Yarra City Council

Community Engagement Policy

2026-2029

YOUR SAY YARRA

CITY OF YARRA

Wominjeka

Yarra City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and true sovereigns of the land now known as Yarra.

We also acknowledge the significant contributions made by other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to life in Yarra. We pay our respects to Elders from all nations and to their Elders past and present.

This publication is available in alternative accessible formats on request.

Electronic copy

PDF versions of this report can be downloaded from yarracity.vic.gov.au

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Community Engagement in Fitzroy

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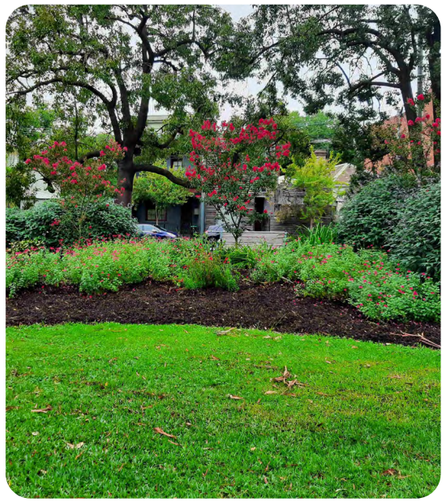


Vision and purpose

Yarra City Council's Community Engagement Policy (The Policy) guides best practice community engagement, identifies when we will seek feedback from the community and sets clear standards for how we will engage.

The Policy outlines the core values underpinning our approach to community engagement. Through this policy the community will know what to expect when participating in community engagement and what role they can play in informing Council decisions

What does this policy apply to?

The Policy applies to:

- Community engagement processes including planning, delivery, reporting, closing the loop and evaluation.
- Community engagement undertaken at each engagement level on the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum.
- All community engagement activities by Council staff, volunteers, contractors and consultants.

The Policy does not apply to:

- Service requests, customer enquiries and complaints.
- Evaluation of Council services
- Social research and population data collection.
- *The Local Government Act 2020*
- *The Local Government Act 2020* (section 55) states that all Victorian councils must develop, adopt and maintain a community engagement policy. The Act outlines 5 engagement principles that must be met by all Victorian Councils. In this policy we expand on the 5 principles and provide a commitment statement for each principle.-

Yarra's 2036 Community Vision

Yarra's 2036 Community Vision shares our community's hopes, aspirations and priorities for the next 15-years:

"Yarra is a vibrant, safe and inclusive environment. We celebrate and embrace our diversity and connection to each other and the land. Our community is empowered to work together and support one another with respect and trust".

Our Community Engagement Policy supports and strengthens the Community Vision through engagement principles and practice.

Council Plan 2025-29

Our Community Engagement Policy aligns to Yarra's Council Plan 2025-29: Objective 4: Running the City:

"We are transparent and accountable, making evidence-based decisions to ensure the sustainability and health of Yarra".

Why we engage

Quality community engagement helps us to make better decisions at both an operational and strategic level by understanding and responding to the needs and lived experience of our community.

Community engagement provides opportunities for everyone in Yarra to share their feedback on Council projects or policies. We are committed to meaningful engagement, and we are transparent about the level of influence that the community will have in the process.

Community engagement builds genuine support for our policies and programs; improves the way we plan and deliver services and encourages trust in Council processes and decisions. Engagement strengthens our relationships with the community by informing, consulting and involving them in matters that affect their lives.

Council decision making

Community engagement is a key input which informs transparent and sustainable decision-making by Council on behalf of the Yarra community.

Our community can influence decisions by sharing their knowledge, perceptions and experiences and informing us about their needs and expectations. Community engagement is undertaken by Council to sense check with the community to inform the decision-making process.

Community members who are most impacted should have the greatest influence in engagements. This is reflected in our engagement approach, which seeks to identify and reach community members and groups who are most impacted by decisions being made.

Our reporting also demonstrates this priority by providing Council with segmented data to better understand the viewpoint of those who are most impacted.

