COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
FRAMEWORK
GUIDE

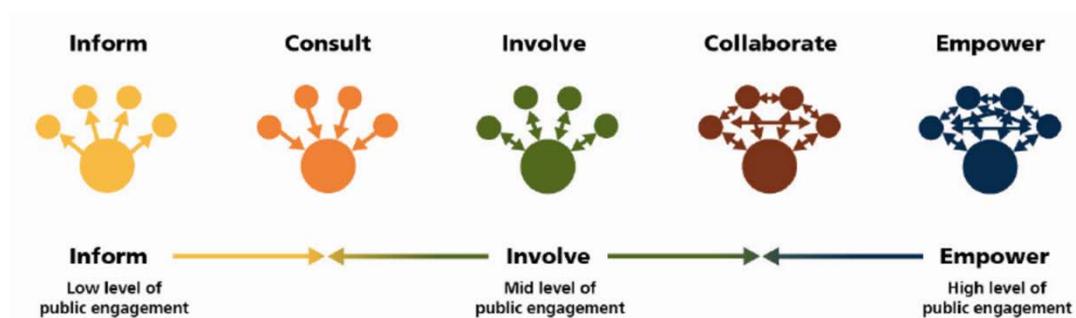# Part A: Community Engagement Framework

Introduction

Effective community engagement not only provides Council with an opportunity to strengthen its relationship with the community, but provides for sound investment in better decision making by ensuring decisions are informed of community needs and aspirations.

What is community engagement

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), an international leader in community engagement, defines community engagement as:

'any process that involves the public in problem-solving or decision-making and uses public input to make decisions'.

Traditionally, governments in Australia have tended to adopt the International Association for Public Participation Spectrum as the starting point.

The limitation of the Spectrum is that it is a very useful framework for community engagement around decision-making, but is less useful for relationship development and capacity building.

Community engagement means different things to different people in different parts of an organisation. Community engagement is both a process and an outcome. In its broadest sense, it is about decision making; relationship development, or capacity building.
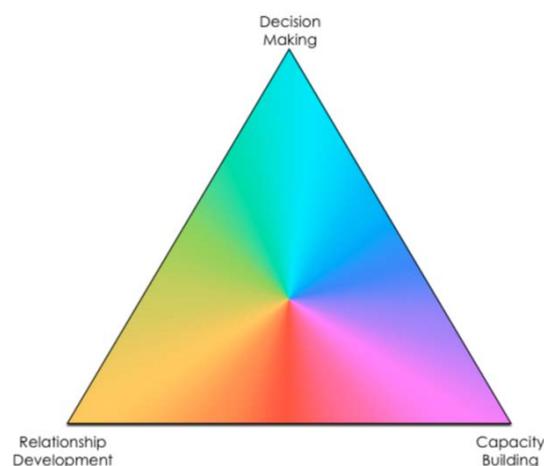
For the purpose of this framework however, the Town has decided to continue along the traditional line suggested by the IAP2.

Community engagement for the Town is therefore summarised as a planned two-way process by which specific, identified groups of the community are given the opportunity to provide input that enhances decision making processes on issues that may impact on their well-being or interests.

It strengthens the relationships between the community and Council by providing a platform for the community to have their voices heard, their views considered and acknowledged, and they're informed of, and involved in, issues which may impact on their lives.

Aim of framework

This framework has been developed to assist the Town in undertaking its community engagement activities with its diverse community. The framework aims at developing a consistent approach to community engagement, providing guidance on when and how to undertake engagement activities and what steps and processes should be considered. Specifically, the goals of this framework are to:

- Ensure community views are understood and considered when developing Council plans, strategies, policies and service delivery.

- Ensure the community has the opportunity to participate in the conduct of Council through inclusive and equitable engagement practices.

- Strengthen community connectedness by creating opportunities for the community to get involved with, and have their say on, matters which are important to them.

- Improve the relationship between the community and Council by ensuring the community is informed about and involved in Council activities.

- Enhance the coordination, planning and promotion of Council's community engagement activities.

- Strengthen feedback and communication from Council so the community knows when and how their input has been considered to inform decisions.

While the framework aims at developing a consistent approach to community engagement across Council, some engagement activities may be the result of statutory requirements which require Council to give notice, consult or engage with the community in a specific way.

Corporate Framework:

Strategic Community Plan 2013 - 2023 and Corporate Business Plan 2014 -2018

This document supports Council's Vision, Business Philosophy and Values by providing a clear framework for engaging the community on decisions that may impact on their lives.

