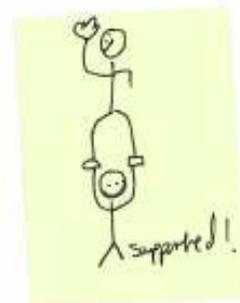
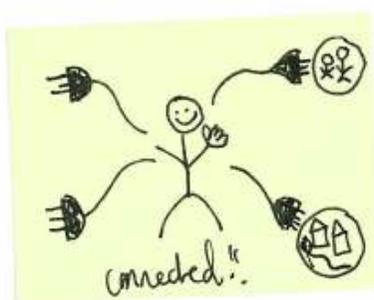




CARDINIA



Creating a Connected Cardinia

Neighbourhood Development Framework

Strategic Directions Paper

2011 - 2015

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Review date:

The *Neighbourhood Development Strategic
Directions Paper 2011-2015* will be
reviewed in 2015.

Introduction

Home has a special place in the heart of Australians. We value our homes, our streets, our communities. We all know when a place feels good to be in....

But what are the ingredients that help create this feeling? What makes a strong, resilient community?

Part of the answer lies in the physical form of the place. Part in the facilities and services that are offered. And a third ingredient is the people that live there, the connections and networks they form, and the sense of belonging that together builds a community.

Cardinia Shire is home to brand-new communities within the growth area, as well as to long-standing communities in some of the Shire's rural townships. The development of the growth area from greenfield sites into new suburbs and employment areas presents a special set of challenges that needs a particular approach. Characteristics such as a more uniform age structure, new residents with fewer closer family members, fewer links with existing community groups are just some examples.

Council has an important role to play in ensuring that new and existing residents within Cardinia Shire feel welcome, become part of the community and are able to know about and access a range of services to meet their individual needs.

This Policy and Strategy document sets out Council's position in relation to Neighbourhood Development and the key outcomes sought. It also outlines the guiding principles and approach Council will adhere to when designing and conducting Neighbourhood Development work.

Program Papers

Neighbourhood Development Background Paper 2011-2015	Provides the background to Neighbourhood Development, defines Council's role etc.
Neighbourhood Development Strategic Directions Paper 2011-2015	Sets out the approach to Neighbourhood Development at Cardinia Shire Council, the key outcomes sought and a program logic model for moving towards these outcomes
Neighbourhood Development Action Plan 2011-2015	Sets out a program of activities and initiatives related to Neighbourhood Development in Cardinia Shire
Yearly Review	Provides a yearly review of Neighbourhood Development and learnings from the following year
4-year Evaluation	Provides a full evaluation of the program and provides recommendations for the next four year program

Our vision for a thriving Cardinia community

Our vision for a thriving Cardinia community is a place where people feel safe, know their neighbours and have friends or family close by, have access to the services and infrastructure they need, feel connected and attached to their local places, are able to work locally or have excellent transport options to take them to work, celebrate and embrace diversity, have access to places which promote connection with others, take local action to create the type of place they want to live in and can join local groups according to their interest.

Our vision is for a Cardinia that feels great to be in and supports the type of life that people want to live.

The Neighbourhood Development is one piece in the puzzle of creating a thriving community. The following document outlines the policies and strategies that will guide the work of the Neighbourhood Development portfolio.