In addition to community engagement there are some other inputs considered by Council when making decisions, including:

- Legislation, plans, policies and strategies
- Operational knowledge and expertise
- Social research and customer data
- Community and stakeholder conversations with Councillors. (see below).

Principles and commitments

In Section 56 of the *Local Government Act 2020* there are 5 principles which describe how community engagement should be designed, delivered and reported on.

We have built upon the 5 principles in the Local Government Act to include an additional 2 principles as well as a commitment statement outlining our promise to the community for each principle.

The principles and commitments ensure that community engagement at Yarra is purposeful, representative, and easy to be involved in.

	Principle	Commitment statement
1	A community engagement process must have a clearly defined objective and scope.	We will have clear engagement planning processes that identify the scope, objectives and community influence for all engagements undertaken.
2	Participants in community engagement must have access to objective, relevant and timely information to inform their participation.	We will provide a project page for each engagement that contains detailed information that is clear and accessible to enable informed participation. Engagements will be promoted across a range of channels to raise awareness amongst the community about their opportunity for participation.
3	Participants in community engagement must be representative of the persons and groups affected by the matter that is the subject of the community engagement.	When planning engagements, we will identify the people and groups who are most affected and reach out to ensure they are informed about their opportunity to participate.
4	Participants in community engagement are entitled to reasonable support to enable meaningful and informed engagement.	We will provide in-language support and offer both in person and online opportunities to support everyone in our diverse community to participate in our engagements meaningfully.
5	Participants in community engagement are informed of the ways in which the community engagement process will influence Council decision making.	We will be transparent about the level of influence that the community can have on the final decision or outcome for each project. We will provide participants with a project timeline, update them throughout the engagement process and let them know how their feedback influenced the decision made.
	Additional Community Engagement Principles	**Commitment statement**
6	Participants in community engagement should include harder-to-reach communities who may face additional barriers to participation.	We will present information in a simple, clear and accessible manner to reduce the barriers of participation for our harder to reach communities. We will connect with the community in many ways and offer a range of ways to participate such as in person, online or as a group. We will measure participation of harder to reach communities and use this data to seek to improve levels of participation.
7	Community engagement reporting should be presented in a way that best enables Council to make decisions in the best interest of the Yarra community. Reporting should be provided to participants and the broader community in simple and accessible formats.	We will make sure that reports on engagements are transparent and include how community feedback has influenced recommendations. Engagement outcomes should be made accessible to the community and shared in a range of ways where possible, such as online, emailed and available in person.

Roles and responsibilities

The implementation of the Community Engagement Policy is a shared and collective responsibility between Councillors, Council Executive and Yarra City Council staff.

Role	Responsibilities
Councillors	• Endorse Yarra's Community Engagement Policy. • Consider community feedback and engagement results (alongside other inputs) when making decisions. • Make decisions at Council meetings relating to projects where community engagement was undertaken. • The Act (Section 18C) states that the Mayor is to lead engagement with the community on the development of the Council Plan. • Encourage community participation in engagements.
Executive Leadership Team and Managers	• Sponsor and support community engagements. • Ensure that community engagements undertaken meet the principles, commitments and standards set in this Policy. • Identify and consider risks relating to projects where community engagement is being undertaken. • Make recommendations for actions relating to engagements and prepare reports to be considered by Council for a decision.
Council staff, contractors and volunteers	• Comply with the Policy when planning, delivering, reporting, closing the loop and evaluating community engagements. • Attend and manage in-person events for community engagements. • Prepare and deliver engagement reports (with input from the Community Engagement team).
Community Engagement Team	• Ensure all engagements undertaken comply with the Policy. • Support and provide advice for the planning, delivery, reporting and promotion of engagements. • Ensure the Community Engagement Policy actions are implemented. • Improve the capacity of the organisation to deliver excellent community engagement.

When we engage

When we engage, sometime referred to as the “engagement scope” is determined during the planning phase. This includes mapping out the timing, number of stages and the level of community influence for the project.

Stages of engagement

Many projects require two stages of engagement. Some projects have less community impact, interest or influence and might only need a single stage of engagement.

