



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK 2022





Message from the Shire President



Welcome to Shire of Mundaring's Community Engagement Framework. This document outlines the Shire's approach to community engagement activities.

Shire of Mundaring has always been committed to active, best practice engagement with our community to ensure informed decision making. Community feedback helps us shape the community in which we live, work and play and delivers suitable programs, projects and facilities. Vitally, it helps us to improve the way we communicate and deliver information; builds trust; opens the door to fulfilling partnerships; and fosters a sense of belonging.

With a review of the *Local Government Act 1995* underway, the role of community engagement and participation has never been more important. It supports local governments to understand, and respond to, the needs of their communities; identify the ways diverse groups want to engage with their Council; and encourages the sector to be agile, smart and inclusive.

In 2019 we launched an online community engagement portal, Engage Mundaring, to support traditional engagement activities (such as advisory groups and committees; working with stakeholders; newsletters; and a monthly Community Update page in the local paper). It's been a great addition to our toolkit.

With a commitment to flexibility and continuous improvement, the framework is comprised of a Council Policy, a CEO Policy and a set of Community Engagement Guidelines.

It is designed to enable accountability and transparency, and to demonstrate to the community the principles which underpin Shire of Mundaring's provision of high-quality community engagement.

This framework will be updated regularly and adapted to suit the needs and aspirations of our community.

Acknowledgement of Country

Shire of Mundaring respectfully acknowledges the Whadjuk people of the Noongar Nation, who are the traditional custodians of this land. We acknowledge Elders past, present and emerging and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the region.

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Cr James Martin
Shire President



What is Community Engagement?



Shire of Mundaring's community engagement practices are underpinned by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Australasia. IAP2 is the peak body for the community and stakeholder engagement sector. It advocates for all communities to be authentically engaged in decisions that affect them through education and increasing awareness of engagement and all its benefits.

IAP2 defines community engagement as 'any process that involves the community and stakeholders in problem-solving or decision-making and uses this input to inform decisions'.

The concept of community engagement is progressively shaping the way local governments partner with the community in decision-making. In Western Australia, community engagement underpins the development of a local government's Strategic Community Plan (SCP).

Shire of Mundaring aims to deliver effective community engagement programs that are inclusive and enable high levels of community participation.



The Framework



Shire of Mundaring's Community Engagement Framework is an overarching document composed of three parts: a Council Policy, a CEO Policy and a set of guidelines. Each component plays an important role, which when put together, make up our community engagement processes.



Why and when we engage



Community engagement is not just a statutory requirement as outlined in the *Local Government Act 1995*. Shire of Mundaring participates in community engagement so that we can:

-  Improve the way we communicate and share information
-  Strengthen the decisions we make and decision-making processes
-  Build relationships that enhance consensus and transparency
-  Form accountability between the Shire, the Council, stakeholders and the community
-  Listen carefully to the views and opinions of community members

We know that when we engage with the community effectively, the community is better informed and has greater levels of trust.

Furthermore, we can better consider the needs of specific population groups such as young people, people living with a disability, and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Community engagement also provides the opportunity for community partnerships to be formed and maintained, meeting local needs and demonstrating a high level of support for active participation.

We strive for the community to have a strong sense of belonging and ownership over decisions that are made.

When deciding to engage, we ask:

“Will there be a change in the existing environment, space, accessibility, convenience, or the provision of a service to the community?”

To put this simply, if there is a decision to be made on a matter that affects any number of community members, we will consult and engage with you.

Whether this is regarding the Shire’s strategic direction, development of new services, changes to facilities or infrastructure, projects, or emergency recovery, we will provide the opportunity for the community to have their say or be informed.

There are however occasions where the community will not be actively consulted and will instead be informed of a decision. Examples include:

- environmental or health concerns
- when the Shire is forced to act immediately
- where the Shire has a duty of care to make a decision in the public interest
- ongoing maintenance or servicing.

Who we engage



The Shire undertakes engagement with our local community and other key stakeholders.

The local community consists of groups and individuals. Within the Shire of Mundaring, community engagement may be focused on a specific geographic location or a group with particular interests in the proposed activity or project, or the community as a whole.

