

Annual Community Engagement Review

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT



November 2023

PROJECT BACKGROUND:

Every year, Council reviews the Community Engagement function to ensure that all engagement opportunities help to identify community needs and priorities so that Council's decisions can align with community expectations.

This year, the team conducted a community survey which was open from 12 July – 14 August 2023. The aim of this engagement was to ascertain community's:

- Attitude towards and experience with / knowledge of community engagement in general at Wyndham
- Experience and preferences for communications of community engagement opportunities
- Specific feedback at project level (measurables align with those in Community Engagement Evaluation and Monitoring Framework), and
- Suggestions for improvement.

Other data that will feed into the overall service review include:

- Internal survey with staff at Council to gather feedback on the internal community engagement service provision to project teams.
- Results from the Annual Community Satisfaction survey
- Performance indicators against the legislated Principles of Engagement from the Community Engagement Policy
- Other internal best practice projects and continuous improvement projects

METHODOLOGY:

The below table outlines the various methods and techniques used to engage with the community.

Community engagement activities / tools	
Method / technique	Stakeholders engaged
Project page on The Loop	616 page views 446 total visitors to the page 31 project 'followers'
Online Survey	106 contributions

Communications / marketing activities	
Method / technique	Stakeholders engaged
Online promotion (Facebook – Organic x3 Posts)	Engagement: 245 Click through to website: 39 Reach: 11 631
Email promotion (New project)	Engagement: 1411 Recipients Click through to website: 97 (6.87%)

WHO WE HEARD FROM:

The below tables highlight who we heard from in our community via The Loop during our engagement process.

Members of The Loop	Anonymous
42.3%	57.7%

Age Group

Under 9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29
0%	0%	0%	1%	4%
30-34	35-39	40-44	45-59	50-54
4%	17%	12%	11%	18%
55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79
9%	4%	5%	12%	3%
80-84	85+			
2%	0			

Gender

Male	Female	Prefer not to say	I identify as...
56.1%	41.5%	2.4%	0

Suburb

Cocoroc	Eynesbury	Hoppers Crossing	Laverton	Laverton North
0	0	16.04%	0	0
Little River	Mambourin	Manor Lakes	Mount Cottrell	Point Cook
0.94%	0%	5.66%	0	21.7%
Tarneit	Truganina	Werribee	Werribee South	Williams Landing
9.43%	6.6%	24.53%	2.83%	3.77%
Wyndham Vale	Outside of Wyndham			
7.55%	0.94%%			

Do you speak a language other than English at home?

Yes	No
14.6%	86.4%

Is anyone in your household of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?

Yes	No	Prefer not to say
2.83%	88.57%	8.57%

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK:

We Asked	You Said	We are doing
<i>Do you know about Wyndham community engagement opportunities.</i>	67.92% of respondents were aware of community engagement activities with 56.65% of total respondents participating in one or more engagements.	Providing as much notice for when engagements are occurring and improving promotion of projects in new and innovative ways.
<i>What do you prefer?</i>	17% want to know what's going but don't want to participate with 50% wanting to know about everything and having their say on everything. 45% are only interested in participating in engagements that impact them directly.	Keep promoting engagements and encouraging community to register for The Loop so notifications, updates and communications can be tailored to each person's wants and needs.
<i>How satisfied are you with Council's community engagement efforts</i>	77% indicated satisfied or above with 23% below satisfied.	
<i>How well do you think Council tells people about community engagement opportunities?</i>	71% of respondents show they hear just about enough with the remainder saying too much or not enough.	Keep doing what we're doing and continue to offer people the option to opt in or out of communications and updates.
<i>Do you prefer community engagement opportunities to be:</i>	70% want a mix of online and in-person with 20% wanting online only.	Ensure we offer a both online and in-person for engagements where possible.
<i>Did you participate in any community engagements at Wyndham in the past 12 months?</i>	57% did and 43% didn't.	
<i>Why didn't you participate?</i>	65% said that they didn't know about engagement opportunities. No one indicated that language or accessibility was a barrier to participation and 10% didn't participate because they got all the information they needed by reading the project page on The Loop or the project wasn't of direct interest to them / their area or their family.	Keep promoting engagements and encouraging community to register for The Loop so notifications, updates and communications can be tailored to each person's wants and needs.

