specific topic e.g. Special Rate Variation.		+++	\$\$\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>POLLS AND REFERENDUMS</b>	Council may seek community views on any issue through a non-compulsory poll of electors opinions, or it may hold a 'constitutional referendum' on certain electoral matters, in which voting is compulsory and the result is binding		+++	\$\$\$	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

- TYPE** in person    online    traditional
- TIME** 0-5 hours    5-25 hours    over 25 hours    *minimum per task including preparation and staff time*
- COST** no cost    <\$1,000    \$1,001-\$10,000    >\$10,000    *minimum costs not including staff time*
- ACTION**  required     recommended     optional     not required

The above lists are Council's identified and preferred methods of community engagement and participation. Council is not limited to this list and based on project needs and industry trends, alternative methods may be used as required in order to reach a range of people, interests, ages and communities.



1-12



## how we respond to feedback

We want to ensure the community feedback is considered when decisions are made.

Once feedback has been considered, Council staff will recommend next steps or outcomes.

As part of the process to close the loop, we will:



Update the **YourSayBallina** engagement page outlining engagement outcomes and next steps.



**Email** those who provided feedback with the outcomes of the consultation and link to the project page. Prior to Council considering the matter, we will email people who have provided feedback (who have not opted out of receiving updates) that a report will be submitted to Council.

When an item is placed on exhibition the resulting report to Council will provide the findings of the community engagement. The Council report will include a high level summary of engagement and may include:



Engagement and communication methods used



Participation and engagement data



Information about submissions/feedback received

The report will summarise the submissions and provide a staff response. Submissions may be provided as an attachment.

Following a Council meeting, those who provided feedback will be emailed Council's resolution, **YourSayBallina** page will be updated, and link to Agendas and Minutes will be included in Council's eNews.

## *evaluation and measurement*

To measure and evaluate the effectiveness of our engagement, we assess:



Measurable participation levels in engagement activities.



The methods used and if they were appropriate and relevant to the stakeholders.



If the responses were relevant to the plan or project.



Verbal and written feedback from the community on the effectiveness of the engagement activities used, and adequacy of the material and information to give informed feedback.



Achievement of the engagement aims (on page 10) in the Community Engagement Strategy.



If we engaged with diverse groups, and what feedback we receive from under-represented groups.

These evaluation results will be used to continually improve our engagement methods and inform future engagement strategies.

This strategy will be reviewed within three months of the local government election, as part of the broader review of the Community Strategic Plan, or as required in the event of legislative changes or requirements.



# Ballina Coast & Hinterland Inform

Whenever you want to go in the Ballina Coast and Hinterland... ask a local!

- Discover local businesses and services
- Find out about local events and activities
- Get the most up-to-date information on local news and events

Ballina Visitor Information Centre  
1800 777 484

LENNOX HEAD STREET DIRECTORY

YAMBA YOGA FESTIVAL  
OCTOBER 2nd 9pm-11pm

STARBUCKS FESTIVAL

Preparedness Week  
23-29

BITBOY!

Byron Beachside Artisan Market

WICKET BROS

KIDS DISCO

STARBUCKS FESTIVAL

Preparedness Week

BITBOY!

Byron Beachside Artisan Market

WICKET BROS

KIDS DISCO

**ballina**  
shire council

## 06

## challenges and opportunities

We will look at the following challenges as opportunities to improve our community engagement:

CHALLENGE	OPPORTUNITY
<b>LACK OF STAFF INVOLVEMENT</b>	Project Advisory Team (PAT) and/or internal communications processes will capture potential projects and plans to start the conversation early with staff around opportunities for community engagement.  Empower staff by providing community engagement coaching and training.
<b>LACK OF RESOURCING AND LIMITED TIME FRAMES</b>	Refer to the engagement standards and actions in the Community Engagement Strategy to use the most appropriate method of engagement within budget and resourcing.  Respond to timeframes outlined in legislation and this strategy.
<b>ACCESSIBILITY LIMITED AVENUES FOR THE COMMUNITY TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK</b>	Engagement to be undertaken at accessible locations across the shire. Use in-person, online and traditional methods.
<b>SCOPE CREEP AND EXPECTATIONS</b>	Define engagement aims and provide a clear scope to help manage community expectations.
<b>LIMITED PARTICIPATION MINIMAL FEEDBACK RECEIVED FROM THE COMMUNITY</b>	Target engagement to ensure that it is reaching the relevant stakeholder groups.  Use engagement methods appropriate to these groups to ensure they can actively participate.
<b>CONSULTATION FATIGUE</b>	Stagger engagement to reduce the risk of community key stakeholders feeling saturated.  Continue to close the loop on engagement so our community knows their feedback is considered and valued.
<b>UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS NOT HEARD</b>	Target and tailor engagement to reach under-represented groups such as youth, aboriginal, disability, families, senior and minority groups.
<b>ADOPTED PLANS DON'T REFLECT COMMUNITY FEEDBACK</b>	Report back to ensure feedback that is within the scope of the engagement and project to better inform the final plan and project.





