

Host a community conversation

Background

We are currently seeking feedback from the community on our draft Community Strategic Plan, *MidCoast 2030: Shared vision, shared responsibility*. This plan provides our roadmap for the future of MidCoast and we want your input to make sure we have got it right.

The plan is the highest level document in Council's planning framework. All of Council's other planning documents, cascade from this plan.

While the plan is endorsed by Council and plays a key role in its delivery, it's a shared vision that we all have responsibility in achieving. The plan answers five key questions:

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to be in 10+ years time?
- How will we get there?
- Who can help?
- How will we know we have arrived?

The vision and values that provide the back bone to the plan were developed from community input into the 'What is MidCoast?' consultation in 2016. As well as this we have collated data from the existing strategic documents, relevant regional and state plans, Local Community Plans, and consultation outcomes from project based engagement activities, to formulate the draft plan.

What is a community conversation?

Hosting a conversation is really easy and is design to be the just as relaxed as having a catch up with friends. Our community conversation kit is a guide for you to host your own conversation with some friends, family, your community group or any other group you might like to bring together.

We won't be collating the results of community conversations like a survey, as they are simply an opportunity to gather the collective wisdom of our community to ensure that we have a shared vision for the future, a realistic plan as to how to get there and clear measures to know once we have arrived.

Contact details

Please feel free to get in touch if you have any questions or need some assistance in hosting your conversation.

Sarah Wilkinson, Community Engagement Officer - MidCoast Council

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Before hosting your conversation, here are some simple steps:

- Send out your invitations - you may like to share the questions and a link to the draft plan, so people can read it beforehand. This may also provide opportunity for people who can't make it to still have their say.
- Gather up the equipment you need, including, blank paper, pens etc. You can be as creative as you like in recording your ideas.
- Grab a cuppa and some biscuits - conversations are much better had over food!
- Lastly make sure you have copies of the questions and the draft plan.

How to host your conversation

1. Have your questions ready and a copy of the draft *MidCoast 2030: Shared vision, shared responsibility* Consultation Paper

Questions are provided overleaf and you can download a copy of the consultation paper from www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/csp or pick up a copy from one of Council's offices.

2. Read the question aloud and have a group discussion

Having an initial chat about the question enables your group to brainstorm thoughts, build upon ideas and help your group develop a response. Depending on the size of your group and the time you have allocated, you may wish to distribute the question prior to the conversation. This allows people to think through their responses prior.

3. Write down your responses

After some initial discussion, write down your ideas in response to each question. You may like to do this as a brainstorm / mind map that you can then prioritise or you may get people to write their responses individually that you can then prioritise as a group.

4. Prioritise

Once you have agreed on a shortlist of priorities, then decide which would have the greatest impact or benefit to the community.

5. Repeat for each question that you chose to respond to

We realise that not all the questions will be relevant or of interest to your group, so you do not need to respond to every question.

6. Register your feedback

This is the most important step, so we can get your feedback. Either follow the instructions to upload your responses on our website www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/csp, or drop in the hard copies to one of Council's offices, clearly marked: Attention: Community Engagement - CSP conversation responses

Questions

- 1)
 - a) What would be the number one strategy that would demonstrate we value our unique, diverse and culturally rich communities?
 - b) How do you think we could measure this? *This could be a community or Council measurement, however consider in your response how the information/data could actually be collected.*
- 2)
 - a) What would be the number one strategy that would demonstrate we value a connected community?
 - b) How do you think we could measure this? *This could be a community or Council measurement, however consider in your response how the information/data could actually be collected.*
- 3)
 - a) What would be the number one strategy that would demonstrate we value our environment?
 - b) How do you think we could measure this? *This could be a community or Council measurement, however consider in your response how the information/data could actually be collected.*
- 4)
 - a) What would be the number one strategy that would demonstrate we value our thriving and growing economy?
 - b) How do you think we could measure this? *This could be a community or Council measurement, however consider in your response how the information/data could actually be collected.*
- 5)
 - a) What would be the number one strategy that would demonstrate we value strong leadership and shared vision?
 - b) How do you think we could measure this? *This could be a community or Council measurement, however consider in your response how the information/data could actually be collected.*
- 6) *Any other comments your group may have in relation to the draft MidCoast 2030: Shared Vision, Shared responsibility*

Extra tip: A video is available online that provides a concise introductory overview of the draft Plan, which would be good way to provide an introduction to the conversation - you can view this by going to www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/csp

Keep in mind, one of the beautiful features of communities is that they are made up of people with a diversity of experiences and viewpoints, so your group may not necessarily agree on what the highest priority is. This is okay! Ensure you include your brainstorming to the questions in your responses. Prioritising just helps us in developing a picture of what is most important.