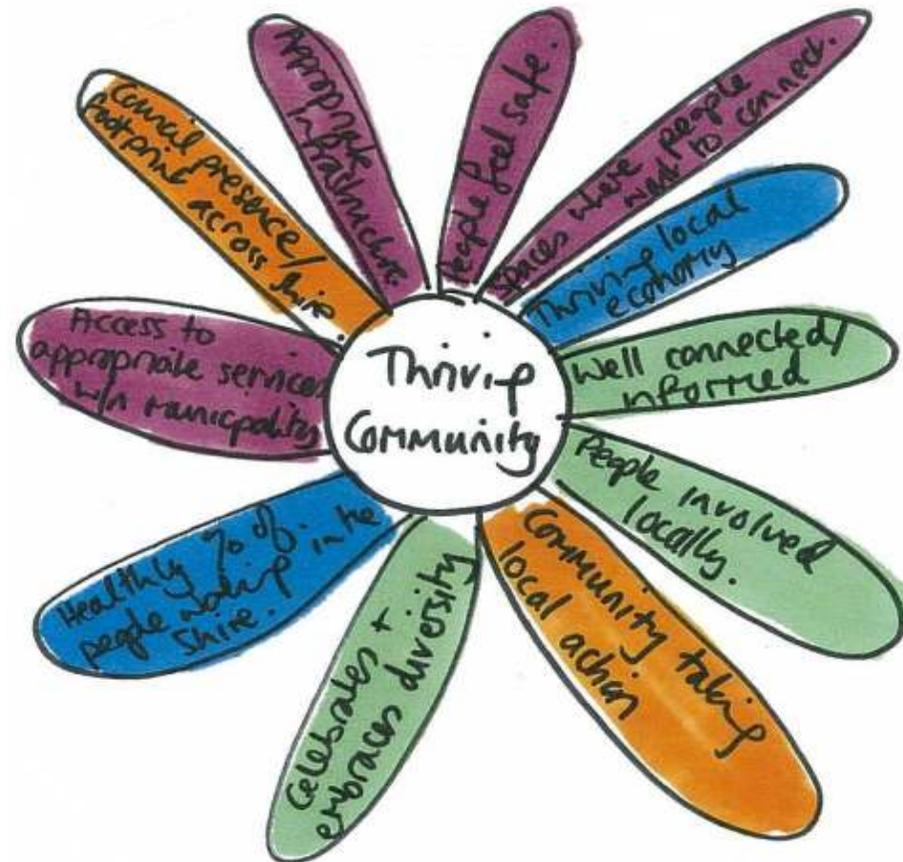


Figure 1: Our ideas of characteristics that create a thriving community

Council's role in Neighbourhood Development

There are many things that contribute to a thriving community.

The Neighbourhood Development portfolio cannot address all of them, but there are four key areas that provide linkages between an overall thriving community and work that is the domain of community or neighbourhood development. These areas are broadly:

Connection	Promoting opportunities for residents and other community members to connect, build social ties, develop linkages with other community members and with community organisations, creating attachment to place and connection with services and governance structures.
Resilience	Promoting resilience in community members
Support	Promoting community leadership and supporting strong community organisations
Respect	Fostering respect for others

These areas are strongly linked to the following Council Plan items:

Our Community

- » Policy 2.3 *Foster Community Leadership*
- » Policy 3.1 *Promote initiatives that connect and strengthen our communities*

In focussing on these areas, the Neighbourhood Development portfolio aims to contribute to the development of a thriving community and reduce the vulnerability of Cardinia's residents to social isolation, family stress, homelessness and antisocial or risk taking behaviours.

Neighbourhood development can and does occur organically and without government input. Some people have no problems in meeting their neighbours, getting involved in local groups, or become active in their local community. However, by undertaking specific neighbourhood development activities in the Shire, Council can help to create and promote opportunities for all residents to make connections and become attached to place, and help to ensure that more and more residents are engaged and less likely to fall through the cracks. The neighbourhood development portfolio is not the only piece in the puzzle of creating a thriving community, and its programs and initiatives will sit alongside many others Council and other organisations are currently delivering or will in the future.

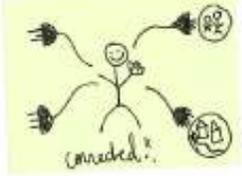
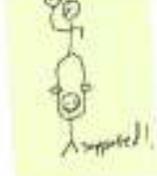
How we do things is as important as what we do, and the neighbourhood development portfolio offers significant opportunities to also build community capacity through its programs and initiatives. This may be community capacity in terms of leadership, skills, and involvement in local governance structures. This building of community capacity is not a given, as neighbourhood development programs could be rolled out by Council with little community involvement. However, the more involvement community members have in the design and delivery of programs and initiatives, the more community capacity building will occur and the more appropriate the programs and initiatives will be.

The Neighbourhood Development portfolio:

The Neighbourhood Development portfolio will take the lead on developing and delivering neighbourhood development initiatives across the Shire. As such, the Neighbourhood Development Framework will not create specific actions for other Council business units. However, it will provide many opportunities for collaboration and also provide for models developed by the Neighbourhood Development portfolio to be applied in other business units, with the opportunity for support and training to assist with this.

How will the Neighbourhood Development portfolio contribute to a thriving community?

By promoting Connection, Resilience, Support and Respect...