## 06

## action plan

### engagement improvements

ACTION	\$\$\$\$	OBJECTIVES	WHEN
<b>Launch an online engagement platform</b>	\$\$\$	Improve council's online engagement by providing a platform that is equipped with a range of engagement tools to gather community feedback in real-time.	Q3 2022
<b>Develop an Engagement Toolkit</b>	\$\$	To support the consistent delivery of engagement activities across council.	Q4 2022
<b>Provide Staff Information Sessions</b>	\$	Ensure staff are familiar with council's objectives for community engagement, the level of engagement required, and the methods of engagement available to them and how to access and use these methods.	Q2 2023
<b>Staff to be trained in facilitation</b>	\$\$\$	<p>Improve confidence of staff to facilitate face to face interactions with groups.</p> <p>Increase number of face to face interactions</p>	Q3 2023
<b>Identify and procure other methods of engagement to bolster our toolkit e.g. SMS notifications, market stall collateral, campaign development services</b>	\$\$\$	Provide a toolkit with current engagements methods available to reach major and under represented stakeholder groups. Investigate alternate methods and channels to reach underrepresented groups.	ongoing
<b>Budget and resourcing</b>	\$\$\$	Allocation of meaningful budget and resourcing to satisfy community engagement aims and standards outlined in this strategy.	ongoing

## *appendix: public exhibition notification and timeframes*

The process of public exhibition and notification is an important part of how Council engages with our community on planning decisions. This provides a regular and valuable way for the community to participate in the decision making process by making comments on a development proposal or draft plan during the public exhibition period.

Council's public exhibition processes are determined by the type and locality of the draft strategic plan or proposed development. This influences who Council notifies, where the information is available and the timeframe that the documents will be publicly available.

The following section outlines the exhibition and notification processes for strategic planning and statutory planning documents. It includes information about:

- Where to find documents on exhibition,
- How the community will be notified about the public exhibition, and
- Exhibition timeframes for these documents.

Council may however go beyond these timeframes and, at its discretion may provide additional notification or longer timeframes to those property owners and occupiers, community groups, organisations and agencies that, in the opinion of Council, may have an interest in the strategy, plan or development proposal.

### WHAT IS PUBLIC EXHIBITION?

Public exhibition means making documents including draft plans, strategies, policies or development applications available for the community to view and comment on, through a formal submission. The public exhibition process typically involves notifying the community that documents are available to view publicly. Depending on the type of development application or plan, notification can be provided through Council's website, [yoursayballina.com.au](http://yoursayballina.com.au), eNews and/or by mail (letter or email) to members of the community, adjoining landowners and residents or to relevant agencies and community groups



### HOW ARE EXHIBITION TIMEFRAMES DETERMINED?

The LG Act also specifies minimum mandatory exhibition timeframes for some planning related matters such as plans of management (POMs). For proposals and plans not covered by these Acts, Council has its own standard minimum exhibition timeframes outlined within this strategy (see pages 16 and 17) .

The EP&A Act details the types of proposals and plans that must be considered. Schedule 1 of the EP&A Act sets the minimum statutory exhibition timeframes for these plans and proposals.

### WHAT IS A SUBMISSION?

When comments on an engagement project, draft document or development application are provided to Council they are known as a formal submission. A submission outlines the support or concerns that an individual or group has relating to the engagement project. Submissions are usually made via the online engagement platform [yoursayballina.com.au](https://yoursayballina.com.au) or in writing via a letter or email.

