



Ararat Rural City

# Draft Community Engagement Strategy 2010

Inform

Consult

Involve

Collaborate

Empower



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## 1 The Purpose of the Community Engagement Strategy

Ararat Rural City Councillors and its officers are collectively committed to a long term vision for a vibrant, healthy and sustainable community in which all residents enjoy a good quality of life. It is with this commitment that community engagement becomes an essential part of our decision making.

This strategy was devised to assist the community and Council officers in choosing the most appropriate community engagement process relevant to the issue at hand. The guide is not intended to be a prescriptive “how to” document but rather acknowledges the adaptive nature of any community engagement process. The overall objective for community engagement process is to provide techniques which are designed to involve people, solicit their opinion in the process, planning and decision making of Council.

In some instances a range of techniques and processes may be required to suit particular circumstances. By using more than one technique may (or may not) result in greater participation and representation; it all depends on the circumstances at any given time.

## 2 Understanding Community Engagement

### 2.1 *What is Community Engagement*

Community Engagement has become an essential part of planning, policy development and service delivery and is a recognised method of how Ararat Rural City Council can be responsive to community needs. It is a process of working collaboratively with people to address issues affecting their wellbeing. Community engagement promotes responsible and informed decision making by communicating the needs and interests of participants, the broader community and Council.

### 2.2 *Why a Community Engagement Strategy is important*

This strategy has been developed in recognition of the benefits of Council and the Community working together. The strategy will provide a framework for selecting the most appropriate Community Engagement process relevant to the circumstances and issue.

This will allow Council and the broader community, an understanding of how they can be involved in both large and small projects or policy making in a co-ordinated and meaningful way.


### 2.3 *What are core values about the Community Engagement Process?*

The following values help identify those aspects of public participation which cross all, cultural, and religious boundaries. The purpose of these values is to help make better decisions which reflect the interests and concerns of people and their organisations.

- The public should have a say in decisions about actions that could affect their lives.
- Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will be meaningfully considered in the decision-making processes.
- Public participation promotes responsible and informed decision making by recognising and communicating the needs and interests of all participants within the broader community.
- Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by, or interested in, a decision.
- In significant projects public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.
- Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
- Public participation communicates to the community how their input affected the decision.


## 2.4 Participation Spectrum

Ararat Rural City Council acknowledges many ways to approach Community Engagement, it has adopted the International Association of Public Participation, Australasia - IAP2 Spectrum (below) for its guiding framework as it provides a clear approach and understanding of expectations within the Community Engagement process.



### IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum

Developed by the International Association for Public Participation



INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
Public Participation Goal:	Public Participation Goal:	Public Participation Goal:	Public Participation Goal:	Public Participation 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 analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	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.
Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:
We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	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.	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
Example Techniques to Consider:	Example Techniques to Consider:	Example Techniques to Consider:	Example Techniques to Consider:	Example Techniques to Consider:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Fact sheets</li> <li>● Web Sites</li> <li>● Open houses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Public comment</li> <li>● Focus groups</li> <li>● Surveys</li> <li>● Public meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Workshops</li> <li>● Deliberate polling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Citizen Advisory</li> <li>● Committees</li> <li>● Consensus building</li> <li>● Participatory decision-making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Citizen juries</li> <li>● Ballots</li> <li>● Delegated decisions</li> </ul>

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<sup>1</sup> IAPP – International Association For Public Participation Table . 2004

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### **3 Council actively seeks Community Participation**

#### **3.1 Council's Commitment for Inclusion**

Ararat Rural City Council will encourage all interested parties to be involved in the community engagement process by providing equal opportunity and accessibility for participation. Council will endeavour to make all community engagement processes will be sensitive to the needs of particular people and groups so to maximise their ability to contribute.

#### **3.2 Council's Commitment for Process**

All Community Engagement plans should be developed in consultation with the ARCC Management Team and relevant officers. If it is a community driven engagement process, Council can offer many experienced officers to assist.

The purpose of each engagement process will be clearly documented and state whether the purpose is to inform, consult, involve collaborate or empower.

A Community Engagement Plan will be developed for every relevant Council project, the plan should be devised with flexibility to suit any changes in the consultation process to gain a better outcomes.

The engagement process will be timed to ensure that community input is able to be considered in decision-making. Council will to allow a reasonable timeframe for community response during all consultation processes.

Evaluation is also a very important part for the ongoing development of Community Engagement processes. Evaluation should focus on the impact and process of the engagement and should include views or feedback of its participants.