We Asked	You Said	We are doing
<i>Specific project feedback</i>	<p>Of those who said that they participated in an engagement, 79% were satisfied or more with their overall experience and 78% said it was easy.</p> <p>73% felt that they had the opportunity to provide input into something that was genuinely important.</p> <p>71% had enough information to provide meaningful input.</p> <p>58% didn't understand how their input was / will be used.</p>	<p>Work hard to provide feedback in a timely manner as well as clearly communicating upfront what information we are seeking and for what purpose it will be used.</p>

Key themes from experiences with individual projects:

These responses have been passed on to the specific project teams to be addressed and assist with planning future community engagement sessions.

The Wyndham Plan:

- The Wyndham Plan Session was taken over by disruptive community who had their own agendas
- We didn't feel heard
- We were not given truthful information
- Not all our questions were answered

Wattle Avenue:

- I felt like decision was already made by Council regardless of input

Accessibility and inclusion:

- Too much say from facilitators making everyone feel not valued and derailing what HAD been an interested and engaged group of people.
- There was insufficient time for genuine consult.

Dog parks

- Easy to leave comments

What improvements or changes would you suggest for making community engagement better? Please provide any specific ideas and suggestions.


As with all our engagements, we receive a mix of very passionate, valid responses. Some are relevant to the project / engagement, but some aren't. This can lead to community members feeling not-heard or like we are ignoring their input and not appreciating the time it takes to participate.


Responses / feedback that is received that isn't directly related to the project are referred to the relevant internal team at Council for a response or to the Customer Service team for follow up.

Responses that are similar are grouped into themes and responded to as a whole. The table below shows all the feedback received for this project with actions.

You Said	We are doing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was difficult to find out the status and timings for when the project was going to start or finish. Quite often, I'll find out about where the project is at via the local Facebook Groups where someone would have posted some information about it. A Gantt chart or schedule on the project page would be handy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Putting the project timelines in a more obvious position on the project pages Looking at implementing a section on The Loop with "upcoming projects"
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In depth knowledge to be provided so that the community can meaningfully engage. Make the community engagement into more meaningful activities where people are able to contribute, network with other people and a specific pain point of the community being addressed as part of the engagement Ensure it feels genuine and is not a "box ticking" exercise. The engagement part is key and sometimes being spoken to about what is happening and then having little to no time for meaningful conversations on topics defeats the purpose. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing as much information on the project pages with download and other resources for people to access in-depth project information. Looking at introducing and using new tools that allow for deeper engagement and information sharing where applicable.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow up feedback on the engagement that finished or how it's progressing To be kept updated about projects we have been involved in and to know how our feedback has been utilised. What is not clear is what happens after the data is tabulated how is it reported out is there a follow-up with affected residents Ensure there is clarity on how the feedback is going to be used. Also clarity on why the feedback was not used. Let the community know what feedback is received and how it impacts decisions. Gathering opinions is only step one for meaningful engagement. Unless we 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing regular updates to contributors after the engagements have closed. Circulating engagement reports to all contributors Working closely with the project teams to ensure reasons are provided equally when feedback is and is not used. Providing clearer information upfront about the end decision / decisions and how the community engagement feedback was used to influence it.

<p>know an outcome the surveys are useless to the community.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I would suggest that the Council diversify its ways of engaging with communities. I know my local community group is not even aware of the changes that are happening within the Council and I think it is fair that they should know about it as residents on the Council. Events which councillors attend could be more accessible, if you don't use Facebook it is difficult to know what events are currently taking place (Meet the mayor, council updates, project news). I know there is a Wyndham newsletter that I got in my mailbox but this not engaging with local residents in an effective manner. <p>I know council meetings used to be uploaded to YouTube, which made it more accessible but now you can only view on the Wyndham website which really makes it more difficult to view these meetings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focusing on reaching parts of our community that haven't been participating or find it difficult to participate. Working with the Councillor support team to advertise and promote Councillor events and Council Meetings more broadly.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To listen to all opinions even when it's not part of the council/government agenda More transparent, more accessible 	<p>All the work that Wyndham is doing to advocate in this space is available</p> <p>https://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/advocacy</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sample size of test data for decision making. 50 responses on a project does not constitute enough data to make any type of formal decision. Council make decisions on improvements that suit them rather than us. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the coming 12 months, a Wyndham-wide marketing campaign will be occurring to promote The Loop and Community Engagement. The aim of this campaign is to encourage as many residents to sign up and participate in engagements. We provide community with opportunities but it is up to them whether or not they choose to participate. Our data shows that most people will only participate if it directly affects them or is of a topic of interest to them. Community engagement is a crucial input into good decision making at Wyndham. Through our Community Engagement Policy, we combine community feedback with other evidence, including research and customer data, along with expert knowledge and our strategic policies and guiding legislation to come to an informed decision. Through ongoing engagement with residents and community members, Council has a strong understanding