Council's Vision, Business Philosophy and Values

VISION

Cambridge is a place where things happen. Stylish new and enhanced development will create hubs of community activity - places where families and friends get together, where business thrives and access is easy. Housing will become more diverse to accommodate people at different life stages and our suburban landscape will enhance its appeal through beautiful green and open spaces

VALUES

In everything we do, we will seek to adhere to a set of values that guides our attitudes and behaviours.

Friendly and Helpful:

We value our customers and our work colleagues and will assist them in the best way we can.

Teamwork:

We believe teamwork is essential for improving our services and achieving our goals.

Creativity:

We can improve the way we do business by challenging the status.

Integrity:

We will act responsibly, place trust in each other and will be accountable for our actions.

BUSINESS PHILOSOPHY

We are committed to making decisions in the interests of both current and future generations. Our approach will be based on the following ideals:

Partnerships/Relationships:

Productive relationships with industry, the State Government and other Local Governments to deliver improved cost effective services.

Community Centred:

Meeting the needs of our communities through strong community consultation, engagement and collaboration.

Sustainability:

Embracing the principles of sustainability in our decision making to balance the needs of both current and future generations through environmental protection, social advancement and economic prosperity.

Enhanced Services:

Continued improvement to our services through planning, adaptability and careful management of risks.

Specifically, this framework aims at facilitating Council's requirements outlined in the Town's Strategic Community Plan, including that we:

- Keep the community informed and consult on local matters that affect them.
- Deliver an ongoing program of Community Engagement.
- Revise the Communication Strategy and adapt to current trends and technologies.

In order to achieve these Strategies and Actions, the Corporate Business Plan requires the Community Engagement process to be reviewed and aligned with the Town's Communication strategy and plan. This includes:

- Developing guidelines to ensure customers and the community are listened to and provided with opportunities to be involved in decisions that affect them.
- Increasing community awareness of Council activities and issues that may impact on them.
- Researching customer needs and satisfaction with services.
- Ensure engagement methods are appropriate for the key stakeholders impacted by the decision.
- Ensure the 'feedback loop' is closed (residents are advised of the key findings and outcomes).
- Increasing community satisfaction with Councils level of engagement with the community on local issues.

While the plans, policies and programs within the Corporate Business Plan referred to a *Community Engagement Strategy*, it was considered appropriate to develop this as a Community Engagement Framework.

This framework will deliver on the desired outcomes articulated in the Corporate Business Plan to reinforcing Council's Community Engagement approach, and provide guidance within the Town to effectively undertake community engagement activities. A community engagement strategy can then be developed for each major undertaking (project or policy) which the Council wishes to progress.

Statutory Framework

Section 3.1 of the Local Government Act 1995 states that the general function of a local government is to provide for the *good government* (emphasis added) of persons in its district. There is a myriad of literature that suggests that the term *good governance*, amongst other things, incorporates participatory governance.

Participatory governance simply put, suggests that anyone affected by or interested in a decision should have the opportunity to participate in the process for making that decision. This can happen in several ways – community members may be provided with information, asked for their opinion, given the opportunity to make recommendations or, in some cases, be part of the actual decision-making process. - refer to: http://www.goodgovernance.org.au/about-good-governance/what-is-good-governance/

Section 2.10 of the Local Government Act also stipulates that the role of a Elected Member includes the facilitation of communication between the community and the Council. This is discussed further in the framework.

Principles and Practice of Community Engagement

Principles

The key to building consistency in the practice of community engagement is the use of a principle-based approach. Principles guide us by providing direction to commence engagement, and can help resolve challenging issues during an engagement process. In this way principles can also act as an effective evaluation tool at the end of an engagement process. The following principles guide Council's approach to effective community engagement:

- *Timeliness*
  Council will endeavour to engage with its community in ways that are timely, open to all, easily understood and not overly bureaucratic or resource intensive. To uphold this principle it is necessary to thoroughly and comprehensively plan for the community engagement elements of a project prior to commencement so that engagement is given genuine attention, appropriate resourcing and realistic timeframes.

- *Information and Feedback*
  The community should be well informed on issues and receive feedback from council on how its input has been used to inform council decisions. Communication with the community is critical to the success and ownership of projects. A well-informed community makes for well-informed decision making. The practice of providing feedback to the community on how their input has been used to influence the project or issues makes explicit the value in participating in engagement activities.