### **3.3 Council's Commitment to be Responsive**

The engagement process will provide the community with knowledge and understanding of how their inputs will be used.

Council will consider the submissions of all community members.

The engagement process will include continuous feedback and ensure that all input is considered.

Council will make reasonable attempts to resolve conflicts if they arise and reach appropriate equitable solutions.

Council will communicate its decisions with those involved in the engagement process.

### **3.4 Council's Commitment for Accessibility**

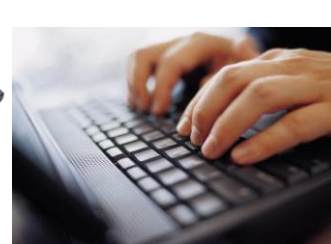
Council will provide options for Council information to be available in accessible formats including large print and audio upon request.

Council should facilitate interpretation of any Council communication material upon request from the State or Federal Translating and Interpreting Service.

The first part of engaging the community is to ensure that all communication will be in plain English free of jargon. If technical terms are used, they will be adequately explained.

Whenever possible Council will conduct all community engagement meetings at universally accessible venues.

Decision making should be based around the needs of the broader community and should take into account the views of all persuasions, whether they be the strongest voice or the smallest. When making information available about decisions, Council will endeavour to inform the public of any technical constraints which must be considered.



### 3.5 How you can get Involved

Community members are encouraged to talk with Council about issues that may affect them. Although Community Engagement processes usually have a designated time for feedback and participation, the public is always welcome to put their point of view to Council, there are a number of ways in which this can occur, you can choose what way best suits you by -

Contacting a Councillor – All Councillors are representatives of the community; as such you should feel free to contact them and discuss your issues. The contact details are available on the website and at the Council Offices.

Or

**Writing to:**

Council and/or Chief Executive Officer  
PO Box 246  
Ararat, Victoria, 3377

Or

**Faxing on:** 5352 1695

Or

**Speaking to:**

One of our Customer Service staff  
Corner Vincent and High Streets, Ararat  
Phone: 5355 0200

Or

**Emailing us:** [council@ararat.vic.gov.au](mailto:council@ararat.vic.gov.au)

Or

Participate in Live chat with our Customer Service Team by logging onto our website [Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.](#) and click the Live Chat button for assistance??

Or

By visiting our website at [www.ararat.vic.gov.au](http://www.ararat.vic.gov.au) and go to our “Provide feedback” link



## 4 What level of Community Engagement is appropriate to the Issue?

Community Engagement and decision making must be considered within the context of the issue at hand. Some issues are easily defined with basic considerations, other issues are extremely complex, these are often the focus of media scrutiny, lobbying by interest groups and requiring detailed technical information.

A general misconception with community engagement is “the more you consult equals the more participation”, this is not always true. It is also recognised that many small communities are being overwhelmed with the level participation or engagement processes being asked of them. Therefore, it is vitally important to make any community engagement process as timely and as effective as possible to maintain interest and not burden communities with drawn out processes. The choices of community engagement techniques are essential to maintaining community interest and participation.

The first step in the planning of any community engagement process is to be clear about the aims and objectives within the desired level of community engagement being considered. **Making the decision about a realistic level of involvement by all stakeholders (interested persons) must be carefully considered, a table with Ararat Rural City, Community and process considerations are provide on the following pages.**

The following table provides real ways in which the five levels of community engagement processes can be defined. It should be noted that not all of the processes listed in each category may (or should) be used for each issue or event, but there may be several combinations used depending on the circumstance and the level of participation realistically available to Council and or any participating group.

Before commencing your project you must be very realistic about the level at which you will involve others and to what degree of participation you require.

