



Sunshine Coast Council
Community Engagement:
Excellence in Engagement Framework
2021



Sunshine Coast
COUNCIL

Our region.
Healthy. Smart. Creative.



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Sunshine Coast Council would like to acknowledge a number of individuals and groups who have contributed their thoughts, ideas and aspirations to the development of the Community Engagement Framework:

- Residents of the Sunshine Coast region who have participated and contributed to the engagement activities supporting this development.
- All council staff who contributed their time and expertise to the development of the Framework.
- International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) as a best practice framework for community engagement practice. Council acknowledges that the IAP2 Quality Assurance Standard for Community and Stakeholder Engagement, IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation and the IAP2 Australasia Community Engagement Model, underpins this document and Council commits to striving towards this internationally recognised standard.
- Engagement Plus Pty Ltd for developing the Framework on the basis of these contributions.

First Nations Acknowledgement

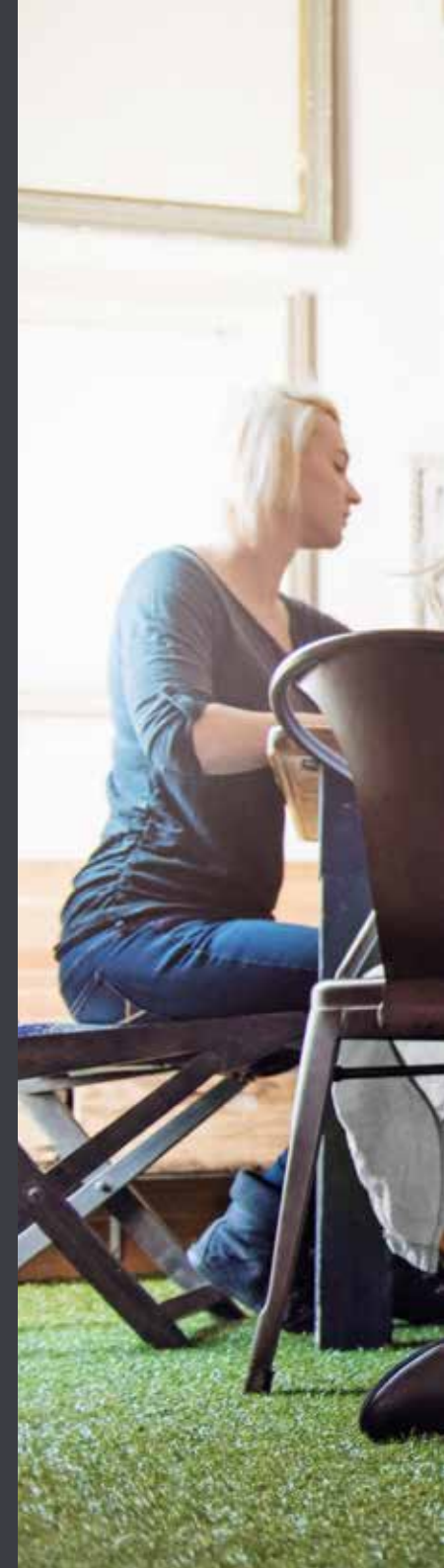
Sunshine Coast Council acknowledges the Sunshine Coast Country, home of the Kabi Kabi and the Jinibara peoples, the Traditional Custodians, whose lands and waters we all now share.

We recognise that these have always been places of cultural, spiritual, social and economic significance. The Traditional Custodians' unique values, and ancient and enduring cultures, deepen and enrich the life of our community.

We commit to working in partnership with the Traditional Custodians and the broader First Nations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) community to support self-determination through economic and community development.

We wish to pay respect to their Elders – past, present and emerging, and acknowledge the important role First Nations people continue to play within the Sunshine Coast community.

Together, we are all stronger.









Message from the Chief Executive Officer, Emma Thomas

The Sunshine Coast is a great place to live, learn, visit and work. Our goal is to work in partnership with the community to co-create a region that is inclusive, connected and where opportunities are available for all. As articulated within the Sunshine Coast Community Strategy 2019-2041, we are committed to the vision of: Together we thrive.

Involving our community in council's decision-making processes is a fundamental step to achieving this vision. This Community Engagement Framework has been developed to set out a clear and effective approach to engaging with our community on matters which are important to us all, and to our region.

During the extensive community engagement program that informed the Community Strategy, the community told us they wanted council to be more visible in our community, and provide a diversity of ways to engage that enables people to influence matters that impact them. This demand for genuine community engagement has been a key contributing factor to council's renewed Community Engagement Framework.

This Community Engagement Framework sets out council's commitment to undertake engagement that is authentic, meaningful and fit for purpose. It will provide our community with genuine opportunities to have a say on matters and issues which are important to them.

Importantly, this Framework will see our organisation embrace the opportunity to be leaders in best practice community engagement. Our engagement initiatives will be premised on integrity, providing a consistent and transparent approach for how council designs and delivers its community engagement.

I look forward to seeing the Community Engagement Framework in action, and the conversations which will take place as a result. Most of all, I look forward to seeing a strengthening of the partnership between council and our community, and the contribution toward council's vision of being *Australia's most sustainable region: Healthy, Smart, Creative* by fostering a strong Sunshine Coast community.

Emma Thomas
Chief Executive Officer





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Our commitment to best practice engagement

Council recognises that the Sunshine Coast has a rich diversity within its local communities and that effective and appropriate community engagement is essential in making better informed decisions which are responsive to community needs.

What is community engagement?

The term 'community engagement' refers to any process that invites the community to contribute to decision-making and uses community input to assist in producing better informed decisions, more responsive services and enhanced outcomes. Supported through an active process of ongoing communication with our community, the sharing of information underpins all community engagement activities.

IAP2 has developed a standardised process to formally assess the quality of an engagement practice which impacts on critical decision making and the consequential implementation of those decisions. The IAP2 Quality Assurance Standard for Community and Stakeholder Engagement (the IAP2 Quality Standard) sets out a quality process by which engagement projects can be assessed. It is therefore important that practitioners are familiar with IAP2's descriptions for 'quality'.

A standard for quality engagement

A standard for quality engagement practice sets out an expectation for the quality of engagement projects and processes. A standard can assure the quality of engagement and can also be used to audit engagement practices. A Quality Framework based upon the IAP2 Quality Assurance Standard for Community and Stakeholder Engagement (the IAP2 Quality Standard) is explained later in this document.

Our community

The term 'community' refers to Sunshine Coast Council residents, ratepayers, and other users of council's services and assets, as well as key agencies and stakeholders holding a vested interest.

Council strives to promote equality of opportunity, to create an environment for all people to have their say and be heard, and to address barriers to participation. A range of communication channels and tools are used to encourage participation by the community. In addition to traditional channels, wherever possible, new and innovative ways of engaging and collaborating with the community are explored to attract wider interest, feedback and input.

It is recognised that every strategy, plan, project, service or program that the community is consulted on will have its own unique characteristics and requires a considered and tailored approach. It is not appropriate to engage the community on all matters, nor does the practice of engaging replace council's responsibility for decision-making. Where community engagement is incorporated into the decision-making process for a project's development and/or delivery, council will engage with the community in a manner and at a level that is appropriate to the subject being considered, and with an approach that is transparent and inclusive.

In council's efforts to achieve its vision of becoming *Australia's most sustainable region – Healthy. Smart. Creative*, effective community engagement plays a key role in establishing the relationships and outcomes required to collectively build this positive future for the region.