	of community priorities that we continue to aim to deliver.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specially whenever face to face or online group chats are held they have always been in the evening and whilst I understand that caters to the major people who work it is less welcoming (particularly in winter when it is dark and cold) to those that either work nights or don't work.. Evenings are for family here Firstly, I'd suggest the Council to have more options for communities to engage meaningfully in person. e.g. I couldn't share my thoughts/chat on the Draft Annual Plan and Budget because the pop up events were held on Sundays - which is a day where i usually have commitments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with project teams to ensure workshops / drop ins and other face to face opportunities are offered at a variety of times and days so that a diverse range of residents are able to attend.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broader advertising of events, etc more publicised Community consultations are better advertised to residents and participants in the community, instead of education and council based stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the coming 12 months, a Wyndham-wide marketing campaign will be occurring to promote The Loop and Community Engagement. The aim of this campaign is to encourage as many residents to sign up and participate in engagements.
Town Hall meetings or one to one where can ask questions and get answers face to face. Our own questions, not the questions supplied by council. Then give satisfactory answers, not generalisations which tell you nothing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Wyndham City Councillor's contact information can be found on the Wyndham City Website if you wish to contact them directly with a query. Events like Meet the Mayor Morning Tea and Conversation with a Councillor occur regularly and are advertised locally and on Facebook.
I would like more information via email and in Wyndham News a great idea but needs more information added).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback passed onto the Communications Team who are responsible for Wyndham News.
My wife and I attended an introduction to community engagement meeting at the Civic Centre on Saturday 29 July 2023. We found the meeting informative giving us an insight into the processes and procedures implemented by Council to provide the community the opportunity to 'have a say' in plans and projects in the municipality.	

I have been happy with community engagement to date and cannot think of any suggestions for improvement at this stage.	
I would like to shape and improve the laws.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you register for The Loop and complete your preferences, you will be notified by email when projects that match your interests are open for feedback
I would also like the opportunity to suggest improvements to lifestyle/infrastructure that affect the area and myself.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you register for The Loop and complete your preferences, you will be notified by email when projects that match your interests are open for feedback
I live in Cornerstone Estate and this area is expanding really rapidly but the nearest swimming pool is Aquapulse. As a pensioner I am desperate to find solutions to maintain mobility and would love something in the area where I could do Aqua aerobics designed for our more senior participants or a facility that provides that and possibly light exercise classes. Also looking for some beginner art classes in the area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This comment was passed on to the Customer Service team for action
Hold more Ward meetings with all the Iramoo Councillors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Wyndham City Councillor's contact information can be found on the Wyndham City Website if you wish to contact them directly with a query.
I don't want to be told that it's up to the State government to decide and have it left at that. For 25 years I have been contacting both state and local government about improving public transport in Wyndham and I may as well been talking to a corpse. It's about time someone who is reliant on public transport gets to call the shots. We're not imbeciles or beggars. We are just as entitled to equal rights as drivers. I live in a backward country that discriminates against people who use public transport whether it be from necessity or choice. It is appalling that all these people get told is it's beyond our control. Utter rubbish! People don't care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All the work that Wyndham is doing to advocate in this space is available https://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/advocacy
Hoppers crossing needs another train station.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All the work that Wyndham is doing to advocate in this space is available https://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/advocacy

NEXT STEPS:

This engagement is part of a larger service review and this report concludes the external facing component of it.

The feedback and input from the engagement will be implemented over the coming 12 months as part of the Community Engagement Team's commitment to continuous improvement and 'business as usual'. Some things will be implemented quickly and you will see changes happening other things will happen later depending on budgeting, capacity and planning cycles.

If you have any further questions regarding this project or this report, please email engagement@wyndham.vic.gov.au