



# PART C

## Chapter 7 Community

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## Chapter 7 Amendments – June 2013

### Revision Register

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# Chapter 7

## Community

### 7.1 Introduction

Community interests and aspirations must be considered to ensure a holistic design response. Communities are a potentially rich information resource, and can provide valuable insights that might otherwise be overlooked throughout the design process. Involving the community through consultation and participation in the design process, allows a sense of pride, respect, ownership, and connection with the road landscape to develop.

People affected by road projects should ideally be consulted as a key stakeholder in the community engagement process (Chapter 1 of Part B) throughout the project concept, design, and implementation phases. This is important to determine community values and collective needs (Figure C7-1). This ensures the design recognises and responds to these values and needs creating a meaningful corridor, which is appreciated, accepted and respected by its users.



**Figure C7-1: Vegetated connective links from residential areas to transport and road corridors provides safe access and movement for the community and high amenity value**

Community needs are often focused on enhancing or maintaining their existing quality of life, health, wellbeing and experiences. For the communities' values and needs to be taken into account effectively, it is essential that designers take a collaborative approach with the community in which citizens are given the opportunity to actively participate in the planning and design process.

#### 7.1.1 Community Benefits

The benefits of integrating community values and needs within the road landscape are:

- enhanced public amenity for all users through improvements to user comfort, wayfinding and walkability for pedestrians;

- improved travel experiences both for users travelling within the transport infrastructure corridor itself, and the community beyond;
- functional and equitable access to a variety of multi-modal systems;
- reinforcement of local character, identity, cultural heritage and a sense of community;
- improved accessibility, connectivity, and security; and
- active community participation, involvement and consultation as part of transport and road landscape planning and design process.

## 7.2 Design Goals

Community related design goals are:

- **Involvement** - promote participation and contribution by implementing effective community consultation processes;
- **Values** - identify and address community values and associated interests, perceptions and preferences; and
- **Needs** - meet the needs and aspirations of the community to improve quality of life and live-ability.

### 7.2.1 Community Involvement

Socially sustainable places are derived from involving the community in decision making processes as *“...people have a right to be involved in deciding how their town or city develops. Real, sustainable change will not be achieved unless local people are in the driving seat right from the start. Successful cities are founded on participative democracy”* (Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions, 2000). A sense of inclusion and belonging also contributes to a healthier community.

There are numerous advantages both to the Department and to the local community associated with collaborative involvement throughout project inception.

The advantages for the Department are:

- generating awareness amongst the community of the wider benefits to their local area as a result of the transport infrastructure project, particularly social and economic value;
- more inclusive and holistic outcomes through accommodation of community interests and aspirations;
- educating the community of challenges typically faced when planning, designing and implementing transport infrastructure projects;
- greater likelihood for community consensus, positive response and support for project proposals;
- improved recognition of government’s commitment to maintaining community values and needs;
- strengthening of relationships between the Department and community, and gaining learning experiences from one another;
- reduced likelihood of expensive delays during later stages of the project as a result of ill-consulted communities in the early planning and design stages;
- effective use of resources through ability to tap into local knowledge;
- opportunities to develop awareness and appreciation of indigenous history and culture, and the inherent value of particular places to different people and cultures;
- improved communication channels, coordinated information services and feedback mechanisms;
- learning outcomes associated with improving engagement process within the Department and effectively implementing the inputs of the community;
- educating the community on the benefits of adopting an asset management approach to maintaining transport systems and road infrastructure; and

- greater legitimacy, integrity and accountability for the departments' activities.

The advantages for the community are:

- opportunities to provide open and honest communication and feedback on particular issues and community concerns;
- heightened awareness within the Department of specific community values and needs;
- opportunities to influence decisions and tailor solutions to meet community interests;
- recognition of potential shortfalls in public transport, pedestrian and cyclist facilities particularly in local areas and the need for improved connectivity;
- identification of key areas which need to be visually remediated or community facilities provided (Figure C7-2);



**Figure C7-2: Community advantages - pedestrian and cyclist rest facilities located according to community access requirements and in close proximity to key residential streets**

- broader community acknowledgement of Departmental transport infrastructure planning and design process;
- improved community understanding and acceptance of potential issues, constraints, decisions and the resulting need for possible alternatives to individual or collective desires;
- enhanced public-private relationships, with potential for greater trust in the decisions made by the Department;
- opportunities to identify significant parts of the local landscape setting which have particular meaning to individuals or groups, or have special natural, scenic (Figure C7-3) or cultural value;



**Figure C7-3: Community advantages - involvement with the Department can ensure that significant scenic areas valued by the community, are preserved and enhanced within the road corridor**

- transparency and accountability in decision making, planning processes and strategies;
- improved outcomes which reflect community aspirations and needs; and
- transport infrastructure landscapes which have lasting value to the community and meet expectations.