Guiding Principles

Council is committed to advancing a culture of excellence that drives genuine, inclusive and transparent community engagement activities and outcomes. It is recognised that the planning, execution and evaluation of community engagement activities must be deliberately focussed and tailored towards the purpose and desired outcomes of individual projects. Thus, council's approach to community engagement will concentrate on a principle-based model, where engagement is:

Inclusive	<p>Opportunities are available for all to have their say on issues that affect them, regardless of age, gender, culture, language, ability, income, location or education.</p> <p>Barriers to participation are reduced through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing information and feedback tools in a range of different formats and using plain English • proactively supporting and encouraging typically 'hard to reach' and disengaged communities to participate in decision-making • creating respectful and safe environments for people to have their say.
Innovative	<p>Innovative technologies and approaches to engaging with the community are explored and utilised to complement and augment traditional engagement methods, to attract wider interest, participation and broader community views.</p> <p>Where appropriate, opportunities for ongoing dialogue with the community are used including the use of instantaneous feedback tools that seek real-time opinions and responses.</p> <p>Council is proactive in taking matters to the people and engaging the community in everyday environments.</p>
Well-planned	<p>Proactive and coordinated planning of community engagement activities ensures that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the community are engaged in a timely manner, reflective of subject matter lifecycles • approaches to engagement are tailored to meet specific project and community needs • timely and effective outcomes are achieved. <p>All community engagement activities are evaluated for their effectiveness, with learnings from each experience used and shared to improve approaches to future engagement initiatives.</p> <p>Council prioritises training and development offerings to build broad capability and facilitate continuous learning in community engagement practice.</p>
Collaborative	<p>Collaboration and partnerships with educational institutions, government stakeholders, service providers, community organisations, local businesses and the community are explored and initiated, where appropriate, to assist in influencing enhanced community engagement outcomes for the region.</p> <p>Council employees value the knowledge base of their fellow colleagues and proactively draw from these influences to generate new ideas and approaches.</p> <p>Community engagement experiences and resources are promoted and shared to facilitate ongoing learning and improvement in community engagement administration, application and evaluation.</p>
Transparent	<p>Community engagement initiatives are open and clear, providing the community with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a well-defined purpose • details of any project constraints • an understanding of the level of influence to inform decision-making, and • the objectives or outcomes that are being sought. <p>Council will carefully consider and accurately represent the community's role and scope for influence in the decision-making process and reflect how community input has influenced decisions or outcomes.</p>



Roles and Responsibilities

Council led engagement

Council's Executive Leadership Team and/or broader management team will decide the strategic and operational issues on which council will engage the community. Typically, these issues will be linked to an identified Corporate Plan priority, a significant emerging regional or divisional issue, or any other council planning or operational matter, and considering relevant legislated requirements. At all times, council will ensure its engagement activities do not conflict with statutory obligations.

Community led engagement

Council also acknowledges that residents and groups will initiate engagement processes in order to address issues and opportunities in their communities and at times they may advocate to council to undertake some action on these matters. In such instances, council will consider its role in relation to the matter and council may also engage with the community to determine a future direction.

In either situation there are different roles that Councillors and employees will have in the engagement processes:

Councillors	...have responsibility for engaging with their communities and within their designated portfolio areas as part of their core function. They also have a role in being an advocate for more formalised community engagement activities. Generally, Councillors may be involved in coordinated engagement activities that either impact on their division, portfolio or are of a strategic nature or are at a significant project or regional level.
Executive Leadership Team and council's broader management team	...act as the key advocates in promoting and advancing the organisation's philosophy, coordination and commitment to a culture of excellence in engagement, and are responsible for approving community engagement projects.
Council employees	...have responsibility for planning and delivering community engagement activities on agreed projects and activities.
Community Planning and Development Branch	...is responsible for the core functions of guiding, coordinating and building capacity in community engagement processes and best practice outcomes, acting as a key advisor for the organisation's community engagement planning and operations.
Communication Branch	...is responsible for corporate communications and supporting community engagement related activities for the organisation, including graphic design and campaigns.

Context of Engagement

The *Local Government Act 2009* requires council to uphold the principle of ‘democratic representation, social inclusion and meaningful community engagement’. To facilitate this outcome, council is committed to engendering and embedding a culture of excellence in where community engagement is prioritised and central to how the organisation conducts its business. This is achieved by delivering community engagement that is meaningful, fit-for-purpose and which is inclusive, innovative, well-planned, collaborative and transparent.

It is generally the responsibility of project managers, in liaison with and upon approval by their relevant Manager and/or Group Executive, to determine if community engagement is essential, desirable or unnecessary for any decision or project, and recommend to council as may be appropriate. For example, where community engagement is deemed essential or desirable, the level of community participation in the decision-making and the engagement method used will be determined by the project manager and Manager and/or Group Executive based on the level of impact, time and resources available for each engagement process. Where the community has little or no influence on a decision or outcome, council may only inform the community of the decision or action undertaken.

Community engagement is most likely to take place when:

- the views of individuals or groups within our community will provide further information valuable to the planning, solution or decision
- the issue will significantly affect existing levels of service
- the issue is complex or controversial
- the issue will have long term impact on the community or part of the community, or
- when it is a legislative requirement.

Mandatory engagement

The Local Government Act, the Planning Act, Queensland Cultural Heritage Acts, Commonwealth Native Title Act and the Queensland Health Act, and other legislation, sets minimum requirements for engagement on a range of matters.

Each of these requires consideration on an individual basis and based on the circumstances and subject matter involved. In some instances, council will go above and beyond the minimum requirements to gain a strong understanding of our community's desires to ensure we are achieving the best possible outcome for the community.

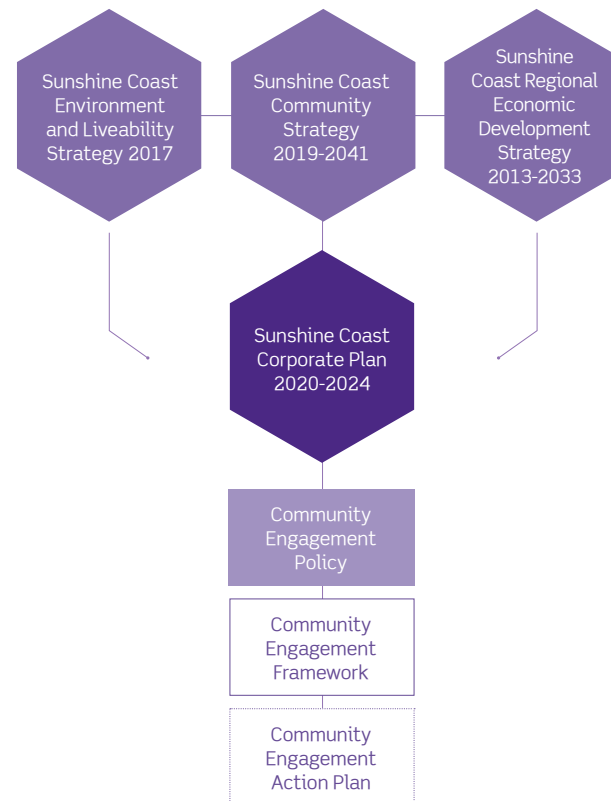
Limitations to engagement

While we look to engage our community when and where appropriate – there are times when engagement will be limited, and council may only inform the community of our decisions and actions. This will occur in situations when:

- Public health and safety are at risk
- Council is responding to an emergency
- An immediate resolution is required
- An initiative involves confidential or commercial information
- Developing or reviewing internal operational policies.

Governance context

Community engagement better enables council to achieve its strategic objectives through the many functional areas across council. For this reason, the Community Engagement Framework and associated Policy is linked to a number of other strategic plans for council. The following diagram illustrates the strategic and governance context.