	CONNECTION	RESILIENCE	SUPPORT	RESPECT
Themes				
Broad outcomes sought	Cardinia Shire community members have connections and attachment to other local people, local groups, local places, local services and governance structures	Cardinia Shire community members have resilient ways of 'doing and thinking'	Cardinia Shire community members feel supported and encouraged to participate in the community and take on leadership roles	Cardinia Shire community members display respect for others and embrace diversity (inc. culture, age, sexuality, gender, ability, socio-economic status)
				
Policy Statements	The Neighbourhood Development portfolio will deliver and support initiatives that help to create and maintain community connection and attachment.	The Neighbourhood Development portfolio will deliver and support initiatives that help to build and maintain resilient community members, families, groups and organisations.	The Neighbourhood Development portfolio will deliver and support initiatives that will encourage and assist community members and organisations to be involved in the community and take a leadership role.	The Neighbourhood Development portfolio will deliver and support initiatives that build mutual respect for others.

Supporting Strategies

The Neighbourhood Development policy statements are underpinned by the following high-level strategies. These strategies will be implemented by actions and initiatives identified in the *Neighbourhood Development Action Plan 2011-2015*.

The Neighbourhood Development portfolio will (in conjunction with internal and external partners):

Connection	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Develop and deliver initiatives that provide opportunities and encouragement for connection between community members, and between community members and local groups, service providers, Council and others.2. Advocate for and contribute to the design and delivery of high quality public spaces that promote connection between community members.
Resilience	<ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Create and deliver initiatives to assist community groups to function optimally and to improve long-term sustainability.4. Develop and support initiatives that assist vulnerable community members to feel safer and more connected to their community.5. Develop and support initiatives that improve individual, group and/or family resilience in dealing with adversity.
Support	<ol style="list-style-type: none">6. Develop and deliver initiatives that support, encourage and promote high quality community leadership.7. Support community members and groups to undertake actions that will help to improve community connectedness, resilience and respect.
Respect	<ol style="list-style-type: none">8. Ensure neighbourhood development initiative are developed with community input wherever possible and appropriate.9. Ensure neighbourhood development initiatives are accessible to all community members regardless of age, race, gender, sexual preference, ability, socio-economic status etc.10. Support and contribute to initiatives that are aimed at creating connection between diverse sections of the community.

Guiding principles of the Neighbourhood Development portfolio

Because how we do things is just as important as what we do...

Go slow	<p>Keep the following principles top of mind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “First do no harm”• “Alone we go fast, together we go far,”
Enquire appreciatively	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listen deeply to a range of voices• What is working for people? What helps? What are the characteristics that support a particular outcome?• What strengths come into play in difficult situations?• What are the most significant changes people have experienced and what influenced the outcome?
Build on current assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build on existing assets within the community• Work with local people and groups already taking a leadership role and who have links with other parts of the community
Co-create	<p>Embrace the co-creation model when developing new programs, initiatives and activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take the time to understand the problem• Talk to relevant people• Use design thinking to generate ideas• Develop and test prototypes until the model is ready• Implement at a larger scale

<p>Use program logic</p>	<p>Use program logic to identify and link the activities and intermediate outcomes that will help to achieve the overarching broad outcomes. While the program logic model for Neighbourhood Development in Cardinia Shire (<i>as shown in the Neighbourhood Development Framework Action Plan 2011-2015</i>) will evolve, it will provide a general framework against which to make decisions, prioritise and evaluate.</p>
<p>Collaborate and complement</p>	<p>Collaborate within and outside of Council and recognise that a lot of neighbourhood development work is already happening and this portfolio should seek to complement not duplicate. Seek additional partnerships and attract new funding and support. A summary of current actions being undertaken by Council is included in the tables beginning on page 12 of the <i>Neighbourhood Development Framework Background Paper 2011-2015</i> and also in the <i>Neighbourhood Development Implementation Plan 2011-2015</i>.</p>
<p>Grow capacity</p>	<p>Search out and embrace opportunities to build community capacity by involving community members as organisers, researchers, monitors and in other roles as appropriate and possible. Identify opportunities to skill up community members and organisations.</p>
<p>Monitor, evaluate, review</p>	<p>Ensure each program and initiative, and the Neighbourhood Development portfolio as a whole, has built in monitoring, evaluation and review to ensure that desired outcomes are being met, unexpected outcomes are captured, and continuous improvement is the norm.</p>
<p>Leave a positive legacy</p>	<p>Build future thinking into each program and initiative to ensure that they leave a positive legacy in the community and can continue into the future through ongoing Council role or through a hand over to appropriately skilled-up community leaders.</p>

Approach

Method 1: Council-initiated program & activities

The Neighbourhood Development portfolio will design and implement a range of Council-led programs and initiatives designed to help achieve the key outcomes identified by the *Neighbourhood Development Strategic Directions Paper 2011-2015*.