- *Mutual Respect*
  Council's goal is one of inclusive involvement. All voices matter, all opinions are valued and considered. Everyone can have a say in matters that impact on them. Opportunities for the diverse communities of the Town to participate need to be created with special consideration given to those communities that traditionally do not have a strong voice or that it may be more challenging to engage.

- *Action Learning*
  Council is committed to the development of innovative engagement approaches, learning from each engagement experience, and using such learning to improve our approaches to engagement. Strategies will be put place to support this principle for example a Community Engagement Calendar and Register, training and access to in-house Community Engagement Champions. Using thorough evaluation approaches assists in continuous improvements.

- *Foresight*
  Council engages with its community not only to learn about and respond to present needs, but also to gain a better understanding of our community's perspective on emerging issues that may affect our preferred future. The Strategic Community Plan is in essence the foresight principle, capturing the vision and aspirations for the long-term future of the Town. The Strategic Community Plan will guide all other planning processes for council.

Elected Members and Community Engagement

When making decisions, elected members have a role to play in weighing up the options before them while considering the needs and/or wants of residents and ratepayers.

While elected members may have their own views and priorities, it is important the material put before them and their engagement outside of council provides them with sufficient breadth and diversity of views that they are able to weigh up the facts of the matter and make a decision based on the whole view.

Elected members can get this information through:

- Attendance at engagement events
- Participation on working groups and committees
- Understanding the range of engagement processes used across the Town
- Discussing key issues with senior staff
- Differentiating a 'chat at the local shop' with engagement activities with the community and stakeholders

In their conduct, Elected Member should be open and accountable to the public and treat others with respect and fairness (Section 2 - Local Government Rules of Conduct Regulations).

Staff and community engagement

The role of staff is to ensure options put to council contain not just the relevant facts, but also the varying views on any given issue. Presenting not only the dominant view, but also alternate views can help council determine the long-term impact of a decision.

Staff can get this information by:

- Developing and participating in engagement events
- Understanding and planning for effective community engagement
- Ensuring engagement planning is part of the project management process
- Undertaking internal engagement

Organisational capacity building and training

The Town currently takes a decentralised approach to community engagement/consultation. Activities are conducted by individual sections of the organisation, in collaboration with the communications team.
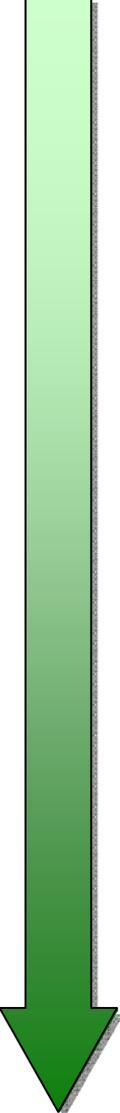
Beyond the existing policy, there is no further resource material to assist in planning and resourcing engagement activities, and so it is left up to each section to determine the strategy, tools and methods that will be employed.

A dedicated Community Engagement resource with specific Community Engagement skills is proposed to coordinate and assist in the implementation of the framework and to provide advice and support to staff when preparing community engagement plans, including any planned engagement programs. This Community Engagement resource will work closely with the Town's corporate communications team to ensure consistency of engagement methods and the use of appropriate tools and techniques.

The detailed Community Engagement guidelines, tools, techniques and processes will be developed by a Community Engagement Officer and will include a series of fact sheets on community engagement methods, templates for planning, checklists and an online engagement register. A new section on the Town's Intranet will be developed specifically for Community Engagement documentation to assist all staff.

Levels of Community Engagement

The Town's approach to community engagement has been developed using the International Association for Public Participation's IAP2 Spectrum for Public Participation. This spectrum outlines five levels of community engagement, with the lowest level of engagement being 'Inform', while 'Empower' involves the greatest level of public participation in decision making processes. Not every issue or decision of Council requires community engagement, so the first step is always to determine whether engagement is necessarily. If the answer is yes, then the following is used to guide the extent of engagement:

Inform	
Public participation goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.
Our commitment to you	We will keep you informed.
Public participation tools	Newspaper advertising, Letterbox drop, Statutory Notices, Fact sheets, website, information sessions.

Consult	
Public participation goal	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.
Our commitment to you	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.
Public participation tools	Advertise seeking public comment, focus groups, surveys, public meetings and displays.

Involve	
Public participation goal	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.
Our commitment to you	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.
Public participation tools	Workshops, deliberative polling, expert panels.