Engagement Framework

The Sunshine Coast Council Community Engagement Framework (the Framework) comprises five stages:

- 1 Establish the intent
- 2 Explore the focus
- 3 Build the plan
- 4 Implement and monitor
- 5 Report and evaluate

The Framework is based on a foundation of the underlying values and each stage has a series of steps to guide best practice. Figure 2 gives an illustration of the Community Engagement Framework.

Each stage of the Framework has a series of steps to guide best practice and the cyclic nature of the illustration reinforces that the planning and implementing of engagement can be ongoing as projects or initiatives go through a series of iterations.

An overview of each of the steps is outlined in Table 1 and explained in detail in the next section.

Figure 1: Community Engagement Framework: Strategic context



Figure 2: Sunshine Coast Community Engagement Framework

Table 1: Key Steps of the Community Engagement Framework

Stage	Key Steps
1. ESTABLISH THE INTENT Deciding to engage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the background and context Deciding to engage Clarify the scope of the work (negotiables and non-negotiables)
2. EXPLORE THE FOCUS Determining who to engage with and why	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine the overall purpose and goals of engagement Understand who to engage with Explore the roles of the stakeholders and their level of influence
3. BUILD THE PLAN Developing your engagement plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose how to engage and communicate Confirm resources and roles of those involved Obtain relevant approvals for the Plan
4. IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR Delivering your engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting the stakeholders and community ready Starting the engagement Monitor the progress
5. REPORT AND EVALUATE Closing the loop and learning from the engagement experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on outcomes Evaluate the engagement process and outcomes



Image: Balance Photography

Engagement Practice

Stage 1: Establish the Intent

1 Understand the background and context

This first but vital step considers:

- the background to the project
- who holds experience and knowledge of context
- the issues and opportunities
- how important the project is to council
- what legal requirements may exist to consult
- what has been talked about so far
- what the community knows about the project already, and
- a sense of what the sentiment towards the project or issue might be.

Understanding the background and content also considers current trends, the political context and also the cultural context in which the project or issue sits, being mindful of relevant and differing 'world views' that may exist.

Involving a number of internal stakeholders and key external stakeholders to understand the background and to help explore the context is important and provides a comprehensive approach.

2 Deciding to engage

This step helps to determine if there is a need to engage and assists in helping to be more targeted with the engagement effort. Not all projects, issues and opportunities need a detailed engagement process. Some can be managed by a good communication campaign at an information level. The checklist on the following pages helps to assess whether there is a requirement or value in undertaking an engagement campaign. If the assessment is not to engage then suitable key messages will be necessary to support this outcome.

Do I need to consult?

Complete these simple questions to determine if you need to consult or not!

Start by answering the questions in Column One.

Check your score in Column Two to understand your level of consultation.

Then consider the matrix in Column Three.

This checklist is also detailed at Appendix 1.

Column one		Yes	No
Q1	Is there a statutory (legal) requirement to consult?		
Q2	Will the community's involvement in the project/program contribute to (inform/direct/influence/affect), and/or enhance, the decision to be made or outcome to be achieved?		
Q3	Will the community benefit from being involved in the project/program (education, improved relations, community building and partnerships)?		

If you responded YES to any of the above 3 questions, please proceed to the questions below.
If you responded NO to all of the questions, proceed to implement the project and prepare a communications plan.

Rate your response to each question and total	
Low= 1, Medium= 2, Medium/High = 3/ 4, High= 5	
Q4	What level of influence/impact can community involvement have on the outcome/decision to be made?
Q5	How would you rate the need for additional information required on the following issues to inform the outcome/decision?
	• Community values, attitudes and aspirations?
	• Community profile and demographics?
Q6	How would you rate the risk to Council if the community does not get involved from the following aspects?
	• Social
	• Environmental
	• Economic
Q7	How would you rate the potential financial impact of this project/program on the overall Council financial operations? (Consider the scale and longevity of the project)
Q8	How would you rate the current or anticipated level of community interest on the project/program?
Q9	In relation to community building and relationship development, how would you rate the potential of involving the community on the issues/project?
Q10	From a city-wide perspective, how do you rate the project's impact on the community's future and that of future generations?
Q11	How do you rate the level of impact of the project/program at a neighbourhood level?
Q12	If Council did not involve the community in the project/program, what level of negative response would you perceive from the community?
Q13	How would you rate the complexity and breadth of the consultation purpose, simple (low), complex (high)?
COLUMN 1 – TOTAL SCORE. Now go to column two	

Column two: Consultation spectrum

Total from column one indicates the level of consultation on the spectrum (range) of consultation				
13-20	21-35	36-49	50-59	60-65
Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Council's Goal				
To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives, opportunities and or solutions	To obtain public feedback on relevant issues, alternatives and or decisions to be made.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Council's Promise to the Community				
Council will keep the public informed	Council will keep the public informed, listen to and acknowledge their concerns and aspirations	Council will work with the public to ensure that their concerns and aspirations / ideas are reflected in the alternatives developed.	Council will look to the public for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate their advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	Council will implement what the public decide.
Council maintains decision making			Public can help or make the decision	

Now go to column three

Column three: Involvement indicator

Level of Consultation	Empower			
	65	Advisory committees E-voting	Taskforce reference groups	Citizen juries Referendum voting
	60			
	Collaborate			
	59	Focus groups Planning groups	Workshops/ planning Telephone survey	Deliberative panels Forums Debate
	50			
	Involve			
	49	Web discussion Surveys	Workshops Project teams Committees	Festival submissions Random telephone (sample)
	36			
	Consult			
	35	Displays Feedback sheets	Survey/ feedback Ideas Day Competitions	Forums Focus groups Meetings
	21			
	Inform (<i>Consultation not recommended</i>)			
	20	Social media Media release Flyers	Info sessions Website	E-newsletters Letterbox drop Public Notice
	13			
Limited			Well resourced	
Level of resources				

3 Clarify the scope of the work

This step helps to clarify the specifics of the project, issue or opportunity, and any parameters that need to be considered such as minimum legislative requirements or industry standards. When council is leading the engagement, this step helps to separate out those aspects that are negotiable from those that are non-negotiable. It helps determine the focus of the project, issue or opportunity that will become the focus of the engagement.

Where the engagement is being led by the community, this step is needed to determine how the focus of the engagement effort is relevant to council's own business and to make a fair assessment of the role for council.

Projects or issues and opportunities will have their own stages of workflow that will guide the engagement sequence, or the logical order in which the engagement activities might flow. It will be important to have established criteria to assess options that are explored and support an effective decision-making process. Similarly, it will be useful to have some understanding of the expectations of the decision makers when planning the engagement process.

Some considerations include:

- Clarify the roles of the different decision makers involved in the matter, and when and how they will make decisions
- Consider if there are other external decision makers involved (e.g. State government)
- Clarify legislative requirements for consultation
- Clarify the perspectives and expectations of internal stakeholders, decision makers, and key external stakeholders.

Finally, this step should also include the development of a scoping statement that articulates the essence of the project or work piece and helps frame what the community and stakeholders are contributing to. Scoping statements are used whenever the project or work piece is referenced or written about. They appear in most of the communication collateral that are used and provide a clear focus on the breadth and scale of the engagement.





Some examples of scoping statements include:

‘To review the Regional Planning Scheme in line with the State Planning Policy by December 2019.’

‘To develop a safe swimming option for the Northern Beach area within the next 18 months.’



Stage 2: Explore the focus

4 Determine the purpose and goals of engagement

This step focuses on describing what we are trying to achieve by the involvement of the stakeholders and the broader community in the delivery of the project or the making of the decision. It offers the rationale of how the engagement of the stakeholders specifically relates to the project or decision in an integrated way.

Scope	Focuses on clarity of the project or work to be done
Purpose	Focuses on why you would involve stakeholders and community in contributing to the project or work piece.