Inform	Strengths	Weaknesses
Public Information sessions	<p>Content of information can be controlled.</p> <p>Can be more cost effective</p>	<p>Can be seen as propaganda – one side of the story.</p> <p>Does not build two way relationships.</p>
ARCC web site information	Can be targeted to specific groups.	Not all ARC residents have any / or efficient information technologies
Notices to residents	Advertisements can be multi lingual and easily include pictures, diagrams and plans.	Some distrust of electronic processes
Advertisements in the local papers	<p>Electronic information can reach larger audiences</p> <p>Most up to date information can be available.</p>	Can raise the level of expectation / influence of those being briefed may have over the total process
Briefings	Useful method in building network relationships.	<p>Could be viewed as ‘One sided’</p> <p>Some processes may be seen as alienating for some.</p>
Education & Awareness Activities/Programs	<p>Essential in behavioural change – ie quit smoking campaigns.</p> <p>Other agency dedicated staff for particular projects, ie GRWMG</p>	Excludes people with low literacy levels or visual impairments.
Newsletters	Efficient way to get succinct information to a broad range of people	Can be relatively costly to publish and distribute.
Media Releases	<p>Can be produced to target particular audiences –or designed to attract a particular demographic</p> <p>Can be in different languages</p> <p>Reaches a large number of people.</p> <p>Regular exposure</p> <p>Cost effective method</p>	<p>May miss target group/s</p> <p>Uncontrolled editing may cause misinformation or key items being missed out.</p> <p>Does not encourage two way relationships</p> <p>Sometimes limited in its scope</p>
Council Office, Library , &/or Shopfront Displays	<p>Quick to arrange</p> <p>Can be held at established community places of interest, places where people go to get information</p> <p>Can build relationships with attending staff</p>	<p>Resource intensive – staff to answer questions etc</p> <p>All information may not be able to be displayed in appealing visual format</p> <p>Are only available to people using those particular venues. May disadvantage some groups or individuals.</p>

Consult	Strengths	Weaknesses
Information via media and call (ask) for public comment	Concise targeting can provide detailed responses.	Limited to those who wish to write response.
<p>One to One Or Question/answer and response sheets, asked in person or sent out to residents then followed up with a phone call. Or Phone calls made to randomly selected people</p> <p>Open Days, Or Public meetings where displays are on show and aims/input is clearly requested</p>	<p>Good process to explore in depth issues for sensitive or complex issues.</p> <p>Can be multilingual and an effective method for those with limited literacy skills.</p> <p>Enables comparative research is different issues.</p> <p>Empowering for participants as they get to provide 'their side ' of the issue in a narrative manner,</p> <p>Achieves random opinion.</p> <p>Can coincide with other events</p> <p>Demonstrates –open and transparent processes.</p> <p>Provide 'first hand' learning about proposals/ project. It is time limited.</p> <p>A good way for staff to get to know the community.</p>	<p>Small target response groups. May raise "over consulted issues" and not be a positive response.</p> <p>The collection and analysis of data may require skilled analysis to produce accurate reporting.</p> <p>Resource intensive.</p> <p>May not be as broad ranging as other techniques. May be limited survey data, dependent on resources.</p> <p>Outcomes maybe difficult to interpret due to complex answers.</p> <p>Collation of data after the survey work.</p> <p>Can be resource intensive.</p> <p>Can raise issues about loudest voice is heard and all else ignored.</p>
<p>Web Based Consultation</p> <p>All online consultation tools should be considered with others listed.</p> <p>Interactive websites Internet Surveys Discussion Boards Email feedback On line forums Online Chats</p>	<p>Potential to reach large audience.</p> <p>Single use survey or gauging of public sentiment has ability to open age demographic of participants.</p> <p>Catchment audience may tend to be younger?</p> <p>Uncensored information gathering.</p> <p>Quick time turnaround of opinion.</p> <p>Can be cost efficient particularly if</p>	<p>May require suitable targeted questions as information may be hard to decipher as part of chats or online topics.</p> <p>Assumes all have access to technology.</p> <p>Anonymity may provide people with ability to skew responses as they are able to have multiple responses.</p> <p>Uncensored information gathering. May require a moderator or facilitator to lead discussion.</p>

using an established site.

May not be representative of general public opinion

Can be far reaching.  
Participation times can be tiled to suit individuals.

Does not necessarily promote community feel as usually solo responses and not group responses.

Anonymity may appeal to give honest responses

Privacy and confidentiality issues may arise.

Limited to those with internet access.

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Involve	Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Community engagement workshops, focus groups – Brainstorming sessions/Direct ideas and concept / visions writing workshops</p>	<p>Targets specific groups. Best way to rapidly Structure can vary so to increase number of outcomes.</p> <p>Capacity building – ownership</p> <p>Can evolve over the scope of the project.</p> <p>Can be flexible and responsive and may change the initial direction of issue.</p> <p>Community ownership of the process.</p> <p>Brainstorming is easy to organise and conduct and closely involves those who take part helping them realise their ideas are valuable.</p>	<p>Participation may not be representative.</p> <p>Produces qualitative (relating to the quality) not quantitative (relating to the measure of) information, not so easily understood.</p> <p>May not add any more value to an information session unless structured to obtain particular outcome/s .</p> <p>Back ground information may not be sufficient resulting in little response to brainstorming.</p> <p>Requires quality facilitator/s to get the best from processes.</p> <p>Exhausting but rewarding process.</p> <p>Some irrelevant material will be collected as process allows free thought.</p>
<p>Polling - Closed questions , Yes or No answers</p>	<p>Allows a quantitative measureable) assessment Easy to collate</p>	<p>Assumes a level of knowledge.</p>
<p>Solicit involvement by direct conversations with residents telephone</p>	<p>Quick way to obtain response from a large number of people on many issues.</p>	<p>Significant effort to ensure response sample is typical of broader community.</p> <p>Does not generally provide information about the topic - just a response. Does not generally build two way relationships / exchanges.</p>

