

Developing Green IG

(A summary of Phase 3 Consultation)

The vision underpinning the strategy is for a 'rich tapestry of green and healthy landscapes that support thriving communities and a vibrant economy, where nature is valued, embedded and enriched at every opportunity'.

About the engagement

In collaboration with our local communities, Council presented the **Green Infrastructure Strategy (Green.IS)** to the community for feedback in mid-2019.

The new strategy was developed over three years in consultation with the community. We heard from more than 400 community members throughout the three-phase process. This exciting new strategy will now guide how Council plans, delivers and values our Region's green assets.

The Toowoomba region is a rich tapestry of natural assets spreading from the Great Dividing Range into the Darling Downs. Across these diverse landscapes, green infrastructure underpins the local identity.

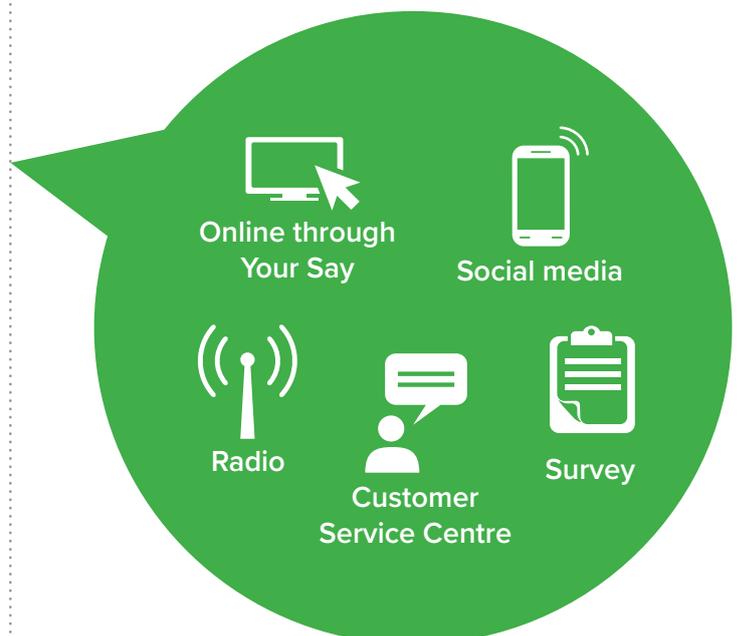
The guiding principles of the strategy will be used in the business case development of future operational and capital projects. It provides the policy framework for a collaborative approach to sustaining clean air and water, healthy food, climate resilience liveable communities and economic development across the Council using the benefits of green infrastructure. The strategy will deliver four key objectives:

- Enrich natural systems
- Enhance local identity and character
- Support healthy communities
- Increase collaboration and co-design.

Toowoomba's Green.IS demonstrates a best-practice approach to improving and maintaining our green infrastructure. It was endorsed at the October 2019 Council meeting, making our region one of Australia's largest Council areas to have such a strategy.

How we engaged with the community

The community engagement aimed to get your views on the Draft Green.IS and gather feedback to help us implement this exciting new strategy. The engagement ran from 23 April to 31 May 2019, utilising the following methods:



What we did during the consultation...

- The “Sowing the seeds for better landscapes together” communication campaign was launched throughout the Region to advertise the strategy and seek feedback.
- Online and hard copy surveys were held.
- Targeted stakeholder meetings were held with State Government Departments and Local Community Groups.



What you told us and how we've listened

Some of what you said...

- “What excites me most is that Toowoomba is starting to catch up with the 21st century. In the next 50 years, we can potentially be an even better city once our green plan is implemented.”
- “Green spaces in the city centre. Green corridors. The strategy shows Toowoomba’s liveability for the future has been considered.”
- “Great to see the TRC being proactive about native wildlife corridors and attempting to save some of the remnant bushland we have”

We listened by...

The feedback submitted, enabled Council to develop the strategy further by incorporating the following areas:

- Further explanation was provided in Section 4 of Green. IS to identify that the purpose of the strategy is not to set targets or measurable objectives but to lay the foundation for the drafting of meaningful objectives through Actions such as the Green Infrastructure Audit (Action 10) and Network Plan (Action 8).

- Inclusion of the words protect and enhance were added where appropriate to consolidate Council’s position in the strategy.

This collaboration between Council and the community has created a positive outcome for our growing Region and will ensure a best-practice approach to improving and maintaining our green infrastructure.

Next steps...

In 2020, Council will be undertaking a comprehensive approach to green infrastructure planning and delivery across four focus areas for change:

- **Policy and delivery tools** - to set direction and drive decisions
- **Demonstration projects** - to trial new ideas in different locations and build confidence
- **Advocacy and education** - to show leadership, raise awareness and empower others
- **Skills and knowledge** - to build further capability in delivery of green infrastructure

This planning has been budgeted for as part of both the 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 annual budgets.

What we’re currently doing...

Once the strategy was endorsed, Council was able to quickly identify several projects across the organisation which are underpinned by the Green.IS philosophy. The following activities will continue to grow as we ‘sow seeds together’:

- Council is undertaking ‘Action 3’ of the Green.IS with the Central Highfields Structure Plan underway
- On 17 September 2019 Council passed a motion to apply for the Queensland Climate Resilient Councils Program.
- Council is undertaking ‘Action 5’ in order to incorporate protection of green infrastructure through both the Planning Scheme drafting and Matters of Local Environmental Significance projects
- A governance structure and implementation planning has been initiated.

Thank you to everyone who provided *feedback* on the Green.IS. We look forward to keeping you up-to-date with the *progress* of this region changing strategy.

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 **TOOWOOMBA
REGION**