Table 2: Samples of engagement purposes

The table below sets out some examples of purposes of engagement:

Purposes of engagement	Tick those that apply
Inform the community about the project and processes to engage	
Meet legal obligations to engage the community	
Understand the reactions and implications of a proposition	
Generate some options and new ideas in relation to a problem or opportunity	
Develop or renew a policy, strategy or plan	
Build community capacity	
Encourage behaviour change or compliance	
Develop a social licence to operate	
Develop community resilience	

The engagement purpose is an important reference when planning and implementing the evaluation activities.

5 Understand who to engage with

This step explores the appropriate and relevant stakeholders who should be involved in the engagement process. Stakeholders refer to any person or group of

persons who have or feel they have an interest or can affect or be affected by an issue or a decision.

Identification of key stakeholders is vital to the success of the project and can involve members of the community (external stakeholders) and employees and Councillors (internal stakeholders).

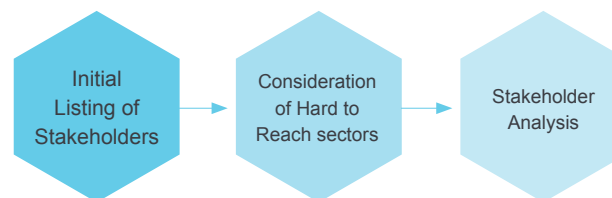
Below is a guide to some of the stakeholder groups in the Sunshine Coast that you may consider for your community engagement process depending on the issue being considered.

- Ratepayers
- Geographic communities
- First Nations Traditional Custodian Groups
- First Nations communities
- Business community
- Culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- Faith groups
- Service providers
- Sports clubs
- Community/social groups
- Environmental groups
- Other government agencies
- Elected representatives
- Council employees
- Special interest groups
- Council's statutory and advisory committees
- User groups
- Reference groups
- Aged based groups
- Peak bodies and industry groups
- Media
- Educational institutions (e.g. University of the Sunshine Coast, TAFE Queensland)

A checklist to prompt the identification of internal and external stakeholders has been developed (see Appendix 3) and also a checklist for identifying potential barriers for people who may be harder to reach has been developed (see Appendix 4).

Once identified then consideration needs to be given to those stakeholders who may be hard to reach or not heard from frequently (see the Appendices for specific guidance on special interest groups). A form of analysis of the stakeholders is then important to understand the roles that the stakeholders may have in the engagement.

The Sunshine Coast is made up of diverse stakeholders with varying levels of interest, influence, power or impact relative to any issue. The level of influence/interest of a stakeholder group should be a consideration in shaping their level of participation in the engagement process, timing of engagement and the methodology for the engagement.



6 Explore the roles of the stakeholders and their level of influence

The previous five steps help to shape what is appropriate in terms of the community and stakeholder's role in relation to the project or work piece and how much influence they will have on the outcome. The promise council is making during the engagement process needs to be clear, as this will be a determinant factor in the community's satisfaction with the process, as well as the outcomes of the engagement.

The IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation (the Spectrum) depicts the five levels of increasing influence that the public can have on an outcome or decision, the obligations of the organisation undertaking the consultation and the potential role of the public in the engagement process. It is important to note that the Inform level of participation runs in parallel and underpins all levels of engagement.

The Spectrum is a tool to help determine the role of the community and stakeholders in the engagement processes, however some important points are:

- Different stakeholders may have different levels of influence, depending on their level of interest and impact of the project or work piece, and
- Different levels of influence can be attributed to the different stages of the project method or workflow.

Table 3: IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation (adapted)

Increasing Levels of Public Participation	Keeping the stakeholders and community INFORMED – To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	Level of Engagement	Public Participation Goal	Council's Promise	Role of community
		Consult	To obtain feedback on analysis, alternatives and/ or decisions.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. We will seek your feedback on drafts and proposals.	Contribute Provide feedback
		Involve	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	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.	Actively participate
		Collaborate	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	We will work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	Partner
		Empower	To place the final decision making in the hands of the public.	We will implement what you decide.	Decide



Image: Balance Photography



Stage 3: Build the plan

7 Choose how to engage and communicate

This step enables you to identify and develop the appropriate methods to engage the community and stakeholders. Choosing the appropriate methods enables council to be inclusive, transparent and responsive while allowing us to fulfill the engagement goals.

There are a vast array of engagement methods available. A sample of some of these is available in the Engagement Methods Matrix (see Appendix 5), however deciding what methods to use for your engagement will be shaped by the following factors from the earlier steps:

Table 4: Implications of planning steps to guide method selection

Planning step	Implications for method selection
Understand the background and context	What is the engagement context? Does the following exist: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legal requirement for certain methods• Low trust• Low interest• High complexity• Tight timeframes• A need for new solutions• Hard to reach audiences• High emotion or outrage• Strong political interest or involvement• A need to understand the community better
Clarifying the scope of the work	Are there certain methods that are more likely to suit the focus of the work? For instance, deliberative processes are useful when there is complex information to consider and diverse views.
Understand who to engage with	What methods are accessible for the target audiences? Is there a need for broad community involvement or smaller scale engagement? Are methods needed to explore strong and diverse views about the topic?
Determine the overall purpose and goals of engagement	What methods will meet our engagement goals? If the purpose is to generate options and new ideas, what methods will help create new thinking?
Explore the roles of stakeholders and their level of influence	What methods suit the level of influence on the Spectrum?

Adapted from the IAP2 Australasia Design, Plan, Manage model.

Once possible engagement methods are selected, the sequencing of the methods is considered against the project stages or workflow, with some methods being run throughout the process and others occurring at certain stages.

8 Confirm resources and roles of those involved

This step is about assessing and harnessing the resources needed to implement the engagement plan. The following table details the key factors to be considered.

Table 5: Resourcing the engagement

Time	Cost
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What timeframes are critical for the project delivery or work piece? • What time is available for the engagement? Consider time for approvals, minor setbacks and what else is happening in the community and council. • Allow time for activation of the engagement, encourage participation, disseminate information and allow the community to make a considered response. • Are there timeframes stipulated in relevant legislation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What budget has been allocated for the engagement? • Does council have the necessary resources to implement the engagement? • Are there potential partners to assist with the implementation of the engagement? • Consider the number of persons and skill level required to implement the engagement
Goals	Quality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the targets for levels of participation? • What are the critical success factors for the engagement? • How significant is the project or workpiece to the council, the stakeholders or partners? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does council have the capability to implement and manage the engagement? • Will the planned engagement activities meet the engagement goals? • Will the chosen methods suit the level of interest of the stakeholders and communities?

Project team roles and responsibilities

As part of planning the engagement:

- Identify the council employees involved – whether as a member of the project team or as important stakeholders
- Allocate roles and responsibilities
- Brief team members and ensure roles and responsibilities are explicit and agreed to
- Clarify lines of communication, reporting and approval within and for the project team
- For more complex projects consider mapping the project structure and approval processes and identifying all decision makers and their responsibilities
- Establish ongoing monitoring, meetings and reviewing with the team and relevant staff.

9 Obtain approval for the plan

This step enables you to bring together all the important components of the engagement planning to seek endorsement and commitment from relevant decision makers (which may include external government agencies). The information gathered in steps one to eight of the Framework are what you need to prepare the Community Engagement Plan (the Plan), provided at Appendix 2. Depending on the scale and complexity of the project and the engagement, the Plan can be modified to suit these different contexts.

The Plan is to be signed off by the relevant manager and/or Group Executive, or CEO (where required) prior to the commencement of the community engagement process.





