# CITY OF SYDNEY

# Community engagement during Covid-19

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# Community engagement during the Covid-19 pandemic

## Purpose

The following document outlines our approach to community engagement (consultation) during the Covid-19 pandemic. It reflects the City's commitment to consult community members and stakeholders on decisions that affect them in line with the City's Community Engagement Strategy (part of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework) while taking into account the difficulties faced by our communities during the pandemic.

## Guiding Principles

No face-to-face consultation events will take place before 18 June 2020. A decision to recommence face-to-face events will be guided by advice from NSW Government.

Meetings with community members or stakeholders (e.g. representatives of community or industry groups) or online workshops may take place through digital channels.

Project will be assess against the Engagement Category Matrix (attached) to guide decisions on how and when consultation will take place.

Key messages have been developed to ensure consistency when communicating about consultation.

Each consultation will be designed to align with the City's community engagement principles -

- o Integrity – Is the consultation clear in scope and purpose and integral to the delivery of the project?
- o Inclusive – Can those who are impacted by the project effectively participate in the consultation?
- o Dialogue – Is there the opportunity for a two-way conversation to take place?
- o Influence – How will the consultation influence decisions made about the project?

Considerations for adapting engagement may include:

- o Timing – Can we change the start date or extend the duration of the consultation? What engagement has already been done on this project? Can we build on this via stakeholder lists and existing relationships?
- o Stakeholders and community members – What impacts are these groups experiencing? What is their capacity to participate? Are they facing economic impacts, reduced staffing, limited access to technology, illness, mental health and well-being concerns? Are we able to reach them effectively through existing or new channels?

- o Risks – What additional risks does engaging during the Coronavirus pandemic represent? This may include public perceptions, difficulty in getting community involvement, mixed or confusing messages that may impact critical pandemic and operational communications.
- o Digital and alternative approaches – What are the opportunities for online engagement in place of face-to-face engagement?

The current situation is changing how people engage with government. We are currently presented with challenges to continuing our engagement programs as usual. Despite the difficulties posed, involving the community in decisions that affect their lives is a core commitment of the City and a key component of transparent decision-making. Engagement on projects also provides an important opportunity to stay in touch and maintain relationships that will be important for recovery.

# Overarching Message

**For the City's website and enews letters**

We're changing how we consult and connect with our communities in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

We know our residents, workers and visitors are focused on social distancing and health and wellbeing, and many are experiencing economic stress.

While how we consult with you may look a little different, we still want to hear from you and provide plenty of opportunities to have your say on the projects and programs that affect you.

We're fast-tracking projects that are ready for construction so we can keep people employed and continue improving your local area.

And we know it's important to keep talking about projects that will help our city recover.

# Engagement category matrix

| Category | Adaptions | Community message |
|---|---|---|
| 1. **Critical responsive - REACT**<br><br>Statutory consultation is required for changes that facilitate Covid-19 response or ongoing administration | Standard online and advertising where possible.<br><br>**Fast track approvals and commence immediately.** | This engagement is critical. It will help the City continue operations and respond to Covid-19. |
| 2. **Key strategic - ADAPT**<br><br>Strategic projects where it has been decided that there is a significant benefit to the economy and the community and should continue with relevant adaptions. These projects have long-term impacts and the views of the community and stakeholders must be considered in the decision-making process. | Adaptions may include: Longer exhibition periods; increased advertising; online forums / stakeholder briefings and other alternatives to face to face.<br><br>To inform adaptions ask what phase the project is in. Has some consultation already taken place and with whom or will this be new to the community?<br><br>**Undertake a risk management strategy that identifies adaptations.** | We're consulting on this project because it will help our economy and communities recover from the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.<br><br>We want to ensure Sydney is ready to recover by preparing an environment that will support renewed economic and community activities.<br><br>Or project specific message. |
| 3. **Complex, long term or high risk - PAUSE**<br><br>After applying community engagement principles, a decision is made to delay consultation. This will be reviewed at regular intervals relevant to the project. | Reason for delay may include:<br><br>Key stakeholders or community members are difficult to reach via available channels.<br><br>Consulting at this time will appear out of touch to the immediate concerns of the community.<br><br>The project or strategy may need to be reviewed based on the current disruption to society.<br><br>**Set a regular time to review decision and possible approaches to consultation** | We've paused consultation on this project for now. Covid-19 restrictions make it hard for us to consult the people we need to. We feel it's not the right time to consult our communities on this project. |
| 4. **Positive and low risk - RECOVER**<br><br>Local projects that provide opportunities to build a sense of community connection and help progress implementation of projects that benefit local communities. | Continue with engagement with relevant adaptions and flexible timing. Where risks out-way the benefits of engaging, pause engagement.<br><br>**Covid-19 risk included in plan** | We're consulting on this project because it will help our local communities recover from the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.<br><br>Include an outline of adaptions to consultation in messaging. |

