

Community Reference Group – Charter and procedures

1. What is a community reference group?

The role of the community reference group (CRG) is to enable community input into the study and provide an opportunity for community issues to be addressed by the study team.

The CRG is not a decision-making body and it is not a requirement that consensus always be reached amongst members on issues discussed.

The CRG aims to facilitate:

- involvement in the project by the community;
- community feedback and suggestions to assist with the decision making on the preferred option;
- increased understanding about the project;
- a more effective response from the project team to arising issues and concerns.

2. What does the CRG do?

Specifically, the CRG will:

- receive briefings on the progress of the planning study;
- provide comment on aspects of the Kenmore Bypass Planning Study, including options;
- represent community views regarding local issues, impacts and benefits;
- provide information about the project to other community members; and
- receive and discuss information on other aspects of the project.

The Department of Main Roads will ensure that the group has access to the necessary plans and information and will consider the recommendations of the group and provide a response to the group.

3. Who can be members of the CRG?

One of the main aims of establishing the CRG is to represent a diversity of viewpoints and community concerns.

In order to ensure a fair representation of the community, each community, environment, business or local facility group may only be represented by one CRG member.

Membership of the CRG is on a voluntary basis, and no payment is made for participation.

The CRG meetings will be convened by an independent Chairperson with professional facilitation and/or negotiation skills who is appointed by Main Roads.

In addition to members of the local community, each CRG will also include officers from the Main Roads project team. Staff from other agencies may be invited to participate from time to time.

Elected representatives from local councils, State or Federal government members or representatives will not be permitted to be a member of a CRG. Elected representatives who request to participate at a meeting will only be invited with the unanimous prior consent of CRG members.

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Main Roads will continue to ensure key stakeholders such as elected representatives are regularly informed and consulted with throughout the planning study.

4. What is the selection process?

A panel, consisting of senior representatives from Main Roads and the community relations team, shall consider applications. The panel will also comprise an independent third party representative who will review applications and make recommendations to the project team. For the Kenmore Bypass Planning Study CRG, this representative will be the Foundation Dean and Professor of Law and Research Professor in Ethics at Griffith University.

The panel will seek:

- members from a range of ages and backgrounds within the study area; and
- a balance of interests including residents, community groups, businesses and local facilities.

5. What are the terms of membership?

CRGs will be established and will continue to meet during the length of the planning study. Members agree to commit to attend at least 75% of meetings over the planning study.

Media liaison

Individual members can speak to the media as individuals about the project, but not as a spokesperson on behalf of the CRG.

New members

If the CRG requires an appointment of a new member mid-term, Main Roads may seek other nominations to fill this position.

Membership resignations and vacancies

A member's position becomes vacant if they provide their resignation in writing.

A position may be declared vacant if the member:

- fails to attend more than two consecutive meetings;
- breaches the CRG meeting protocol; or
- becomes an employee of the project team.

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6. What are the operational principles?

CRG Members

Members agree to the following principles, which are important to a successfully functioning CRG:

- respect the right and views of other members;
- participate in the forum; and
- agree to disseminate relevant information accurately and in good faith to the group they represent.

If a member believes he or she may have a conflict of interest in relation to a particular issue or item of discussion, the member should immediately make this clear to the other CRG members, and may be excluded from discussion on this issue.

Project Team

The project team agrees to:

- provide regular information on the progress of the planning study; and
- where reasonably required by the Chair, arrange consultant(s) to explain technical information to the CRG and, where reasonably required, invite representatives from relevant government agencies or other individuals to attend CRG meetings.

The project team must report back to the CRG on consideration of their comments.

The Chairperson

Main Roads will appoint an independent Chairperson for the CRG.

The Chairperson will:

- organise the agenda; and
- approve meeting notes prior to dissemination to members and posting on the website.

Breaches of Protocol

Should members of the CRG not comply with the CRG principles or continually disrupt meetings or disrespect the rights of other members to participate, the CRG member may be asked to resign from the CRG.

Dissolution of the CRG

If it is deemed by the members or by Main Roads that the role of the CRG is no longer required, Main Roads may dissolve the CRG. Any request for dissolution must demonstrate why the CRG is no longer required.

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7. What are the CRG operational protocols?

Members will be invited to nominate issues for discussion as will the project team through the Chairperson.

The number of items will be limited to allow for appropriate levels of discussion within the meeting timeframe.

Frequency of meetings

The frequency of the CRG meetings will be discussed during the first CRG meeting.

CRG meetings will be held on a weeknight (Monday to Thursday) in the local area at a convenient local venue. It is anticipated that the meeting will run for up to two hours. The time will be 6.45pm for a 7.00pm start.

Meeting notes

It is the responsibility of Main Roads to organise, facilitate and host the CRG meetings. Meeting notes will be kept of meeting attendees, key issues raised and actions recommended or agreed. Comments from individuals will not be attributed to them and a verbatim record of the meeting will not be prepared.

The meeting notes will be forwarded to the Chairperson and Main Roads for approval, prior to distribution to members within 14 days of the meeting.

Any changes to the meeting record should be placed in writing and forwarded to the Chairperson to be tabled for discussion at the next meeting, and adoption if agreed to by CRG members. A summary of the key issues and outcomes of the meeting will be placed on the Main Roads website.

Dissemination of information

CRG members are encouraged to discuss issues and disseminate information about the project with the wider community including their specific interest groups where relevant.

Dispute resolution

It is not a requirement that consensus be reached among CRG members on the issues discussed. Differing views will be noted and taken into consideration. In the event of any dispute between the CRG and Main Roads, the Chairperson will seek to resolve the issue in consultation with Main Roads.

8. Organisation and minute keeping

Main Roads will organise meetings, take meeting records, disseminate records in accordance with the protocols outlined and act as a conduit with the CRG.