Collaborate	Strengths	Weaknesses
Specific Purpose committees – invited reps	<p>Supports community engagement relationship building within community.</p> <p>Capacity building of individual members.</p> <p>Generates ideas.</p> <p>Usually representative of larger community opinion.</p> <p>Could create intra group relationships and trust.</p> <p>Sharing of knowledge base.</p>	<p>Needs to be well resourced and supported.</p> <p>May attract only vocal members Difficult to ensure genuine representation?</p> <p>Longer term commitments may Not be sustainable by community reps.</p> <p>May fail to engage marginalised groups/people.</p>
Consensus decision making		
Concepts workshops or Charrette	Promotes joint problem solving and creative thinking	Partnerships may not be representative of whole community.
Charrette = “inquiry by design workshop”. Where interested persons come together to identify issues, deliberate about preferred outcomes and create plans for the future. <sup>2</sup>	Creates working partnerships with the community	Difficult to engage groups usually marginalised from consultative processes.

Empower	Strengths	Weaknesses
Delegated decisions		If process fails, the burden may lay with the authority that has ultimate responsibility in issue/project.
Community panels / committees in charge of the whole process		

<sup>2</sup> National Charrette Institute ( NCI ) (2003) [www.charetteinstitute.org.au](http://www.charetteinstitute.org.au)

## 5 What needs to be considered when developing a Community Engagement Plan?

Throughout the planning stages of the proposed Community engagement several questions may need to be considered. These are divided up into three different 'issue' groupings, Ararat Rural City Council, Community and Process Issues. Once the technique of community engagement has been identified these questions may also be a great value before, during and at the time of evaluation for any community engagement process undertaken.

Ararat Rural City Issues	Considerations Include
GOALS & OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why is ARCC engaging the community?</li> <li>• What does ARCC hope to achieve from the process?</li> <li>• What time commitments must be met?</li> <li>• Do the benefits of engaging outweigh the costs of not engaging?</li> <li>• Define underlying principles and explain what you are trying to achieve.</li> </ul>
COMMUNITY TO BE TARGETED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a geographic community?</li> <li>• why is ARCC engaging the community?</li> <li>• what does ARCC hope to achieve from the engagement?</li> <li>• what time commitments must be met?</li> <li>• do the benefits of engaging outweigh the costs of not engaging?</li> <li>• are other authorities/ organizations also engaging this community?</li> <li>• Is collaboration possible or necessary?</li> </ul>
POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what level of political support or awareness exists about the proposed engagement?</li> <li>• is your process part of a broader government agenda?</li> <li>• is this a contested issue ?</li> </ul>
CAPACITY TO INFLUENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is this a government or a community initiated activity?</li> <li>• what decisions have already been made?</li> <li>• what decisions can the community have input into?</li> <li>• Legislative environment</li> <li>• is engagement required by legislation?</li> <li>• are any parts of this project or engagement process supported or constrained by legislation?</li> </ul>

<p>POLICY AND PLANNING CYCLES</p> <p>CORPORATE CULTURE</p>	<p>Where does your engagement fit within the policy or planning cycle?</p> <p>Is there a high level of understanding of, commitment to community engagement within ARCC?</p> <p>Is there openness to use more innovative engagement processes?</p>
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<p>RESOURCES</p> <p>**NOTE – COMPETENCIES AND AVAILABILITY OF STAFF AND OR CONSULTANTS WITH SKILLS TO IMPLEMENT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IS A KEY CONSIDERATION.</p>	<p>What resources are available to support the engagement, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Skilled facilitators and managers? **</li> <li>– Information and communication technologies?</li> <li>– Engagement structures such as Advisory Committees?</li> <li>– Budget allocation? - Staff Time?</li> </ul>
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Community Issues	Considerations Include
<p>DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what is the age and gender mix?</li> <li>• what levels of literacy exist?</li> <li>• what is the socio-economic mix – is it representative of whole community?</li> <li>• what languages are spoken in the community?</li> <li>• what cultural protocols are adhered to?</li> <li>• what percentage of the community is employed and when do they work?</li> <li>• do community members have access to transport?</li> </ul>