Collaborate	
Public participation goal	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.
Our commitment to you	We will look for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.
Public participation tools	Stakeholder meetings, Advisory committees, participatory decision-making.

Empower	
Public participation goal	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Our commitment to you	We will implement what you decide.
Public participation tools	Citizen juries, ballots, delegated decision.

While the *IAP2 Spectrum for Public Participation* has been adopted for this framework. Within the context of Local Government, the highest level of 'Empower' will rarely be achievable or appropriate. The spectrum notes that the level of 'Empower' places the "final decision-making in the hands of the public". As elected representatives for the community, final decisions will ultimately rest with the Elected Members.

Community engagement plans need to be tailored for each project where a decision to engage is made, identifying the appropriate level of community engagement for that project. It should be noted however, that while a project may have an overarching engagement level, a stakeholder analysis may result in some sections of the community having a greater or lesser level of participation depending on the level of impact the decision may have. During the life-time of the project, it may also be necessary to adjust the level of engagement, depending on the stage of the project.

How and When We Will Engage

When commencing a project, consideration will need to be given to determine the level of impact any decision may have on the community and stakeholders. Consideration also needs to be given to the timeframe within which the engagement activities can be conducted, established by statutory, government or project parameters. Many Town projects/decisions of Council are of an operational nature and it may be determined that engagement is simply not necessary (see Part B: Deciding to Engage)

Once a decision to engage has been made, the following guide will help determine the level of impact. Generally speaking, the higher the level of impact, the greater the level of community consultation and engagement.

Level 3	Criteria (one or more)	Current examples
There is a **high** level of impact or risk (perceived or real) on the Town as a whole, or a section of the community. There is potential for any decision to create controversy and/or have varying levels of acceptance within the community.	• Significant impact on attributes that are considered to be of high value to the community (e.g. lifestyle or physical environment) • Likely to have a high level of interest across the Town • Potential for a high level of controversy or conflict across the Town • High levels of complexity in the issue being considered • There is a loss or significant change to any service or facility provided by Council.	• Strategic Community Plan • Treescape Advsiory Committee/Treescape Plan • Coastcare/Biolink • Lake Monger Advisory Committee/Management Plan • Local Planning Strategy
Typical tools: Community Reference Groups, Expert Reference Groups, Joint Advisory Committees.		

Level 2	Criteria (one or more)	Current examples
There is a **medium** level of impact or risk (perceived or real) on the Town as a whole or a section of the community. It is likely that the decision will be accepted by the majority of the community impacted, however the decision may be an inconvenience for some sections of the community.	• There may be some impact on attributes that are considered to be of high value to the community or a section of the community (e.g. lifestyle or physical environment) • Some sections of the community concerned are likely to have a high level of interest • Potential for some controversy or conflict across the Town • There is a medium to low level of complexity in the issue being considered • There is some loss or change to any service or facility provided by Council.	• Major Projects Design • Underground Power • Park Concept Plans • Annual Town Budget • Redevelopment of a local playground • Redevelopment of sporting facilities • West Leederville Activity Centre Plan • Commercial Centres Strategy • Disability Access and Inclusion Plan • Youth Strategy
Typical tools: Meetings with key stakeholders, Meetings with other target community groups, e.g. parents, youth, aged, disabled, Workshop sessions, Site tour/meeting, Community forum/debate. Suggestion box, Telephone or Written survey, Written submission, Public exhibition, Intercept interviews, Focus group sessions, Public meetings, Feedback form, Social media, Online discussion forum.		

Level 1	Criteria (one or more)	Current examples
There is a **low** level of impact or risk (perceived or real) on the Town as a whole or a section of the community. It is likely that the decision will be widely accepted by the community and seen as having positive outcomes or being required.	• No negative impact on attributes that are considered to be of high value to the community (e.g. lifestyle or physical environment) • Low level of interest across the Town. • Low to no risk of controversy or conflict across the Town. • Only a small change, or enhancement to any service or facility provided by Council.	• Upgrade of local playground or park • Extension of operating hours for a service • Town Events • Major Project Construction Contracts
Typical tools: Written correspondence, mail out, Fact sheets, brochure, Notice/advert in paper, Media release, Personal telephone contact, In person meeting, Displays, Briefings, Social media, Email Website, Banners/posters/signs		

Note: Where there's a situation which requires Council to respond quickly to avoid an immediate threat to the health, safety or wellbeing of the community, it may not be possible or feasible to involve the community prior to taking action.