### ARE SUBMISSIONS PUBLIC DOCUMENTS?

In accordance with the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009, submissions to documents on public exhibition are public documents and may be viewed by the public and published on Council's website, listed on Council's DAs Online portal [da.ballina.nsw.gov.au](https://da.ballina.nsw.gov.au) and/or included in Council meeting reports and agendas.

If you do not want your submission to be publicly available, a written request for confidentiality will be required.

Council may also determine a submission is not suitable for public viewing and publication. This could be because it contains personal, private or defamatory material. Further information about how Council manages submissions can be found in the 'Your Privacy' section of Council's website [ballina.nsw.gov.au](https://ballina.nsw.gov.au)

### DISCLOSING POLITICAL DONATIONS

The Local Government and Planning Legislation Amendment (Political Donations) Act 2008 imposes disclosure obligations on submitters in relation to political gifts and donations. Detailed information about your obligations under the Act can be found in the 'Disclosure of Political Donations' section of Council's website [ballina.nsw.gov.au](https://ballina.nsw.gov.au)



### Key points to note about public exhibitions:

- ▶ Timeframes are in calendar days and include weekends and public holidays.
- ▶ If the exhibition period is due to close on a weekend or a public holiday Council may extend the exhibition to finish on the first available work day.
- ▶ The period between 20 December and 10 January (inclusive) is excluded from the calculation of a period of public exhibition.
- ▶ Council is not required to make available for public inspection any part of an environmental impact statement whose publication, in the opinion of Council, would be contrary to the public interest because of its confidential nature or for any other reason.

## 07 public exhibition, notification and timeframes cont

### HOW DO I WRITE A GOOD SUBMISSION?

A good submission should:

- Include the name of the engagement project, draft strategic plan or the DA Reference Number and the property address the DA relates to (this information is usually included in the notification material).
- Clearly state the reasons for objecting or supporting the engagement project, draft strategic plan or development proposal and why. Give details about how you arrived at your assertions.
- Be brief and to the point or include a single page summary sheet where the submission is lengthy because a number of issues covered.
- Be specific to the project, DA, strategic plan or strategy and avoid generalising.
- Be well researched and based on facts, not on hearsay. Talk to the Council officer who is dealing with the application prior to writing your submission and make sure that you understand what is proposed.
- Avoid statements which are defamatory or offensive.
- Suggest changes that might resolve the problems identified.
- Include your name and contact details as well as a daytime telephone number, as a Council officer may need to clarify matters you raised in your submission.

### SHOULD I SIGN A PETITION?

You may find that someone has started a petition to object to a development proposal. Someone may also ask you to sign a pro forma letter. Council will consider petitions and letters received. However, an individual letter about how the proposal will affect you gives Council a much clearer picture of the likely impacts.

### WHERE SHOULD I SEND MY SUBMISSION?

Unless otherwise stated on the exhibition material, a submission should be sent:

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Online    | <b><a href="http://yoursayballina.com.au">yoursayballina.com.au</a></b>          |
| By email  | <a href="mailto:council@ballina.nsw.gov.au">council@ballina.nsw.gov.au</a>       |
| By post   | Ballina Shire Council,<br>Customer Service Centre<br>PO Box 450 BALLINA NSW 2478 |
| In person | 40 Cherry Street BALLINA NSW 2478  |

Your submission must be received at Council offices by the date and time specified in the exhibition notification. If you are sending your submission through the mail, make sure you allow sufficient time for delivery by 4.00pm on the closing date of the submissions.

Objections relating to a DA or strategic planning document received after the exhibition period has concluded may not be taken into consideration by Council in the assessment of the DA or finalisation of the draft strategic plan.

If for some reason you cannot meet the submission deadline, talk to the Council officer handling the application before the closing date for submissions.

### WHAT HAPPENS TO MY SUBMISSION?

You will receive notification that your submission has been received. Your submission, along with others received, will then be considered as part of an assessment of the project, DA, preparation of a strategic plan or finalisation of a draft document.

You can continue to track the process of a DA via the DA's Online portal **[da.ballina.nsw.gov.au](http://da.ballina.nsw.gov.au)**. You can also contact Council to find out the progress of a project or draft strategic plan after the exhibition period has closed or visit **[yoursayballina.com.au](http://yoursayballina.com.au)**



***ballina***  
shire council

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40 Cherry Street Ballina NSW 2478  
1300 864 444 | [council@ballina.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@ballina.nsw.gov.au)

***ballina.nsw.gov.au***