| Category | Adaptions | Community message |
|---|---|---|
| 5. **House-keeping and statutory**<br><br>Continue as usual if the consultation fits one of the criteria listed. Adjustments may be made to usual processes – eg planning approvals | Continue as usual if:<br><br>There a decision of the organisation or statutory obligations to continue with this work.<br><br>This project part of the City's stimulus program.<br><br>The consultation urgent (critical deadlines to meet). | This is business as usual for the City of Sydney, so we're continuing with consultation on xx to keep things moving as much as possible. |
| 6. **Stimulus public works**<br><br>Projects where consultation is complete or no consultation is required. | Send notification to immediate community members when required. Provide signage as usual.<br><br>Include information on WHS measures and extended construction hours if hours have changed. | We are responding to the Covid-19 global pandemic with a range of measures to support our community and our local economy. This includes fast-tracking capital works projects including upgrading parks, paving and landscaping.<br><br>All our sites have Covid-19 management plans in place and are following public health guidelines for social distancing, extra hygiene and safety measures. |

# Online tools: advice on securing Zoom-hosted meetings

Many business and resident groups are now meeting online via Zoom and other video-hosting programs. To maintain the security of your Zoom meetings, the City of Sydney strongly recommends using the following configuration settings:

**1. Turn On your waiting rooms**
The <u>Waiting Room</u> feature is a way to screen participants before they are allowed to enter a meeting.

**2. Do not allow others to join before host**
You can <u>enforce this setting</u> for a group under "Account Settings."

**3. Do not allow removed participants to re-join the meeting**
To prevent unwanted participants to re-join the meeting enable this feature under "Account Settings"

**4. Protect your meetings with a password.**
To prevent unwanted attendees hijacking into your meetings <u>set a password</u> for your meeting.  The password should be distributed by email, but not as part of the Meeting Invite.

**5. Use a randomly-generated Meeting ID**
You should not use your personal meeting ID, as this could let pranksters or attackers to disrupt your online sessions. Instead, choose a <u>randomly generated ID</u> for meetings when creating a new event.

**6. Avoid file sharing**
Disable the file-sharing feature of meetings to prevent malicious content being shared.


For more information please refer to <u>https://zoom.us/docs/doc/Securing%20Your%20Zoom%20Meetings.pdf</u>

# Disruption Management

| Issue: | Response |
|---|---|
| An unwanted participant joined the meeting and disrupts the online session | To remove a participant disrupting a meeting:<br>- Click on "Participants" tab.<br>- Hover over the name, click "More," and remove them.<br><br>The Chair to decide whether the meeting should be terminated. |
| Inappropriate content being shared on the screen | To remove a participant disrupting a meeting:<br>- Click on "Participants" tab.<br>- Hover over the name, click "More," and remove them.<br><br>Or<br><br>- Go to "Security" tab and disable the ability for meeting attendees to share their screens.<br>-<br>The Chair to decide whether the meeting should be terminated. |
| Disrupting noise from an unmuted participant(s) | Use the "Mute ALL" function |