When considering the level of impact, it is important to factor in existing knowledge about the community. It may be helpful to review results from the Town's biannual Community Survey, existing research and consultation, along with experiences from other Council staff. Feedback from community members and research into how other communities in Western Australia have responded to similar situations or decisions should also be considered.

Once the level of impact has been determined, the *IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation* can be utilised to determine the overall level of engagement required. The diagram below provides guidance to the level of engagement required, based on the level of impact identified.

With a Level 3 impact, the level of public participation should be aimed at the Collaborate level.

Level 2 impact should normally aim at having public participation aimed at the Involve level, although in some circumstances Collaborate may be appropriate.

Level 1 impact will normally be located at the informed level of public participation, although some minor consultation activities may occur before making a final decision.

With all levels of impact, a stakeholder analysis is critical in determining what level of engagement may be required. Even at Level 3, not all stakeholders will need to have the same level of engagement; many stakeholders only being required to be engaged at the Informed, Consult or Involve level. The Statutory processes also need to be considered.

Implementing, monitoring and reviewing the framework

To assist in the implementation of this framework, a number of additional activities will occur. These include:

- Recruitment of a Community Engagement Officer to co-ordinate the implementation of the framework and assist in major Community Engagement projects over the next financial year including New Strategic Community Plan, Underground Power etc
- Development of internal intranet based Community Engagement guidelines, tools, techniques and processes.
- Development of a web based online Register of Community Engagement activities.
- Implementation of training and development opportunities to build organisational capacity to undertake community consultation and engagement.
- Evaluation, recommendation and implementation of Community Engagement online web based e-Engagement tools.
- Develop a stakeholder relationship management strategy linked to the Community Engagement framework e.g. the Towns business community.

In order to assist with the monitoring and review of the framework, the biannual Community Survey will contain specific Key Performance Indicators to measure Community satisfaction with:

- Council's level of engagement with the community on local issues.
- Council level of keeping the community informed of key issues.
- Council level of encouraging community discussion on key issues.

Twelve months following the adoption of the framework, a review will be undertaken to determine the success of the implementation and further refinements that may be required. Council will be also provided with an update report outlining the range of community engagement activities undertaken and the key outcomes concerned.

Part B: Planning Guide for Community Engagement

Step 1: Deciding to Engage

Deciding to engage

A series of prompt questions have been provided to help you. A key has been developed to be a visual prompt and is based on a traffic light system. The lights system is to be complemented by your professional judgement and knowledge of the project.

✔ **Must engage**

? **May choose to engage**

✘ **Don't engage**

❗ **Seek more information**

Question	Answer		Deciding to Engage	Comments
Has the decision already been made?	Yes	✘	Inform the community only.	
	Unsure	?	You may choose to engage.	
	No	❗	unsure – find out what in the project is negotiable.	
Is there a statutory requirement to engage?	Yes	✔	Engage.	
	No	?	You may choose to engage.	
Has the community already provided feedback on this issue?	Yes	?	You may choose to engage.	
	No	✔	Engage.	
	Unsure	❗	unsure – refer to the Community Engagement Register	
Can the community's involvement in the project contribute to or enhance the outcome to be achieved?	Yes	✔	Engage.	
	No	✘	Inform the community only.	
	Unsure	?	You may choose to engage.	
Are there benefits to the community from being involved (i.e. education, improved relations, capacity building and networks)?	Yes	✔	Engage.	
	No	?	You may choose to engage.	
	Unsure	?	You may choose to engage.	
Is there benefit or value of engaging internally?	Yes	✔	Engage.	
	No	✘	Inform internal stakeholders only.	
	Unsure	?	You may choose to engage.	

Step 2: Setting Engagement Objectives and Boundaries

At the beginning of any community engagement within a project, it is important to ensure that the objectives are clearly defined.

A review of existing information, including any past engagement activities should be undertaken before finalising the objectives. In particular, project managers should consider:

- The project timeframe within which the engagement activities must be carried out.
- Who will be making the final decision?
- What are the questions you would like the engagement activities to answer?
- What do you want the engagement to achieve?
- What level of engagement do you feel is appropriate?

It's important at this stage to identify the project's negotiable and non-negotiable goals. By identifying and understanding what is negotiable, project managers will be able to:

- Clearly communicate and provide information about what decisions have already been made.
- Identify and communicate what is outside of Council's sphere of influence.
- Clarify the areas on which Council will be seeking engagement from the community.