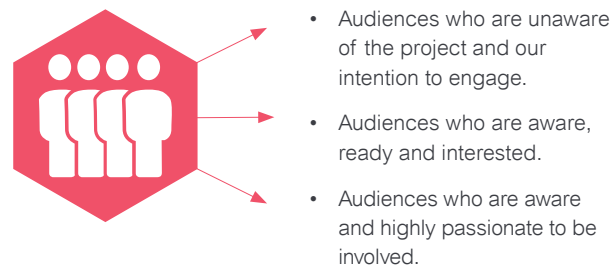
Stage 4: Implement and monitor

10 Getting the stakeholders and community ready

This step focuses on the activation of the engagement or getting your audiences ready to contribute to the engagement process. It involves promoting the engagement activities, disseminating information and encouraging participation so that the community and stakeholders are well primed to provide a considered response.

We need to think about our audiences and what level of awareness that they may have about our project and intention to engage:

Figure 3: Understanding the audience



We also need to think about the legacy of what has been communicated previously and how this has impacted audiences. Misinformation or ill-informed perceptions of the past may need to be remedied in planning the communication messages now and for the future.

Activation efforts can include, but are not limited to:

- Networking
- Advertising – range of media
- Council's publications
- Social media including use of video material
- Council's 'Have your Say' website for accessing information
- Direct mail
- Emails to key project stakeholders
- Yammer
- Internal communications (CEO newsletter)
- Corflute signs near the project location (if appropriate)
- Printed material at libraries, council venues etc.
- Council owned electronic billboards.
- Consult with the Communication Branch to determine the most suitable communication channels to appropriately activate an engagement project.

11 Starting the engagement

This step relates to carrying out the activities contained in the Plan. A standard process of project management and team management is required to oversee the engagement activities. Tracking and reporting on progress of the project and reporting to the project team and decision makers will be necessary throughout the delivery.

The following factors will be important to consider during the implementation of the Plan:

- Use of event and static display checklists – provides an overview of event logistics that will ensure consistent practice of event activity including branding, banners, catering, promotion and VIP procedures
- Relevant workplace, health and safety procedures for working safely in public spaces
- Relevant media management policies if media contact is sought or triggered
- Keeping stakeholders and the community up to date with engagement opportunities
- Keeping decision makers up to date with the engagement implementation.

12 Monitor the progress

This step relates to monitoring the implementation of the Plan and how the community and stakeholders are responding to the engagement opportunities. This is the stage where we focus on the following elements and ask ourselves critical questions:

- The profile of who is participating
 - Are the participants representative of interested/ impacted stakeholders?
 - Who ought to be there and isn't?
 - What additional steps can be taken to obtain their response if necessary?
- Monitoring changes in the context of the project
 - Are there any changes in circumstances about the project?
 - Does this trigger new stakeholders?
- Preliminary feedback from community and stakeholders
 - What themes are emerging and is there any testing of these ideas that need to occur?
 - Are there divergent ideas emerging that may require a different response?

- Is the feedback meeting the objectives of the project or workpiece or do we need to change our approach to get a greater depth?
- What is needed to respond to concerned people?
- Monitoring the budget for the engagement
 - Is the expenditure on track with the planned budget?
 - Are there savings that could be used to bolster the engagement activities?
- Monitoring compliance with legislated requirements
 - Have the required activities been carried out?
 - Is there documentary evidence that these activities have been carried out?

Modifications to the engagement processes need to be recorded so that they can be considered in the evaluation and reporting stages.







Stage 5: Report and evaluate

13 Reporting on outcomes

This step is about managing the data that emerges through the engagement processes and ‘closing the loop’ with the community and stakeholders so that they know how their contribution has informed the project outcomes or decisions made.

Some factors to consider when managing data:

- Keep accurate records of the processed and unprocessed responses in line with council’s information management procedures
- Look out for responses that may be invalid, i.e. incomplete responses, repeat contributors where identifiable
- Pay attention to trends in the data, e.g. what responses are similar and dissimilar?
- What previously unknown information has been provided?
- If you are collecting both qualitative data and quantitative data, consider the sentiment that is emerging, not just the facts and figures
- Consider what systems or platforms are needed to collate and analyse the data, e.g. Excel spreadsheets, Survey Monkey
- What timing and formats are important on reporting outcomes for decision makers and the community and stakeholders?
- Closing the loop with internal stakeholders.

There are a number of reasons for reporting on the outcomes from the engagement and it can be done in a number of different ways. Some of the objectives for reporting on outcomes are:

- To communicate what has been learned from the iterative stages of the engagement process and to encourage further participation as the project progresses
- To communicate how input from the stakeholders and community has been considered in the final outcomes for the project

- To demonstrate transparency of the decision-making process
- To communicate the decision or outcome itself and how this will be implemented for the future

Being thorough with reporting on outcomes and closing the loop with the community and stakeholders helps to build trust.

14 Evaluate the engagement process and outcomes

This step involves the assessment of the performance of the community engagement activities against the specific engagement goals and the overall engagement principles. Evaluation serves the purpose of continuous improvement of council’s community engagement practice.

Evaluation begins with the establishment of success criteria in Step 5 and should consider the context and purpose of the engagement. Evaluation should be commensurate with the extent, and the importance of the engagement task.

An approach to developing evaluation criteria is to consider three types of criteria:

- 1 **Process criteria** – how well the method was designed and implemented
- 2 **Acceptance criteria** – how well the public and stakeholders accepted the process
- 3 **Outcome criteria** – what was achieved

The table below provides some guidance on possible criteria to use in a formal evaluation process:

Table 6: Community engagement evaluation criteria

Types of Evaluation Criteria	Focus	Specific criteria to be measured
Process criteria – how well the community and stakeholders accepted the process?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource allocation Task definition Structured decision-making Cost-effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants have the necessary information, human, material and time resources Participants are clear about the task, the scope, and the output of the method An appropriate process for decision-making is used, and communicated clearly so participants understood how and why a decision was made The method produces valuable data compared to the cost of collection
Acceptance criteria – how well the methods were selected and delivered?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representative Independence Early involvement Influence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The participants are a representative sample of the affected or interested public Independent and unbiased The public is involved as soon as possible The feedback or input impacted on the decision
Outcome Criteria – what was achieved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of the decision Rational goals Sustainability Transparency Relationships Valued 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The decision provides a feasible solution to the community engagement project The method achieves the goals set The decision was sustainable and implementable The process of the method and the decision-making is transparent to the community The process supported positive relationships and acknowledged conflicts and worked through the conflict in a constructive manner Participants felt their contribution was valued

Adapted from the IAP2 Australasia Evaluation Criteria.

The above criteria can be reframed as questions and then used as options within evaluation tools such as feedback forms, post engagement interviews or sentiment registers at events. An Evaluation Planning template has been developed (see Appendix 6).

To report on the overall participation, results, process evaluation and outcomes of the community engagement

activity, a Community Engagement Outcomes Report is provided at Appendix 7.

The IAP2 Quality Standard and the specific standards as set out in the following section is an important reference for establishing evaluation measures.





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Quality Framework

IAP2 has developed a standardised process to formally assess the quality of an engagement practice which impacts on critical decision making and the consequential implementation of those decisions. The IAP2 Quality Assurance Standard for Community and Stakeholder Engagement (the IAP2 Quality Standard) sets out a quality process by which engagement projects can be assessed. It is therefore important that practitioners are familiar with IAP2's descriptions for 'quality.'

Included in the Standard are the IAP2 Core Values. For each Core Value a set of criteria has been developed that describes the industry expectation of quality application. The table in the following pages provides a summary of these descriptions for the level of quality achieved depending on evidence presented.