<p>PREFERENCES FOR ENGAGEMENT</p>	<p>Have community members expressed particular preferences regarding engagement eg. to be involved in information sharing, consultation or active participation?</p>
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<p>PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE(S) WITH ARCC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESSES</p>	<p>Has previous engagement with government been largely positive or largely negative?</p> <p>What percentage of the population has not previously engaged with ARCC?</p> <p>Is there trust and connectedness within the community between them and Council?</p>
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<sup>3</sup> Tables adapted for ARCC purposes from -Engaging Queenslanders , A guide to community engagement & techniques ( p8 - 12)

<p>CAPACITY FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT</p>	<p>Do community members have the knowledge needed to participate? (eg. to critique planning models, understand architectural / engineering plans)</p> <p>Do community members have the resources needed to participate? (eg. time, internet access)</p> <p>Do community members have the skills needed to participate? (eg. public speaking)</p> <p>Do community members have access to necessary infrastructure needed to participate? (eg. child care networks, transport and disability access)</p>
<p>EXISTING ENGAGEMENT STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES</p>	<p>Are there existing networks, committees, structures to support an engagement process within the community?</p> <p>Who are these contact people?</p> <p>Are there sporting, religious, professional and other groups who already engage with the community? Will they support this engagement?</p> <p>Are there existing newsletters, radio stations, websites etc. that the community accesses?</p>
<p>NATURE OF IMPACT</p>	<p>Who is directly impacted by the issue?</p> <p>Who is indirectly impacted by the issue?</p> <p>Who is interested but not necessarily impacted?</p> <p>Is public opinion positive, negative, divided or indifferent?</p>

Process Issues	Considerations Include
<p style="text-align: center;">INCLUSIVENESS &amp; DIVERSITY</p> <p>Considerations –continued.....</p> <p>Transport arrangements for a range of participants who would not otherwise be able to attend,</p> <p>Disability access for differently-abled people, wheel chair access or those needing Pram access,</p> <p>Does information need to be provided in languages other than English and/or large font format?</p> <p>Can the information be articulated to those who are illiterate or those with disabilities?</p> <p>Will diverse groups interact well in group situations or are parallel processes required?</p> <p>Are there cultural protocols which need to be honoured?</p> <p>Will targeted processes and/or culturally, age and gender appropriate facilitators enhance the effectiveness of engagement?</p> <p>Have there been measures to cater for child care and/or people with a different ability /disability?</p>	<p>What consideration needs to be given to venues, language, print type, timing etc. to ensure that engagement is accessible to all?</p> <p>Is capacity building required to enable all people to be effectively engaged?</p> <p>What techniques are required to enable all voices to be heard?</p> <p>What promotion is required to encourage wide participation?</p> <p>Are there groups of disengaged or unengaged people within the community who could be engaged?</p> <p>What will it take to engage these groups?</p> <p>Can engagement processes be implemented in times and places that are comfortable to the community?</p> <p>Can engagement processes link with community radio stations, newsletters, websites etc.?</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">BEING LISTENED TO</p>	<p>What will community members gain from being engaged?</p> <p>How will community members' contributions be recognised and valued?</p> <p>How will community feedback on the engagement process be received and used?</p> <p>Will engagement processes be flexible to accommodate changing community issues?</p> <p>Is ARCC listening or just talking?</p>
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INTEGRITY OF PROCESS

How can the honesty, openness and accountability of the engagement process be demonstrated?  
Is there a commitment to carefully planning, implementing and evaluating the engagement technique?

Are there sufficient resources to implement the technique effectively including:  
– advertising and publishing, printing and circulating information?  
– hire of venue, facilitators, translators, child care staff, catering, meeting costs?  
- professional, technical, casual and support staff (some of which may have existing networks with some of the participants?)

Will the technique build government and/or community capacity for future engagement?

Will the technique build trust between ARCC and the community?

Will the technique support sustainable community and/or State / Federal government outcomes and funding requirements?

## 6 Community Engagement Plan & Template

Once you have a plan and decide to proceed with the project, this template will help determine the logistics of the engagement process. Please see appendices 1 – template.