It's important to make sure that the non-negotiable goals are actually that. The more non-negotiable goals a project has, the less likely the community will want to participate. Non-negotiable goals should be clearly defined and communicated to avoid confusion and unrealistic expectations – therefore minimise the risk of conflict and disillusionment towards Council.

Step 3: Identify the Stakeholders

It is important to identify all groups and individuals within the community what will be affected or have an interest in the decision being made. Not all stakeholders will need to be engaged at the same level, so you will need to identify their needs to determine what engagement activities might be required and at which stage of the project.

When identifying the key stakeholders, it's also important to consider the public's perception on the issue or topic you're engaging on. Consider past experiences with the community concerning similar issues or any pervious consultation or research which may have been undertaken.

In order to develop a comprehensive list of stakeholders, the following steps may be useful:

- Brainstorm with a cross section of staff within Council.
- Contact the Community Engagement Officer or the Corporate Communications department in relation to past consultations or interested community groups.
- Ask key members of the community and other identified stakeholders who they think might be interested.
- Call for expressions of interest or consider advertising in local papers and other media.
- Identify any hard to reach groups who may be impacted by outcomes – special consideration should be given on how to engage these sections of our community.

It's important to note that when considering stakeholders, it is advised to avoid grouping people of cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds as one stakeholder. Consideration will need to be given to each cultural group on how best to engage; ensuring engagement techniques take into consideration cultural requirements or other barriers which may otherwise prevent effective engagement.

When undertaking your stakeholder analysis it is important to include:

- What are the key issues or areas of interest for the project
- Who the key stakeholder groups are
- What their level of interest may be
- Who are the key contacts for the group.

Once you have completed your stakeholder analysis, review the project objectives, including the negotiable and non-negotiable goals.

Step 4: Determine the Level of Impact

The Community Engagement Framework outlines three main impact levels to inform the level of community engagement required. A brief description is below:

Level of impact	Brief description
Level 3 (high)	There's potential for any decision to create controversy and/or have varying levels of acceptance within the community.
Level 2 (medium)	It is likely that the decision will be accepted by the majority of the community impacted; however the decision may be an inconvenience for some sections of the community.
Level 1 (low)	It is likely that the decision will be widely accepted by the community and seen as having positive outcomes or being required.

To determine the level of impact, firstly consider the key stakeholders who may be interested in or impacted by the decision. When determining the level of impact for each stakeholder group, it may be appropriate to consult with other staff across Council to inform your analysis.

During different stages of the project, it may be necessary to review the level of impact due to changes in the situation or increasing understanding of the implications of outcomes.

Step 5: Timelines and Budget

Timelines and budget for community engagement will vary from project to project and will be dependent on a number of factors. Consideration will need to be provided to any legislative requirements and timeframes set (particular by other spheres of Government), which may impact on the project. This may influence the level of engagement selected and engagement tools employed.

Timelines and budget will also be affected by the level of public participation required and the community engagement tools and techniques chosen for each stakeholder group.

Generally speaking, the higher the level of impact and more stakeholders you have, the more time and resources will need to be allocated to community engagement. Therefore it is essential that a community engagement plan is developed before commencing the project and should be included in the overall plan and budget for your project.

Early engagement is recommended for Level 3 projects, especially where the project is dealing with complex issues, requires community education or capacity building or is of a contentious issue.

Projects at this level will often need a period of informing the community about the issues at hand, before consulting, involving or collaborating.

An important factor in determining timeframes will be key community events such as school holidays, religious festivals and other major events. Where possible these should be avoided in order to maximise the ability for people to participate.

When considering budget and resource allocation, the type of engagement tools chosen will be a significant factor. Each tool requires different levels of practitioner skill, time and budget. For controversial projects, it may be necessary to use an independent facilitator to ensure a balanced and unbiased approach and provide a greater level of credibility and confidence with the community.