Quality Assurance Standard (adapted from IAP2's Quality Standard, 2015)

Core Value	Indicators	Level of Quality		Evidence
		Emerging	Exemplary	
1 Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.	Clear problem statement	A problem statement / purpose of engagement has been developed and provided to stakeholders.	A problem statement / purpose of engagement has been developed in collaboration with stakeholders.	Decision making framework developed. Challenges and decisions to be made are published.
	Decision making process clearly communicated.	Decision making process communicated to stakeholders.	Decision making process communicated to stakeholders via with stakeholders preferred communications channel.	Governance structures within the decision-making body are communicated to stakeholders. Communications with stakeholders are recorded.
	Affected stakeholders have been identified.	Affected stakeholders have been identified.	Affected stakeholders have been identified and means of expanding the stakeholder base throughout the process have been considered.	Minutes of meetings are recorded. Etc.
2 Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision.	Appropriate level of engagement has been endorsed by decision maker.	A level of engagement has been identified by the decision maker.	Stakeholders are involved in establishing the level of engagement.	Communications to stakeholders' outline level of influence.
	Level of stakeholder influence clearly communicated to stakeholders.	Stakeholders are informed that their input will influence the decision-making process.	Stakeholders are informed of what aspects of the decision-making process can be influenced and which cannot be influenced.	
3 Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognising and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers.	Understanding of participants values and interests	No demonstrated understanding of stakeholder interests and needs.	Barriers to participation have been identified and efforts made to overcome them.	Techniques aligned to stakeholder interest and level of engagement.
	Engagement techniques identified to support interests and needs.	Demonstrated understanding of stakeholder interests and needs.	Knowledge of stakeholder interests and needs are based on stakeholder input.	Stakeholders engaged to identity values and interests.
4 Public participation seeks out and facilitates the participation of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.	Participation opportunities enable contribution.	Existing resources and networks have been effectively utilised.	Stakeholder input sought for engagement methods. Project sponsor facilitated additional support resources.	Stakeholder participation requirements have been identified. Blocks to participation have been identified and overcome.
	Thorough stakeholder analysis completed.	Initial stakeholder analysis conducted.	Iterative stakeholder analysis conducted.	Stakeholder requirements are revisited through the project.

Quality Assurance Standard (adapted from IAP2's Quality Standard, 2015) continued

Core Value	Indicators	Level of Quality		Evidence
		Emerging	Exemplary	
5 Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.	Dialogue between representatives on the most suitable way of engaging participants.	Reasonable efforts have been made to seek feedback on the potential engagement processes with all stakeholder groups.	Project sponsor has enabled the participants to have a key role in determining the engagement processes and techniques.	Demonstrate how the stakeholders influenced the process for the project.
6 Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.	A balanced set of information has been provided.	Balanced information provided reflecting all sides of the argument relating to the decision to be made.	Expert, objective and independent content has been openly made available to all participants.	The range, quality, format and timing of materials that are made available to inform participants in advance of the engagement process.
	Communication tailored for audiences and channels appropriately identified.	A range of communication channels are offered based on good practice and previous experience.	Stakeholders have been actively engaged to identify appropriate communication channels.	Stakeholders are engaged in shaping the form and content of materials. Records of meetings and correspondence.
7 Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.	Clearly demonstrate how participant input has influenced the process.	All feedback is collated and made freely available to the participants.	Opportunities are provided to explore the feedback in depth, discuss its implications and determine the future steps.	Statement of feedback promised to all participants. Processes identified for feeding back the results to the stakeholders.

Adapted from the IAP2 Quality Assurance Standard for Community and Stakeholder Engagement

References

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Appendices

Contents:

- 1 Deciding to Engage Checklist
- 2 Community Engagement Planner
- 3 Internal/External Stakeholder Checklist
- 4 Hard to Reach Stakeholders/Barriers
- 5 Engagement Methods Matrix
- 6 Evaluation Planning Template
- 7 Community Engagement Outcomes Report





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APPENDIX 1: Deciding to Engage Checklist

Do I need to consult?

Complete these simple questions to determine if you need to consult or not!

Start by answering the questions in Column One.

Check your score in Column Two to understand your level of consultation.

Then consider the matrix in Column Three.

Column one		Yes	No
Q1	Is there a statutory (legal) requirement to consult?		
Q2	Will the community's involvement in the project/program contribute to (inform/direct/influence/affect), and/or enhance, the decision to be made or outcome to be achieved?		
Q3	Will the community benefit from being involved in the project/program (education, improved relations, community building and partnerships)?		
<p>If you responded YES to any of the above 3 questions, please proceed to the questions below. If you responded NO to all of the questions, proceed to implement the project and prepare a communications plan.</p>			
Rate your response to each question and total			
Low= 1, Medium= 2, Medium/High = 3/ 4, High= 5			
Q4	What level of influence/impact can community involvement have on the outcome/decision to be made?		
Q5	How would you rate the need for additional information required on the following issues to inform the outcome/decision?		
	• Community values, attitudes and aspirations?		
	• Community profile and demographics?		
Q6	How would you rate the risk to Council if the community does not get involved from the following aspects?		
	• Social		
	• Environmental		
	• Economic		
Q7	How would you rate the potential financial impact of this project/program on the overall Council financial operations? (Consider the scale and longevity of the project)		
Q8	How would you rate the current or anticipated level of community interest on the project/program?		
Q9	In relation to community building and relationship development, how would you rate the potential of involving the community on the issues/project?		
Q10	From a region-wide perspective, how do you rate the project's impact on the community's future and that of future generations?		
Q11	How do you rate the level of impact of the project/program at a neighbourhood level?		
Q12	If Council did not involve the community in the project/program, what level of negative response would you perceive from the community?		
Q13	How would you rate the complexity and breadth of the consultation purpose, simple (low), complex (high)?		
COLUMN 1 – TOTAL SCORE. Now go to column two			

Column two: Consultation spectrum

Total from column one indicates the level of consultation on the spectrum (range) of consultation				
13-20	21-35	36-49	50-59	60-65
Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Council's Goal				
To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives, opportunities and or solutions	To obtain public feedback on relevant issues, alternatives and or decisions to be made.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Council's Promise to the Community				
Council will keep the public informed	Council will keep the public informed, listen to and acknowledge their concerns and aspirations	Council will work with the public to ensure that their concerns and aspirations / ideas are reflected in the alternatives developed.	Council will look to the public for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate their advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	Council will implement what the public decide.
Council maintains decision making			Public can help or make the decision	

Now go to column three

Column three: Involvement indicator

	Empower			
	65	Advisory committees E-voting	Taskforce reference groups	Citizen juries Referendum voting
	60			
	Collaborate			
	59	Focus groups Planning groups	Workshops/ planning Telephone survey	Deliberative panels Forums Debate
	50			
	Involve			
	49	Web discussion Surveys	Workshops Project teams Committees	Festival submissions Random telephone (sample)
	36			
	Consult			
	35	Displays Feedback sheets	Survey/ feedback Ideas Day Competitions	Forums Focus groups Meetings
	21			
	Inform (<i>Consultation not recommended</i>)			
	20	Social media Media release Flyers	Info sessions Website	E-newsletters Letterbox drop Public Notice
	13			
Limited			Well resourced	
Level of resources				

APPENDIX 2: Community Engagement Planner

Project Name:

Project Sponsor	(Generally, Group Executive)	
Plan developed by		
Project Manager		
Portfolio/Divisional Councillors		
Communication Account manager		
Consultant (if applicable)		
Project timeframe	(Engagement start date to engagement end date)	
Corporate Plan linkage		

STEPS 1-3:

1. Understand the background and context
2. Deciding to engage
3. Clarify the scope of the work (negotiables and non-negotiables)

Project Description: (Give detailed description of the scope of the project, including relevant background. What are the negotiables and non-negotiables? What are the legislated requirements?)

