

Community Engagement Framework

We are committed to ensuring we provide clear and objective information and offer opportunities for people to participate in decision making that affects them.

Community engagement principles

Encourage participation in decision making

Be clear about our engagement objectives and how stakeholders can contribute to decision making. Consider the level of interest and complexity of each topic, and use relevant engagement techniques to support participation.

Increase representation in decision making

Consider the timing and range of our engagement activities to maximise opportunities for participation and hear a broad range of views and opinions.

Strategically target key stakeholders to ensure the participation of traditionally underrepresented groups.

Seek new ways to engage our communities

Introduce new engagement techniques where a need has been identified to complement traditional approaches.

Go to places where people feel comfortable, taking time to build relationships and explore how people want to be engaged.

Ensure decision makers consider feedback

Ensure decision makers give consideration to stakeholder opinions, knowledge and expertise alongside other influences.

Close the feedback loop with stakeholders

Recognise the importance of closing the engagement loop and communicate to stakeholders about how their participation contributed to decision making.

The decision-making process

Issue triggers decision-making process

Project is scoped.
Issue is clarified and defined.

Community engagement
approach is developed

Stakeholders are
identified and engaged

Feedback is collated and assessed

Issue is presented to the
decision maker for review

The decision maker makes decision

Stakeholders are advised of decision

Influences on decision making

Existing legislation
and policies

Previous Council decisions

Community Vision 2034
and strategies

Legal or expert advice

Community engagement
outcomes

Environmental, social
and economic context

Research and analysis

Available resources

Decision makers'
local knowledge

Community engagement methods

Inform

Provide information to assist understanding of how decisions will be/were made.

We will inform when:

- a decision is made for legislative, financial environmental, or technical reasons
- there is no opportunity to influence the outcome.

We will explain:

- how the decision was made
- what's going to happen
- impact of the decision
- where further information can be found.

Consult

Obtain feedback on preferences when there are options available.

We will consult when:

- input is required on concepts or designs
- there are several options available
- final decisions are being shaped
- issues and concerns are unclear.

We will ask:

- are there any ideas to improve this?
- which option is preferred?
- what would the impact be?

Active participation

Involve people and work together to understand all needs and concerns.

We will use active participation when:

- we need community knowledge to influence the decision
- there is likely to be a high level of interest
- we need stakeholders to talk with us and each other about complex issues.

We will ask:

- what would people like to see happen?
- what have we not considered or are not aware of?
- how should we proceed with this?

The Community Engagement Framework also includes techniques, tools, templates to support the decision-making process