This independent facilitator may be an external consultant, or another Council staff member who has the required skills and is not directly involved in project or responsible for putting forward Council's position on the topic being considered.
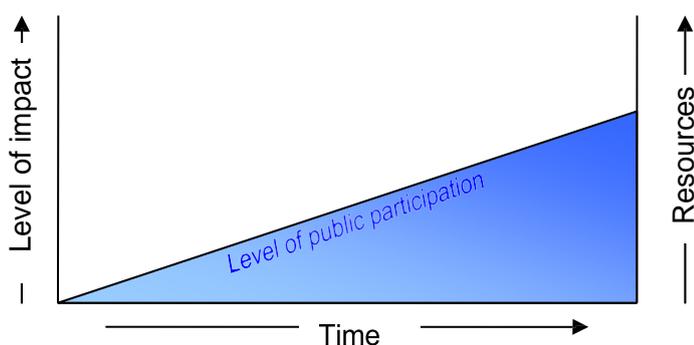
Step 6: Select the Appropriate Engagement Methods

Determining the level of impact for each stakeholder group will allow you to identify what levels of participation you should be considering for your project. Not all stakeholders will require the same levels of engagement and engagement methods should be selected carefully based on the needs and demographics of each group.

There are many reasons why people don't get involved with Council engagement activities. Consideration should be given to the types of engagement activities being planned to ensure they are inclusive and maximise the potential for participation.

Some of the main reasons people do not participate include:

- Lack of information and awareness of the issues
- Perception that their input will not make a difference
- Lack of follow-up with issues raised in the past
- Not knowing how their input has been used in the past
- Intimidating or inappropriate engagement methods
- Language or cultural barriers
- Accessibility – venue, time, holidays, disability access etc.

Once the level of impact and the level of participation have been selected, you will need to ensure you select the appropriate methods and tools to engage the community. Although not an exhaustive list, the following matrix will assist staff in identifying what tools or methods could be used.

★★★ Strongly desirable   ★★ Desirable   ★ May be appropriate

Level of participation & method/tool	Level of impact		
	Level 3 (high)	Level 2 (medium)	Level 1 (low)
INFORM	★★★	★★★	★★★
Personal telephone contact	★★	★★	★
In person meeting	★	★	★
Written correspondence, mail out	★★★	★★	★
Fact sheets, brochure	★	★	★
Notice/advert in paper	★★★	★★	
Media release	★★★	★	
Site display	★	★	★
Displays/information at community meeting spaces (e.g. Shopping Centres)	★★	★★	★
Information sessions/briefings	★★★	★★	★
Social media	★★	★★	★
Email – community contacts	★★	★★	★
Website – information/updates	★★★	★★★	★★★
Banners/posters/signs	★★	★★	★
CONSULT	★★★	★★★	★★
Suggestion box		★	★
Telephone survey	★★	★★	★
Written survey	★★	★★	★
Hotline/phone-in	★	★	★
Written submission	★★★	★★	★
Public exhibition	★★★	★	
Intercept interviews	★★	★★	
World café	★★	★★	
Public meetings	★	★	
Feedback form	★★	★★	★★
Social media	★★	★★	★
Online discussion forum	★★	★★	

Level of participation & method/tool	Level of impact		
	Level 3 (high)	Level 2 (medium)	Level 1 (low)
INVOLVE	★★★	★★★	
Meetings with key stakeholders	★★★	★★★	★
Meetings with other target community groups, e.g. parents, youth, aged, disabled, various CaLD groups	★★	★★	★
Workshop sessions	★★	★★	
Site tour/meeting	★★	★★	
Public Art session	★	★	
Community forum/debate	★	★	
Community reference groups	★	★	
Deliberative polling	★	★	
COLLABORATE	★★	★	
Community summit	★		
Expert reference groups	★★		
Community reference groups	★★	★	
Joint Advisory Committees	★★	★	
EMPOWER			
Citizens Jury	★		
Ballot	★		

Step 7: Reporting and Feedback

Providing feedback and reporting to the community is essential to ensure ongoing engagement with the project and with future projects.

When developing your engagement plan, identify at which points throughout the project you will be providing feedback or reporting on progress.

In order to maintain engagement, and create confidence in that feedback is being considered, community engagement session should recorded and minutes or notes made available to participants within 10 business days. This will help ensure ongoing interest and allow participants to provide you with any feedback or corrections about what has been recorded.

It is important to remember to maintain privacy and confidentiality in all reporting and feedback provided. Participant names and identifying information should be removed unless you have the written consent of each individual to publish or release their personal information.

To assist with providing feedback the following steps should be undertaken:

- Offer to capture contact details of all stakeholders and community members who would like to be involved or participate in an engagement process.
- Ensure that contact details are kept up to date throughout the project.
- Detail how and when each stakeholder group will receive feedback during the project and after completion.
- Ensure that feedback is accessible to all stakeholders.
- Keep contacts informed of key project stages and send details of any relevant upcoming engagement activities or details of Council reports for comment.
- Ensure the privacy and confidentiality of individuals is maintained at all times.