Sample Scoping Statement: This project is about developing a design concept for the cultural precinct. It includes...

Negotiables	Non-negotiables

Legislative Context:

Scoping Statement:

STEP 4:

Determine the overall purpose and goals of engagement

Community Engagement Purpose: (What is your overall aim for engaging stakeholders and community? How will this benefit the project?)

Sample: Our goal is to capture the community's aspirations for how the precinct will be used by all generations into the future. Our goal is to also...

Community Engagement Goals: (What will be needed from stakeholders and community? What might they need from us?)

Sample: To understand operational requirements for each group; To involve key stakeholders in contributing to design considerations

STEP 5:

Understand who to engage with

Decision Makers: (Who are they and what are their expectations from the engagement process?)

Sample: Councillors will approve final design. Group Executive will approve vision, scope, scale and intent for the precinct. Negotiables include...

Issues/and Stakeholders Opportunities: (What are the issues risks and opportunities with this matter? What is the level of impact for the stakeholder groups? – Refer to Appendices 3 and 4)

Issue / Risk / Opportunity	Stakeholder Groups	Impact 1 (Low) – 5 (High)	Risk mitigation strategy/action
Sharing the space with other groups	Arts group, woodcraft guild, VIC.		

Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder Group	Expectations	Adding Value to Project	Communication Needs	Possible Methods
Individuals, sectors or known groups	The stakeholder's role as an organisational group and their role in relation to the project. What expectation does the stakeholder group have of the organisation in relation to participation, information, involvement in the project?	What the stakeholder group can bring to the project that is of benefit.	The level and type of communication requirements of the stakeholder group in relation to the project.	The techniques that could be used to engage the particular stakeholder group.
Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chamber of Commerce Community arts organisations Young people Media 	Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be kept informed on the overall progress of the project. To be involved in providing input on relevant operating issues. 	Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide feedback on operational aspects of the facility. To assist in planning appropriate programs. Assist in providing clarification on issues. 	Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timely updates on progress of project. Targeted input on specific issues. 	Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus group discussions Website updates Council publications Community Newsletters



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STEP 6:

Explore the roles of the stakeholders and their level of influence

Level of Influence: (What is the level or spectrum overall? Are there differences for some stakeholder groups?)

Stakeholder	Participation level
Sample: Onsite businesses	Collaborate Level

STEP 7:**Choose how to engage and communicate**

Key Messages: (What do you want your stakeholders to know and remember?)

Sample: This facility will be for everyone; Council is creating a cultural heart for our town; a place where residents and visitors can relax, learn and create.

Communication Strategies: (Identify key communication methods for delivery of this engagement approach)

Audience	Communication Method	Resources
Historical societies	Newsletter; Briefings	Newsletter content, PowerPoint slide deck; strong visuals

STEP 8:**Confirm resources and roles of those involved**

Project Team: (Give overview of who will be involved)

Project Team Member	Role	Responsibility
Museum Coordinator	Contribute technical knowledge and assist with sourcing funding	Attend project team meetings

STEPS 7-8:

- 7. Choose how to engage and communicate
- 8. Confirm resources and roles of those involved

Action Plan

Stage	Project Actions/ Activities	Community Engagement Objectives Why do you want to involve stakeholders and what can they offer?	Stakeholder groups to be involved	Level of Influence	Engagement Method (Refer Methods Matrix – Appendix 5)	Date of engagement	Evaluation Strategies (Refer Evaluation Planning template – Appendix 6)
Establish scope	Deliver project scope definition workshops	Key stakeholders to identify opportunities, constraints and expectations	Arts groups, wood craft guild	Collaborate	Workshop	01/12/20	Process evaluation

STEP 9:**Obtain relevant approvals for the Plan****Community Engagement Plan Sign Off****Project manager: (Name)**.....
Signature.....
Date**Manager/Group Executive: (Name)**.....
Signature.....
Date

APPENDIX 3: Internal/External Stakeholder Checklist

Who are the INTERNAL stakeholders to involve or be responsible for a role in the engagement process?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> CEO and Executive Office | <input type="checkbox"/> Customer Response |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mayor | <input type="checkbox"/> Arts, Heritage and Libraries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Divisional Councillor | <input type="checkbox"/> Civil Asset Management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Portfolio Councillor | <input type="checkbox"/> Digital and Information Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Planning and Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Parks and Gardens |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication | <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transport and Infrastructure Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Sport and Community Venues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> First Nations Partnerships |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Operations | <input type="checkbox"/> Design and Placemaking Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environment and Sustainability Policy | <input type="checkbox"/> Civic Governance |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other? |

Who are the members of the Project Team associated with this engagement process?

Project Sponsor	Role

Who are the EXTERNAL stakeholders to involve in the engagement process?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> General community | <input type="checkbox"/> State and Federal Government |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community organisations/groups | <input type="checkbox"/> Peak bodies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Existing Advisory Groups | <input type="checkbox"/> Media |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Industry groups | <input type="checkbox"/> Older people |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Private enterprise | <input type="checkbox"/> People from diverse cultural backgrounds |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local business | <input type="checkbox"/> Young people |
| <input type="checkbox"/> People with disability | <input type="checkbox"/> Other? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> First Nations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) people | |



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APPENDIX 4: Hard to Reach Stakeholders/Barriers

Creating Reach

There are many reasons why people do not get involved in engagement activities. We need to ensure that suitable approaches are made to pursue inclusive participation.

The following list provides a snapshot of 'hard to reach' groups and potential barriers to consider when trying to maximise their participation².

'Hard to Reach' Groups	Potential Barriers to Participation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age (children/young people/middle age/older people) • Gender roles – for example, women as primary carers, single parents • Industry and business • Low income or unemployed • Shift workers, commuters or seasonal workers • People who are homeless or transient • First Nations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander), Traditional Custodian Groups and the First Nations community • First Nations people and/or newly arrived refugees who may have experiences of disadvantage or isolation • People with drug and / or alcohol dependency • People affected by mental health issues • People affected by chronic health issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time poor – interested but struggle to find time to participate • Apathy – Why is it relevant to me? • Childcare and elder care responsibilities • Community bullying • Cultural norms or religious customs • Use of technical jargon • Language and cultural barriers • Ineffective communication between Councillors / council employees and community members • Low literacy levels • Physical disability or mobility and access difficulties • Prior experiences of not being listened to • Access to transport • Access to and capability to work with IT

The Community Planning and Development Branch can provide advice on engaging various stakeholder groups in differing ways to overcome some of the barriers identified. They can also advise on special factors that may need to be considered to protect vulnerable groups and to be effective and innovative using non-traditional approaches.

This includes a focus on:

- Young people
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- First Nations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) people
- Older people
- People with a disability.