## 7 Follow Up & Feed Back

As people are often asked to contribute in a voluntary way and give many hours of their time in Community Engagement processes it is essential to provide feedback to participants. It is equally important to recognise that this “feedback” allows participants to see if their opinions, views and ideas have been accurately represented in the decision making process thereby increasing their sense of ownership of the outcomes of that particular issue.

It is wise to establish very early on in the Community Engagement process “the how“, “the when” and “by whom” this follow up & feedback process will occur.

Generally ,within any community engagement process questions and answers throughout the meetings always play a large part, as feedback spontaneously occurs, however it is vital that participants know the “end” of process follow up & feedback arrangements.

In short, **Follow up & Feed Back** will -

- Gives confidence in continuing participation
- Clarifies if community views have been understood
- Fosters relationships between all parties
- Builds trust in the community engagement process
- Provides measure of effectiveness of the community engagement techniques used
- Answers questions to raised by participants
- Details any changes made along the way
- Provides any information about future participation

Some methods of How **Follow Up & Feedback** can be provided -

- Writing letters or emails to all participants
- Providing summary report workshops or community information sessions
- Acknowledging written submissions
- Presentations to community groups
- Publishing newsletters / posters etc
- Publish on the Internet or Interactive web site ( chat , face book etc )
- Media releases and communications
- Using informal networks
- Talking to participants individually – phone or face to face
- TXT – or sending a text message of where information can be found.

## 8 Evaluating Community Engagement Activities

Every Community Engagement project should have a level of evaluation; this will provide an insight as to the appropriateness of the community engagement process and any pit falls or successes which may be helpful for future engagement sessions.

You should evaluate all aspects of your operational plan, with particular attention to the following:

- Who is doing this role and how this feedback can be provided to those involved?
- Was the engagement level you used appropriate?
- Did the tools used help achieve your aims and objectives?
- Did the process benefit stakeholders?
- What has changed as a result of the engagement process?
- Did the engagement process influence the outcome of the project?
- Did participants receive appropriate feedback throughout the process?
- Did you meet the specified timeframes?
- Was there anything about the process that could be improved for next time- If SO how will this information be documented, passed on to others and used in future planning of CE sessions?

Some of this evaluation should be performed along the way and should involve participants. Some options that will assist in accurate evaluation could include:

- Asking participants to fill out a simple evaluation survey at the end of each phase of engagement so reflection can become part of the engagement process and that you are reaching the desired goals of the community engagement process.
- Keeping a record of meeting attendance numbers and where people come from at each stage of the engagement process.



## 9 Choosing the right Community Engagement Technique for ARCC Processes

CONSULTATION EVENTS	Applicable Act	Section of the Act	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Council Plan	Local Gov Act 1989	LG Act 1989	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
		S125					
Strategic Resource Plan	Local Gov Act 1989	LG Act 1989					
		S126 (4)					
Municipal Strategic Statement	Planning & Environment Act 1987	P&E Act 1987	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
		Pt 3(17-23)					
Annual Report		LG Act S 131					
Council Budget	Local Gov Act 1989	LG Act 1989					
		S130 129,(2),223	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Municipal Rates / Reviews	LG Act -Pt8 -S126	LG Act	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		S 158,223,					
ARCC Annual Report including financials	Local Gov Act 1989	LG Act	<input type="checkbox"/>				
		S131 (11)					
		S 134 (1-2)					

Other documents required under the Local Government Act 1989	Choosing the right Community Engagement Technique for ARCC Processes						
	Applicable Act	Section of the Act	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Local Laws - Reviews -	Local Gov Act 1989	LG Act S120 B	<input type="checkbox"/>				
	Pt 5 – Local Laws						
Best Value Principles	Local Gov Act 1989	LG Act S208 B	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Service Delivery Processes							
Customer satisfaction surveys / Performance Statement	Local Gov Act 1989	LG Act 1989	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		
		S132 (2)					
Call for public to be part of ARCC advisory panels							
Reduction or change of Services			<input type="checkbox"/>				
Council Policies - Internal							
Council Policies - External							
Council Initiated Policies or Strategies			<input type="checkbox"/>				
some examples are ( not limited to ) -							
Environment Sustainability Strategy							
Disability Access / Universal Access	Disability						

Inform . Consult . Involve . Collaborate . Empower - ARCC Community engagement strategy