The key stakeholders we engage with can be external or internal and whilst they form a part of the community, they are more likely to be impacted by a project due to a certain level of influence or interest.

We also engage with each other as Shire staff across the organisation, in order to seek feedback, inform projects and collaborate.

How we engage



Our approach to community engagement is underpinned by IAP2 and its spectrum of engagement.

IAP2 outlines a variety of approaches to engagement depending on the level of impact the proposed initiative might have.

Engagement ranges from informing the community to increase understanding, through to empowering the community to make the final decision and in some cases deliver on it.

The Shire is flexible in its approach to engagement by tailoring it to the community with whom we are engaging.

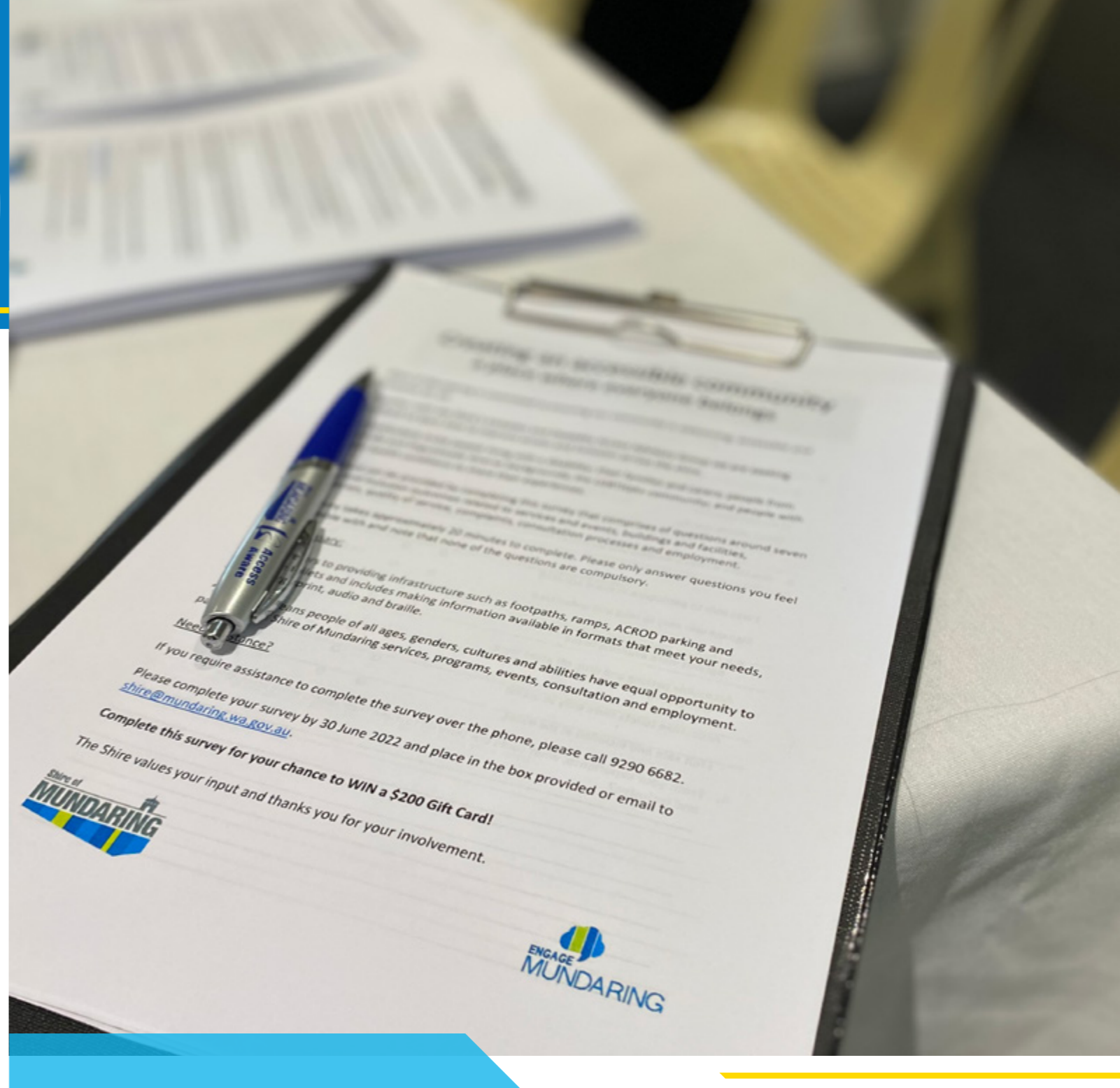
Some examples of current engagement activities the Shire undertakes include:

- Engage Mundaring
- advisory groups and committees
- Resident and Ratepayer Networking Forum
- working in partnerships
- meetings with stakeholders
- interagency networks
- participating in external networking groups
- focus groups and workshops
- Council meetings
- Shire website
- social media posts
- newsletters
- Community Update page in the local newspaper.

INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
Objective				
To provide the community with balanced and objective information and assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives and solutions.	To obtain community feedback on analysis, alternatives or decisions.	To work directly with the community throughout the process to ensure that public and private concerns are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the community in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place the final decision making in the hands of the community.
Promise to the Community				
We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge your concerns and provide feedback on how community input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that where appropriate, your concerns and issues are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how community 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.

Table 1: IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation*

* © International Association for Public Participation www.iap2.org



Throughout the entire community engagement process, Shire of Mundaring staff will carefully consider the scope and objectives of the project, as well as the stakeholders and community members that may be impacted at various levels.

Importantly, we also aim to carry out feedback and evaluation processes to ensure that the community and stakeholders can transparently see how their input influenced the process, and whether the engagement achieved its purpose and objectives.

This demonstrates our commitment to continuously improve the way we deliver initiatives to the community.



ENGAGE MUNDARING



Engaging with specific population groups



We recognise that the needs of specific population groups are diverse. When planning engagement activities, we will consider how the engagement process can accommodate the needs of specific population groups including:

Shire of Mundaring has an online engagement platform called Engage Mundaring (powered by Engagement Hub).

Through Engage Mundaring, community members and stakeholders are invited to have their say on a range of Shire projects and initiatives.

It can also be used to provide information to the community, with document, photo and video libraries, frequently asked questions and details on timelines for a proposed project.

How do you get involved?

Get started by registering and start contributing your voice to various projects currently out for consultation.

We encourage you to become a registered user of Engage Mundaring, which allows you to participate in online engagement. Go to engage.mundaring.wa.gov.au to register.

By using Engage Mundaring, you can have your say on current live projects that are displayed on the homepage.

There are many different ways to engage with these projects, including polls, submissions, surveys, community chat, idea walls, and interactive mapping. These tools provide creative interaction methods to gather opinions and suggestions from the community.

The portal also contains some private projects, which community and stakeholders may be invited to be a part of, if the project has no external impact beyond those invited to consult.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Engagement Methods

We will seek advice and permission, demonstrate respect, and communicate in a culturally-sensitive way. We also strive to engage in a way that assists the community to better understand Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories. We will consult and seek advice from recognised Elders and community leaders first, with a focus on reconciliation.



Older Adult Engagement Methods

Aligned to actions within the Age Friendly Informing Strategy, our priority is to provide 'regular and reliable information to older people,' through using diverse methods of traditional and online communication, and maximising relationships with local organisations that engage face-to-face with older people.



Engaging with Young People

We aim to give a platform to young people, to encourage interest and participation. We aim to engage and form partnerships with schools, utilise social media, provide youth-specific programs and activities, and partner with 'The Youth C.R.E.W.' as a primary network of communication and youth leadership.