These programs and initiatives will be designed in accordance with the guiding principles of the Neighbourhood Development portfolio.

These actions will tend to be high level and targeted at all residents in the Shire.

Method 2: Resident-initiated activities

Resident led activities could originate from specific community engagement efforts, ad-hoc opportunities or through special crowd-sourcing initiatives by Council:

Community engagement:

- Working with targeted groups will provide an opportunity for an in-depth look at the dynamics of a particular community and allow for targeted neighbourhood development activities to be led by residents with the support of the neighbourhood development portfolio.
- Consideration will be given to ensuring engagement with currently disengaged/hard to reach groups.

Ad-hoc opportunities:

- Opportunities will arise through a number of forums for community members to put forward ideas for initiatives that complement the broad outcomes of the Neighbourhood Development Framework (e.g. Township Strategy preparation).

Crowd sourcing:

- Grant programs seeking initiatives to promote community connection
- Competitions

Council will take a supportive role in these activities through direct support, training, resources, grants, etc

Method 3: Collaboration with external partners

Council may wish to seek partnerships with external organisations to work on Council initiated projects.

Partners may include:

- Research universities
- Federal, State or other local government agencies
- Private sector
- Not-for-profit sector
- Education institutions (schools, kinders, TAFEs etc)
- Think tanks and institutes (e.g. The Australian Centre for Social Innovation)
- Religious institutions

Protocols:

- Projects should contribute to one of the broad outcomes of the *Neighbourhood Development Strategic Directions Paper 2011-2015*, and be consistent with the policy statements and strategies of this document.

Method 4: Capitalising on ad-hoc opportunities

Ad-hoc opportunities may arise through grant applications and approaches from external organisations such as not-for-profit groups, academia, research organisations and others.

Principles for deciding on proposed project or initiatives

The proposed project or initiative must contribute to at least one of the broad outcomes of the *Neighbourhood Development Strategic Directions Paper 2011-2015* (see page 6), and be consistent with the policy statements and strategies of this document (see page 6 and 7). Some key guiding questions could be:

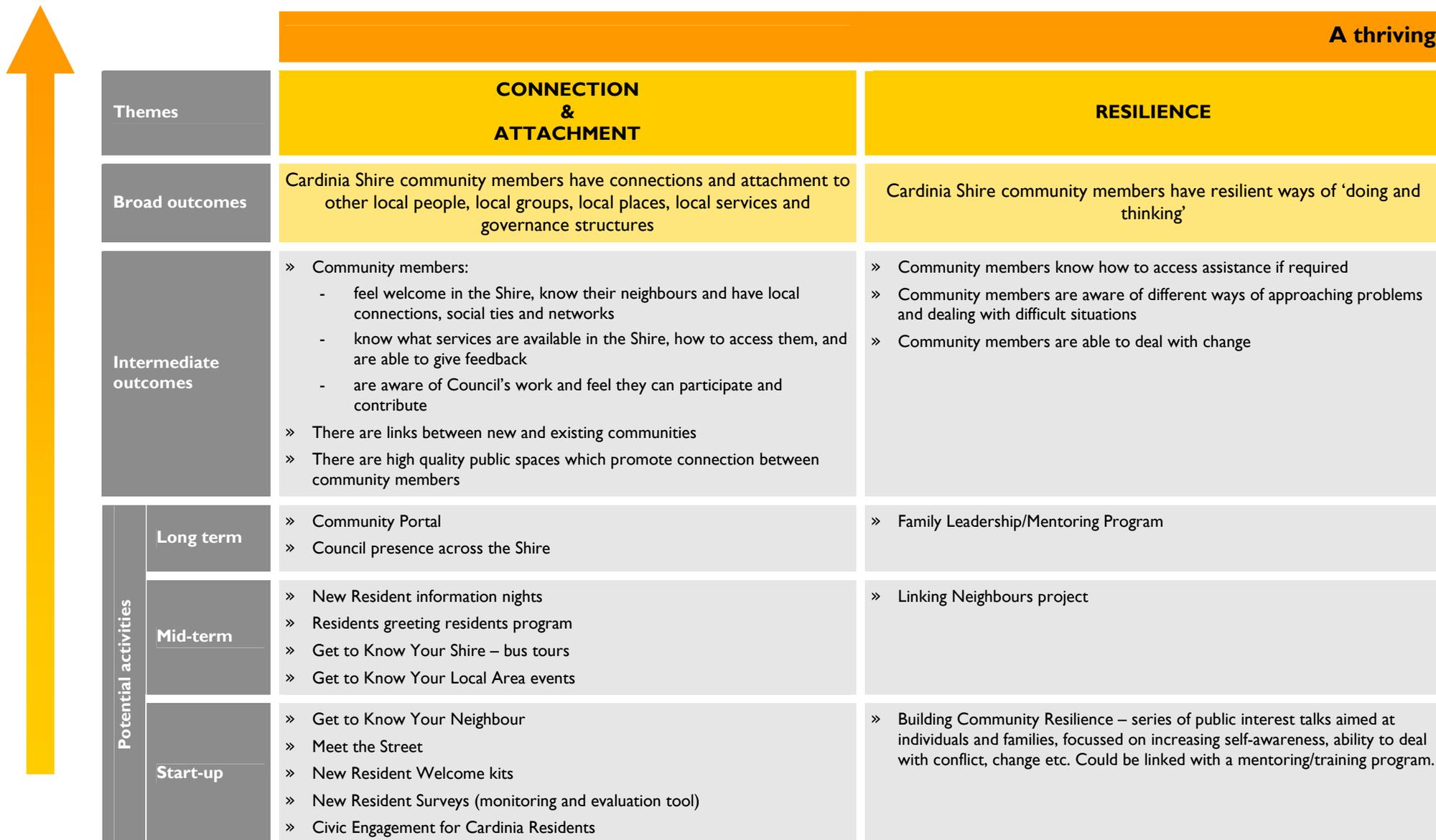
Outcomes:

- Will it strengthen resident connections in Cardinia?
- Will it help meet the lifestyle needs of residents?
- Will it increase inclusiveness, social cohesion and access to services?
- Will it promote tolerance and understanding and be embracing of diversity?
- Will it increase opportunities to work and participate?
- Will it have ongoing impact (sustainability and legacy)?

Process:

- Will it add value to the work being done by Cardinia?
- Does it avoid duplication of any existing work?
- Does it fit within the program logic map for Neighbourhood Development in Cardinia (see the *Neighbourhood Development Action Plan 2011-2015*)?
- Does it have robust project management structure and in-built monitoring & evaluation?
- What risks are involved for Council? Will they be adequately managed?

From Policy & Strategy to Action: Initial Program Logic map



Cardinia community

SUPPORT & INVOLVEMENT	RESPECT	Themes	
Cardinia Shire community members feel supported and encouraged to participate in the community and take on leadership roles	Cardinia Shire community members display respect for others and embrace diversity	Broad outcomes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Community members across the Shire are supported and encouraged to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participate in structured activities and events - Be involved in local groups and organisations » Community groups are functionally optimally » Community members and groups are involved in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The planning and design of public spaces - Setting the direction for community strengthening activities » Community leadership is fostered and community members are supported and encouraged to become agents of change » Volunteering and community participation is valued and supported 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Community members display respect for others » Diversity of culture, age, gender, sexuality, ability, socio-economic status is respected and embraced by community members, Council and community groups. » Community groups are inclusive and accessible 	Intermediate outcomes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Place building initiatives » Asset mapping to have a comprehensive picture of community groups and services in the Shire 		Long term	Potential activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Poppy Seed grants program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Identify and develop opportunities for connection between diverse groups (physical spaces/programs etc) » Promote inclusive and accessible community groups 	Mid-term	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Community Leadership Program » Capacity Building for Community Groups » Resident-led Neighbourhood Development initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Investigate and potentially revamp the role of the Access and Inclusion committee » Multi-lingual Council information and promotion of translation services 	Start-up	

Governance arrangements

The actions and initiatives outlined in the *Neighbourhood Development Action Plan 2011-2015* will be delivered by the Neighbourhood Development portfolio in conjunction with internal and external partners.

In keeping with the guiding principles and approaches of the *Neighbourhood Development Strategic Directions Paper 2011-2015*, a Neighbourhood Development Reference Group will be created to:

- Act as a sounding board
- Help to clarify priorities and identify appropriate actions and initiatives to best achieve the Neighbourhood Development outcomes
- Identify opportunities for collaboration
- Assist with evaluation

The Neighbourhood Development Reference Group will initially consist of interested and appropriate staff members from across Council.

The Reference Group could then be expanded (or an additional group created) to include:

- Community members from each ward if possible – diverse representation including youth, seniors, CALD, all abilities
- Councillor representation
- Not-for-profit sector representation

Community and not-for-profit sector involvement would achieve the following outcomes:

- Ensure a range of voices at the table, not just Council
- Provide opportunities for capacity building of those community members that are involved
- Provide better linkages into the community through these community representatives

The Neighbourhood Development Reference Group will meet quarterly during the year and communicate via email as needed between meetings.