#### **7.2.1.1 Community Consultation Project**

Involving the community in transport infrastructure projects occurs through engagement and consultation. Undertaking a formal community consultation process is not always required as part of corridor upgrades. The need for this process depends on the type, scale and intensity of the project.

#### **7.2.1.2 Participation**

There are opportunities for the community to actively participate and contribute to the actual design, implementation and management of components within transport infrastructure landscape.

Potential areas for participation opportunities are:

- plant species selection and feedback;
- compiling plant and wildlife inventories through local knowledge
- greening programs such as tree/ planting days (Figure C7-4);





**Figure C7-4: The community participating in a greening program; public tree planting day**

- implementing participatory bush regeneration programs; and
- involvement in the design process for urban artwork concepts for treatments to retaining wall panels, noise barriers and throw screens.

### **7.2.1.3 Community Values**

Values, and associated interests, perceptions and preferences will differ and potentially conflict amongst individuals and groups within and across communities. Considering and balancing these different values during the planning and design stages of a project is important to ensuring integrated project outcomes are met.

### **7.2.1.4 Common Values**

Some broad values traditionally common to community groups are:

- community health - where *“healthy communities improve the social, economic, and physical well-being of their people, places, and natural environment”*;
- collaboration - where *“each individual’s unique contribution supports the best outcome...and stakeholders are viewed as members of the larger team who have valuable input and are essential to implementation”*;
- transparency - where *“clarity in rules, process, and roles is essential to collaboration. All information relevant to decision making must be made available to the stakeholders”*;
- shared learning - where all relevant viewpoints are involved in the decision making process which can *“lead to a change in people’s perceptions and positions”*; and
- direct, honest and timely communication - where frequent communication and feedback between parties is facilitated so that that there is *“reasoning behind decisions and acknowledgement of how their (stakeholders) input affected the outcome”*.(Adapted from Farr, D, 2007, p83)

Undertaking community consultation is an effective way of determining commonly held community values. It promotes gaining a unique perspective on the interests within local neighbourhoods and residential areas adjoining transport infrastructure corridors. Responding to community values also plays an important role in encouraging greater ownership of local areas. Determining the interests that

the community has towards local environmental values (Chapter 6 of Part C) can also assist in the retention of fragile environmental areas.

#### 7.2.1.5 Cultural Values

Preservation of existing cultural values is often the most significant value to the community. They define the sense of place, identity, uniqueness and individual character of places. Cultural values may encompass aesthetic, historic, scientific and social perspectives.

These cultural values should be equally recognised and respectfully responded to if affected by a transport infrastructure project. Conserving and enhancing cultural values within communities has been linked with greater economic prosperity and quality of life, potentially benefiting communities as a whole. Local landscapes (Figure C7-5); with significant cultural heritage values and character are important assets within the community for economic renewal or development.



**Figure C7-5: The Glasshouse Mountains providing a high amenity landscape backdrop; with significant cultural heritage values and economic tourism potential**

#### 7.2.1.6 Community Needs

All communities will reflect differing individual and collective needs and aspirations. There is often a common set of needs that are identified during the community consultation process. Community needs are related to achieving a desired quality of life and amenity. Within a transport infrastructure context most often community needs focus on safety, liveability, user comfort and equal access to facilities. Facilities need to be functional and of a high quality to meet user expectations and preferences, both now and in the future.

#### 7.2.1.7 Common Needs

Common community needs relative to the transport infrastructure landscape are:

- personal safety and security;
- convenience (through ease of access to facilities);
- legibility (to assist in wayfinding);
- connectivity and linkages to business services and the broader community (Figure C7-6);



**Figure C7-6: Connectivity through pedestrian/cyclist access bridges to public transportation systems is a basic community need within transport and road corridors**

- accessibility and mobility; and
- recreational opportunities.

Undertaking community consultation is an effective way of determining other common needs of the community relative to the transport infrastructure. This process will often raise concerns amongst the community relative to their current or future needs. During this process, individuals should be encouraged to describe:

- their current movement and use patterns within an existing infrastructure network;
- their frequency and type of transportation system utilised;
- existing transport infrastructure nodes and their quality;
- their perceived amount and quality of public open space and recreational opportunities;
- existing neighbourhood assets;
- prominent landmarks with key significance to community;
- the level of service desired from the transport infrastructure network;
- quality of city or town centre (if applicable); and
- their personal priorities for change in the level of service.

Priority should be given to meeting those needs which are representative of the community as a whole. Design responses should ensure that the basic social needs of residents are integrated and a balance of the community's collective needs are met.