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Other documents required under the Local Government Act 1989	Choosing the right Community Engagement Technique for ARCC Processes						
	Applicable Act	Section of the Act	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Strategy	Discrimination Act						
Tourism Strategy							
Recreation Strategy							
Alex Oval Management Plan							
Waste Management Strategy							
ARCC - Town Planning Applications or Major Projects							
Minor impact	Planning & Environment Act 1987	P & E Act 1987- S50, 52, 60 (.C),					
Medium impact							
Significant impact							
ARCC Major Projects							
some examples are (not limited to) -							
ARC Art Gallery re development ??							
Community Driven Projects under Auspice of ARCC							



Other documents required under the Local Government Act 1989	Choosing the right Community Engagement Technique for ARCC Processes						
	Applicable Act	Section of the Act	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Alexander Oval Re- development / Master plan							
Community driven Policy or Strategy							
some examples are , (not limited to )							
Alex Gardens Sound Shell							
Pomonal Hall Development							
Other Regulatory Authority Requests							
some examples are , (not limited to ) -							
Advisory Groups							
Road closures							
Rail Closures							



Other documents required under the Local Government Act 1989	Choosing the right Community Engagement Technique for ARCC Processes						
	Applicable Act	Section of the Act	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Disposal of Crown lands ??							

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## 10 Appendices

### Appendix 1 - ARCC - Community Engagement – Project Template

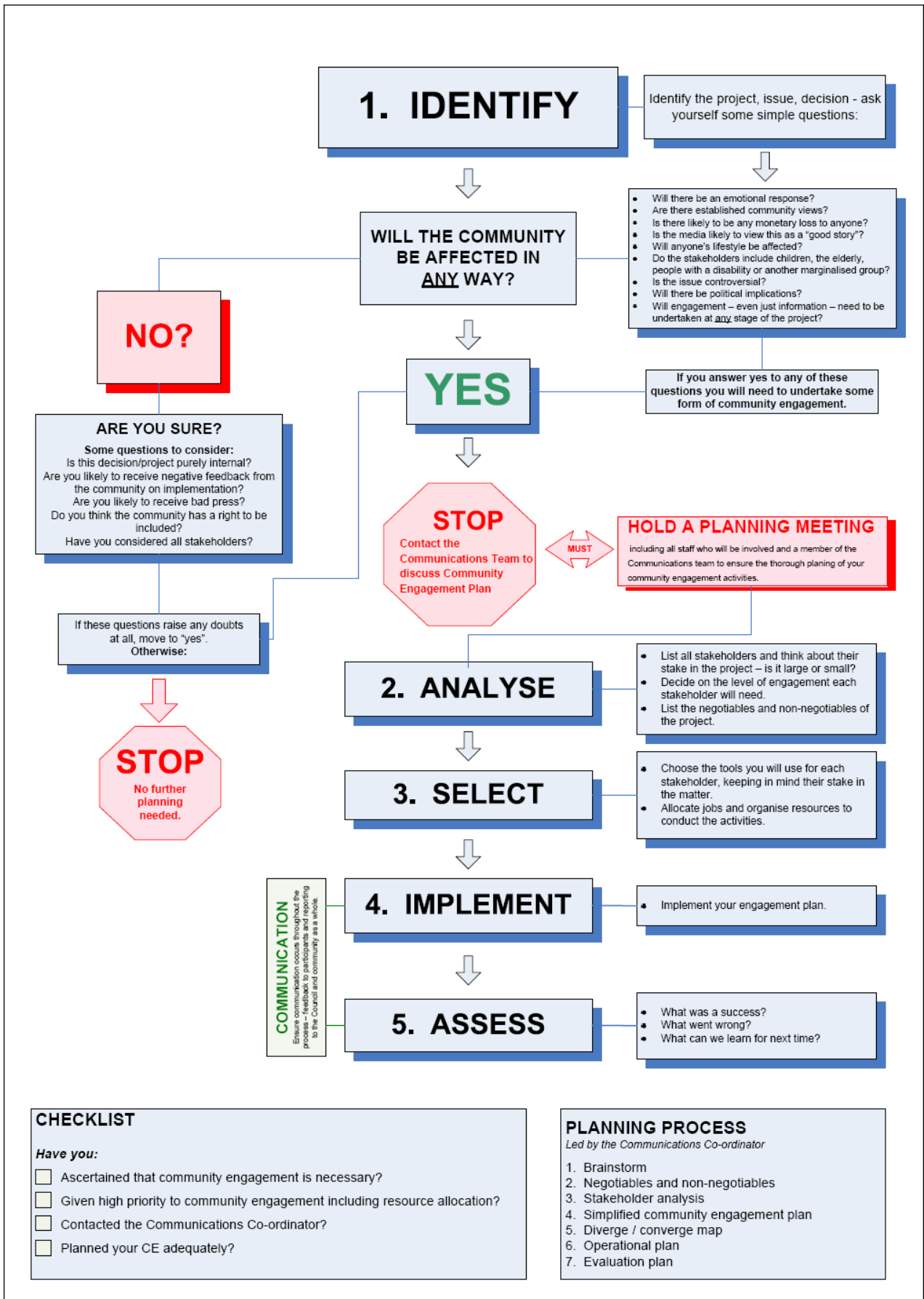
Contact Person For Project –  Project Team Members & Contact Details.	Actioned by / Time line
Project name	
Project description	