²LGASA Referring to Victorian LGA report

APPENDIX 5: Engagement Methods Matrix sample (extracted from the IAP2 Australasia Methods Matrix)

Method	Description	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Appreciative Inquiry (AI)	A structured process for decision making that focus on building on strengths ('what works well'), rather than focusing on problems and limitations. In Appreciative Inquiry Summits, participants follow a four-stage process of Discover, Dream, Design, Destiny.			✓	✓	
Card Storming	Participants individually write their ideas, concerns, issues on cards. These are shared in small groups then categorised by the whole group.		✓	✓	✓	
Carousel	A subject matter is split up into a number of sub-topics with each sub-topic set up as a station around a room. Participants work in groups progressing around the stations and then returning to original station to sum up each of the sub-topics.		✓	✓	✓	
Citizens Panel	Large numbers of people who are selected to be representative of the population and be a part of a panel that deliberates on a range of issues over a set period of time. Surveys are distributed during the time to understand community attitudes, feedback, issues and behaviour. Can track changes as well.		✓	✓	✓	✓
Community Education Program	A program to educate the community about a topic, project or proposition. Education campaigns can be designed to raise awareness, generate understanding or support behaviour change.	✓				
Community Reference/ Advisory/ Liaison Groups	A structured group of community or stakeholder representatives the meet regularly and operate under Terms of Reference. Can vary from members providing their own feedback or ideas, to members acting as a conduit between the broader community and organisation.	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Crowd Sourcing	Gathering ideas, services and content, from online users, rather than from staff or suppliers. Crowd sourcing can include asking for solutions to a problem, seeking funding for a project such as a start-up (crowd funding), developing creative content to graphics, or to gather information. Can include a competition or incentive.		✓	✓	✓	
Deliberative Democracy Processes	Deliberative democracy processes are methods where a representative sample of the population, usually chosen through random selection, meet and deliberate over a few days. Participants are members of the wider population rather than representatives of stakeholder groups. Groups aim to make a decision, make a recommendation or find common ground. Includes a range of processes such as citizens juries, and consensus conferences.				✓	

Method	Description	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Focus Group	A small group discussion hosted by a facilitator about a focussed topic. Designed to allow for an open discussion that is guided by a series of questions, but which may follow the flow of participants' discussions.		✓	✓	✓	
Gamification	Development of online or non-digital games which participants play to solve problems and accomplish tasks. Can sometimes include rewards for players. For engagement, can be used to learn, explore a scenario, understand implications of choices, or to understand the implications of choices, or to understand the perspectives of different people. Participants can sometimes take on the role of different characters, including decision makers.	✓	✓	✓		
Hotline-Telephone / Web	Widely publicised telephone or email hotline that and provides one-to-one responses to community questions or complaints.	✓	✓			
Interactive Online Tools	Online software that engages the community in an interactive way. May involve seeking input or feedback, participating in games, entering or sharing data or photos, GPS markers, GIS mapping, uploading of content, or a host of other functions. Designed to shift online users from reading to participating.	✓	✓	✓		
Interviews	One-on-one discussions to explore and understand community or stakeholder needs, perspectives, insights and feedback, and to build relationships.		✓	✓	✓	
Online Discussion Forum	Online forum where invited or self-selected participants contribute to an online discussion about a topic or project for a set period of time. Participants can contribute anonymously, using an avatar or using their true identities.		✓	✓	✓	
Open Space	A method for hosting a meeting, conference or summit which is focused on a particular purpose or topic, but which has no formal agenda set. In the "self-organising" process, participants determine the topics of breakout sessions at the start. Ranges in size from a few to thousands. Participants set the agenda, rather than organisers.		✓	✓	✓	
Opt-in E-panel	Community members opt in to be part of an online engagement panel. Panel members can be called on to participate in engagement projects or questions. Can range from seeking insight, input, feedback or voting. Differs from a citizen in that members self-select.		✓	✓	✓	
Participatory Budgeting	Process where the community works with an organisation through its budgeting process, e.g. setting a whole-of-organisation budgets. Participants should be a representative sample of the community.		✓	✓	✓	✓
Photo Visioning / Photo Voice / Photo Journals.	Community members gather and share photos that represent their ideas or preferences for the future. Can be incorporated into face-to face engagement events, or collected and shared online. GIS platforms can be integrated.		✓	✓	✓	

Method	Description	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Public Displays	Staffed or unstaffed displays of information, options, drafts or final decisions which are made available in a public place.	✓	✓			
Public Meeting	A meeting organised by either the organisation or community with presentations and questions asked by the crowd.	✓	✓			
Social Media-Facebook and Instagram	Most commonly used social networking sites where you can post comments, photos and videos, which can be seen and shared by either friends or the public. Used to reach a broader audience, have online discussions, and monitor and respond to community ideas or concerns.	✓	✓	✓		
Surveys	A series of questions provided to a sample which may be a representative sample or a self-selected sample.		✓	✓	✓	
Visual Aides	Includes a range of visual aide material to help promote and interpret project information e.g. video clips, 3D imagery, LCD displays, Augmented reality/holograms, Virtual reality.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Voting	Voting on a series of options. Need to be clear about the voting procedures; any criteria (eg. Weighted criteria); whether the results of the vote will form a decision, recommendation or insight; and provide enough information to enable informed voting.		✓	✓	✓	✓
Webinars	Online interactive web-based seminar, presentation or workshop. Webinars can include a wide range of features such as live video streaming, live navigating through websites, voting, commenting or Q&As.	✓				
Workshop	A structured method to explore specific, complex issues, and where participants work in small groups.		✓	✓	✓	
World Cafe	A structured process where participants discuss a question or series of questions at a group of small tables. Each table has a host who facilitates the same conversation during a series of "rounds". At the end of each round, participants disperse and move to new tables to continue the discussion. Is designed so participants share ideas, concerns, fears, experiences or feedback with a broad range of people.		✓	✓	✓	

APPENDIX 6: Evaluation Planning Template

Process Criteria – how well the public and stakeholders accepted the process?			
Evaluation Criteria	Success Criteria Indicators	How to Collect Data	Evaluation Tool / Technique
Resource Allocation Participants have the necessary information, human, material and time resources.			
Task Definition Participants are clear about the task, the scope, and the output of the method.			
Structured Decision Making An appropriate process for decision-making is used, and communicated clearly so participants understood how and why a decision is made.			
Cost Effective The method produces valuable data compared to the cost of collection.			

Acceptance Criteria – how well the methods were selected and delivered?			
Evaluation Criteria	Success Criteria Indicators	How to Collect Data	Evaluation Tool / Technique
Representative The participants are a representative sample of the affected or interested public.			
Independence Independent and unbiased.			
Early Involvement The public is involved as soon as value judgements are important.			
Influence The feedback or input impacted on the decision.			
Transparency The process of the method and the decision-making is transparent to the public.			
Relationships The process supported positive relationships and acknowledged conflicts and worked through the conflict in a constructive manner.			
Valued Participants felt their contribution was valued.			

APPENDIX 7: Community Engagement Outcomes Report

Project sponsor	(Generally a Group Executive)	(Contact details)
Plan developed by		
Branch Manager		
Project Manager		
Project Lead	(If different to the Project Manager)	
Portfolio/Divisional Councillors		
Communication Officer		
Consultant/internal partner support		
Project timeframe	(Engagement start date to engagement end date)	

Project team member	Member's role

Corporate Plan Linkages	
A strong community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An inclusive community, with opportunities for everyone Connected, resilient communities, with the capacity to respond to local issues
Service Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular and relevant engagement with our community

1. Participation

Evidence of consideration given to diverse audiences and stakeholders

Engagement method and participants	Reach
e.g. Focus Group including students, multicultural committee, businesses...	52

2. Engagement results

The community engagement results... An overview of findings...

3. Recommendations

The following recommendations can be made...

4. Evaluation of community engagement activities

Provide evidence of multi-modal engagement methods with consideration to levels of interest, participation, and effectiveness

Technique	Evaluation
e.g. Pop up stall	Average numbers, but high-level effectiveness and ability to clarify responses

5. Evaluation of overall process

Include measures highlighting community satisfaction of their involvement in the engagement, and general engagement lessons learnt

Comments about the overall community engagement process as informed by the Process, Acceptance and Outcomes criteria findings developed using Appendix 6 – Evaluation Planning Template.

6. Communicating the outcomes

Consideration on how community input has influenced decision-making and the method/s used to close the feedback loop with stakeholders

Stakeholder group	Method of communication	Timeframe	Communication messages
e.g. Affected Residents	Letterbox drop of printed project update, E-news, Councillor column	Jan- Feb 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How resident input has been considered Draft solutions How to provide further feedback







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