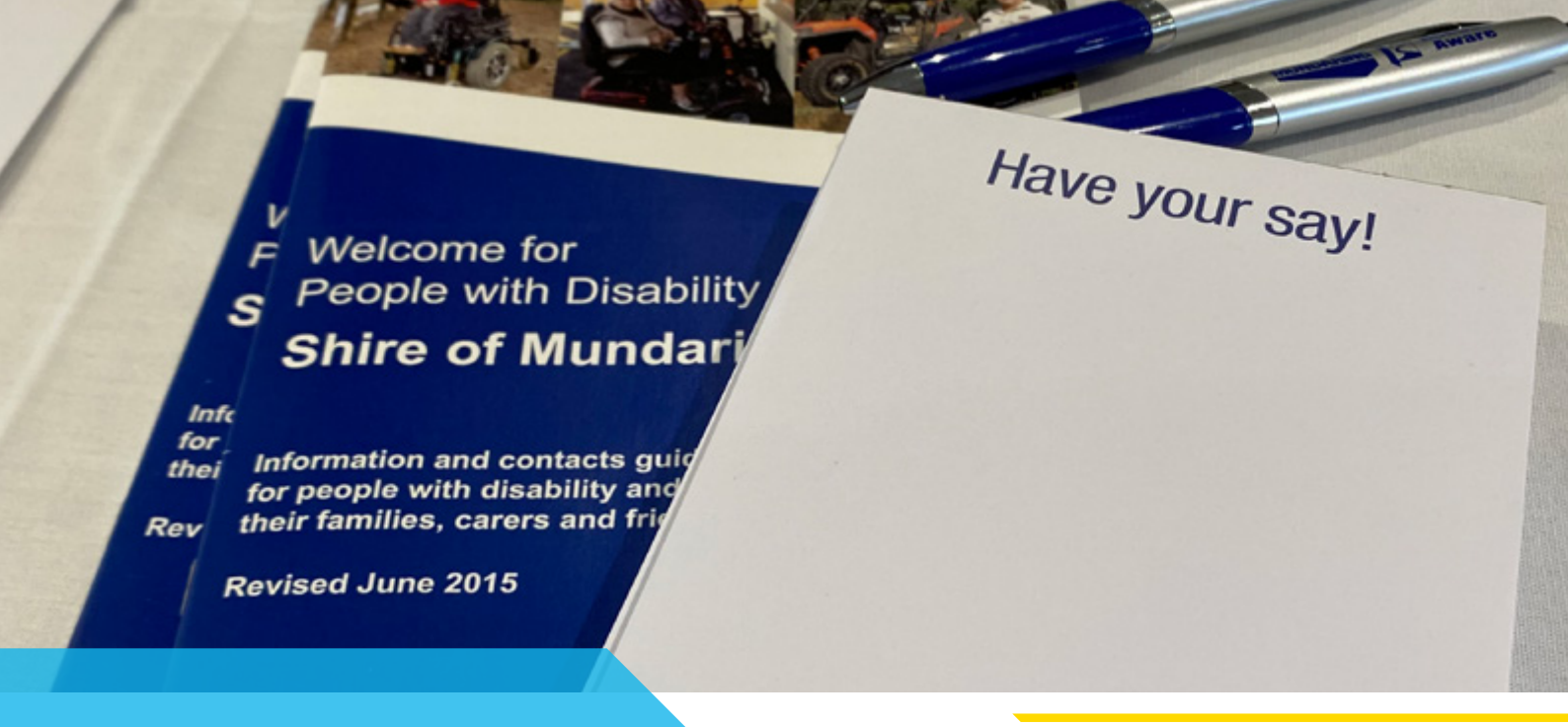
Engaging with People with a Disability

We consult with our Inclusion and Disability Access Advisory Group. Decisions are also informed by the Shire's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan. We will think innovatively to address and overcome any barriers to accessibility and make sure our engagement methods are available in multiple formats.



Engaging with People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds

To engage with people from diverse cultural backgrounds, we will be aware of differences, consider translation requirements, use symbols and pictures and address barriers to participation.



Framework evaluation

Shire of Mundaring is constantly reviewing its community engagement practices to ensure alignment with best-practice principles. The Framework will inform our engagement practices while encouraging continuous evolution and improvement in all areas of consultation.

Invitation to engage

We are keen to hear from you. You can contact the Shire via phone 9290 6666 and email shire@mundaring.wa.gov.au, or use Engage Mundaring engage.mundaring.wa.gov.au to have your say about various projects.



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