Monitoring & Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of the Neighbourhood Development initiatives will be an ongoing activity as part of the implementation program. The cycle of Monitoring and evaluation will follow a similar pattern to the cycle shown in Figure 2.

The purpose of evaluating will be:

1. To track the progress of the Cardinia community on a range of measures such as:
 - » Community connection
 - » Knowledge and access to services
 - » Respect and tolerance, including cross cultural understanding
 - » Participation
 - » Resilience
 - » Capacity
2. To understand the impact of Neighbourhood Development initiatives, including unexpected outcomes.
3. To understand what works/doesn't work.
4. To inform new initiatives and collect ideas.

The broad Key Evaluation Questions will be based around the following concepts¹:

Inputs	(Resources)	→ Time, money staff
Activities	(What is done)	→ Activities conducted → People that the program reaches
Outcomes	(What results)	→ Changes in people → Changes in what people do → Social, environmental, economic change

¹ Adapted from Roberts Evaluation – Jacqueline Story (2009) *Program Design – Program Evaluation: Further Reading*.

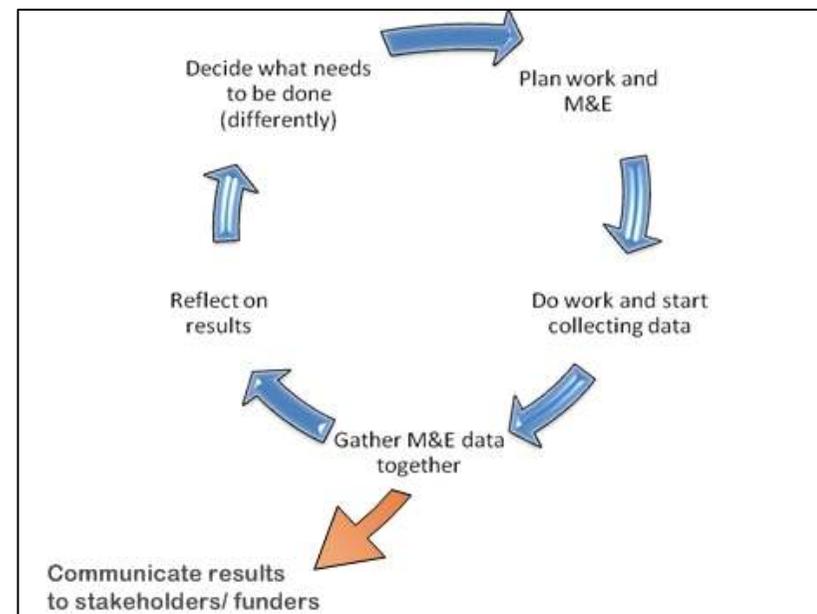


Figure 2: Overview of Monitoring & Evaluation process

Clear Horizon <http://www.clearhorizon.com.au/monitoring-evaluation-overview/>

Monitoring of individual initiatives

Each program or initiative will have in-built monitoring mechanisms that will be identified during the project planning phase.

This will feed in to annual review/evaluation process, and will provide feedback on what is done each year, and the impact it has.

Quantitative and Qualitative approaches will be used, including:

Quantitative	Qualitative
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What happened?• Who attended?• Happy sheet feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most Significant Change• Semi-structured interview• Quote capture

Monitoring of overall trends in Cardinia

Monitoring of overall social trends and measures of well-being in Cardinia will be undertaken as part of the yearly review using resources such as:

- ABS Measures of Australia's progress
- Community Indicators Victoria

Evaluation of overall progress towards our broad outcomes

The overall evaluation each year will look at the range of actions and initiatives undertaken, and the contribution they have made to achieving the overall outcomes identified in the *Neighbourhood Development Strategic Directions Paper 2011-2015*. The evaluation will also assess whether the broad outcomes are still relevant.

Some broad themes will be:

- Merit – did the program do what it intended?
- Worth – was the program the best way of addressing the issue?

Bibliography

Clear Horizon, *Monitoring and Evaluation Overview*. Website accessed (16/05/2011). Available at: <http://www.clearhorizon.com.au/monitoring-evaluation-overview/>

Roberts Evaluation – Jacqueline Story (2009) *Program Design – Program Evaluation: Further Reading*. Melbourne.