When reporting on the final outcomes of the project:
- Define how the final outcomes will be documented and circulated.
- Provide feedback to participants on how their information was considered in the development of the final outcomes.
- Where appropriate, ensure project outcomes are reported on Council's website and through other mediums.

Step 8: Evaluation and monitoring

Evaluation and monitoring is an important part of improving community engagement processes and should be encouraged throughout the project.

For all major projects, or those identified as having a Level 3 or Level 2 (where relevant) impact, a summary evaluation should be prepared on the community engagement undertaken. This summary should include information concerning the project, the community engagement process and the key outcomes.

Undertaking this evaluation will help the organisation better improve its community engagement processes, celebrate success and learn from past experiences. The summary evaluation should also be made accessible to the community, particularly those who participated in the community engagement activities, via Council's website and other mediums as appropriate.

When developing your evaluation, the following participant questions may assist:

- How would you rate the quality of the project information you received?
- How would you rate the facilitation of the session?
- Participants were provided with adequate information and resources to participate in a meaningful way
- The session was conducted in an open and transparent manner
- The session provided me with sufficient opportunity to contribute my views
- A variety of views, opinions and needs were heard and discussed
- The decision making process for this project has been fair and appropriate
- There's been a high level of trust between the community and Council on the project
-

The Community Engagement Officer or Corporate Communication department will be able to provide further assistance in developing evaluations for community engagement activities.

Key Protocols when Conducting Community Engagement

There are a number of Council policies and recommended protocols that need to be considered or adhered to when conducing community engagement activities.

Media Releases

- Media Releases are to be approved and distributed by the Corporate Communication department.

Brochures, fact sheets and leaflets

- All brochures and leaflets must be provided to the Corporate Communication department for approval against branding and content prior to distribution.
- Final copies of brochures and leaflets must be recorded on ECM, and copies should be forwarded to Customer Services to assist with any customer enquiries.

Community surveys

- Community surveys are required to be approved by the Community Engagement Officer or Corporate Communication department prior to distribution.
- Community surveys that relate to the whole of the Town or are of a sensitive nature should be endorsed by the relevant Director, and or CEO.
- Customer Services should be advised of the distribution of community surveys, with instructions on how to respond to any enquiries, including validation of telephone surveys (excluding minor customer satisfaction surveys).
- Elected Members should be provided with a copy of community surveys being distributed in the Town prior to distribution (excluding minor customer satisfaction surveys).

Community meetings (public meetings, information sessions, workshops etc.)

- Community meetings must be approved by the relevant Director and or CEO.
- The Community Engagement Register should be checked when arranging meetings to avoid clashes with other events.
- Customer Services should be advised of any community meetings that involve broad community participation, with instructions on how to respond to any enquiries, including validation of telephone surveys.
- Elected Members should be made aware of all community meetings that involve broad community participation.
- A summary of meeting notes should be provided to all participants within 10 working days of attending the event.

Written correspondence

- All correspondence received by Council should be responded to as per the Town's Customer Charter.
- Correspondence that makes a decision or financial commitment on behalf of Council must be endorsed and signed by the appropriate delegated Officer.

Social media and e-Engagement

The rise in popularity and proven effectiveness of social media as a powerful tool in communicating

to the wider public has resulted in the Town utilising several social media channels i.e. Facebook, Twitter.

Responsibility for the management of the Town's social media channels is the Corporate Communication department. The key use of the Town's social media channels are to communicate to 'friends' or "followers" to:

- Promote and market council events, projects and programs
- Provide news updates on significant ongoing projects

There are a number of opportunities for engaging with the community using online platforms. Online engagement opportunities include:

The Town's website offers dedicated project webpages e.g. Bold Park Aquatic Centre Redevelopment, Wembley Golf Course Redevelopment, Wembley Sports Park Pavilion.

The Town's website utilises online questionnaires/surveys and analysis e.g. the product Survey Monkey.

There are a number of other specific external online web based applications which could be purchased by the Town for engagement which includes functionality for discussion forums, quick polls, Q&A sections and brainstorming.

The Community Engagement Office will be responsible for the evaluation, recommendation and implementation of Community Engagement online web based e-Engagement tools.

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- Sunshine Coast Council Community Engagement Framework. (sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au)