Time frame of total project Commencement of project through to Council Agenda listing – <i>Including all milestones in process , all community engagement processes, all technical reports, all staff processes &amp; all briefings to Council x 2 minimum.</i>	
What is the timeframe for community engagement project? <i>Is this realistic? Is there a critical path chart devised for this time line?</i>	
What level of Community Engagement? Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, Empower  <i>What realistic and expected level of Community Engagement is considered in line with the processes in Section 4 of this document? Does the time frame permit this level of consultation?</i>	
What are the perceived outcomes of this community engagement project? <i>Does this fit within the chosen level of Community Engagement?</i>	
Is there a particular Target Group/s which should be consulted? <i>Apart from general participants. Who are we consulting and why?</i>	
What is the budget for consultation? Does the budget restrict the CE process? – Do you need to re-evaluate the level of CE in line with budget?	
What are the Community Engagement considerations?  <i>Has due consideration been given to the issues in Section 5 of this document? Do any stakeholder groups have special needs for access to buildings, print size of publications etc?</i>	
Community Engagement Tools required	

<p><i>Letters, meetings, website, survey e-newsletter.</i></p>	
<p>Action list  <i>What needs to be done and by whom and time lines?  Meeting dates and times – to be known in advance.</i></p>	
<p>Has a media plan been devised?  <i>Has the ARCC communications / media person been consulted?  Is there a communications plan?</i></p>	
<p>Expected issues, concerns or problems or special considerations  <i>These could be internal or political, they could relate to the sensitivity of the project, timing, budget considerations etc. Are there any Privacy issues that require consideration?</i></p>	
<p>Databases / internet /Email  <i>Is there appropriate database for communication with stakeholder groups? Is the CE process IT accessible?</i></p>	
<p>Reporting / Feedback / Documented outcomes  How will the community, participants, council and staff be given feedback throughout the project?</p>	
<p>In House – ARCC Evaluation  How will you evaluate the project? Consider who was consulted, adequacy of timeframe, info provided, cost. Did consultation meet expectations/aims? Were the outcomes different from initial perception of CE process?  Any reporting of the outcomes to Council required as information/expectation?</p>	

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**Appendix 2 - ARCC – Adopted Consultation Process for the review of Assets .**



### **Appendix 3 - Definitions**

Council: Ararat Rural City Councillors or its officers.

Community: People who live, or work in, or visit the local Government of Ararat and the surrounding townships

Community group: groups, organisations and Council advisory bodies that have community-based members and who may share common interest(s) of a location, cultural activity, language or value(s) nature. Individuals can be members of different communities of interest

Community engagement: the many processes and interactions that occur between Council and the community and community groups

Consultation: a two-way relationship of Council giving information to the community and community groups, listening to what others have to say, considering the responses then giving information regarding outcome(s)

Policy: A statement which defines the position taken by Council in regard to that matter.

Stakeholders: A stakeholder is a person or interested persons, group, organisation or system who affects, or can be affected, by an organisation's actions.

Stakeholders can be internal or external to the organisation and both should be regarded with equal importance. Successful community engagement usually involves a range of stakeholders / interested persons, and ensuring that all are equally involved is vital to success.

## Stakeholder Analysis

Fill out the following Matrix to help you understand your stakeholders and their level of influence on the project. Important, influential stakeholders may require a higher level of involvement than stakeholders of little influence.

	Significant influence	Some influence	Little influence
Significant Importance			
Some Importance			
Little Importance			

## 11 Bibliography & Resources

Sarkissan W. & Cook A. & Walsh K. ( 1999)  
Community Participation In Practice. *A practical Guide*. Murdoch :  
The institute for Science and Technology Policy. Murdoch University

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