The first stage of engagement is when the level of community influence is the highest. During this stage we typically seek input to have a better understanding of community needs and aspirations and to gain valuable insights.

In the second stage of engagement, we generally present a draft concept design or draft strategy/ plan for feedback so that improvements can be made to meet community expectations and needs.

Other projects include a final stage of engagement, which usually involves presenting the community with a completed design or document and checking in to understand if anything has been missed.

Whilst the number of stages if determined on a case-by-case basis during the engagement planning process, we have provided a guide (Appendix 1) which indicates the general level of engagement that is provided for common Council activities and different types of projects.

IAP2 Spectrum

We identify the groups and individuals most impacted or affected by the project and determine how much influence the community can have on the decision.

At Yarra, we use the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Public Participation as a guideline when determining the right level of community influence for our engagements. This guideline is aligned with engagement standards and practice outlined by the Victorian Government.

The table below shows the following for each of the 5 levels of engagement:

- Engagement approach and public participation goal.
- Yarra’s commitment to the community.
- Examples and methods.

Disclaimer

This table on page 13 has been adapted from the original version © Federation of International Association for Public Participation 2024. All rights reserved. This work was created with contributions from Lewis Michaelson, Martha Rozelle, and Doug Sarno. **iap2.org**.

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Engagement Approach	**Notification**	**Consultation**	**Deliberative**	**Deliberative**	**Deliberative**
IAP2 Public participation goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, 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 concerns and aspirations are understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of a preferred solution.	To place the final decision making in the hands of the public.
Community Vison	We will keep you informed.	We will seek feedback, listen to you and consider your concerns and aspirations. We will keep you informed and let you know the outcome of the decision.	We will seek feedback from the broader community and also form community working groups or community panels to ensure community priorities and needs are directly included in recommendations. We will ensure that some of your recommendations are adopted as part of the decision made.	We will seek feedback from the broader community and also form community working groups or community panels to ensure community priorities and needs are directly included in recommendations. We will ensure that more than 60% of your recommendations are adopted as part of the decision made.	We will seek feedback from the broader community and also form community working groups or community panels to ensure community priorities and needs are directly included in recommendations. We will adopt your recommendations in full.
Examples	Notice of Works.	Seeking feedback on a playground upgrade, transport corridor or policy.	Council Plan community working group.	Service Planning and Review Principles community working group	Community Vison.
Methods	• Letters • Signage • Council newsletters • Social media • Yarra News • Website content.	• Surveys (online and hard copy) • Online mapping tool • Workshop sessions • In person “Pop up” events • Advisory groups.	• Community Working Groups • Community Panels • Summits • Advisory groups.	• Community Working Groups • Community Panels • Summits • Advisory groups.	• Community Working Groups • Community Panels • Summits • Advisory groups.

Legislated community engagement

The Act sets out minimum requirements for Councils to apply in their Community Engagement Policy for the development of the following long-term plans.

For each of these plans Council needs to apply a deliberative engagement approach.

- Community Vision
- Council Plan (every 4 years)
- Long-Term Financial Plan
- Asset Plan.

The Community Engagement Policy guides the development of other statutory plans and obligations such as the Council Budget, Governance Rules, Council's Local Law, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, leasing and licensing, acquisitions, disposals and exchange of land, and road discontinuances.

Some engagement activities are governed by other legislation and must be conducted in accordance with that legislation. Specifically:

Activity	Legislation
Amendment to the Yarra planning scheme	*Planning and Environment Act 1987*
Road Discontinuances	*Local Government Act 1989*
Planning Permit Applications	*Planning and Environment Act 1987*

Deliberative engagement

Deliberative engagements take place at the involve, collaborate and/or empower levels on the IAP2 Spectrum.

Deliberative engagement is used for more complex, long term and high impact issues, where perspectives are likely to differ and/or where the issue has a high impact on sections of the community.

Deliberative engagement generally involves:

- a representative sample of the population or group who are impacted
- a clear scope and remit that often asks for an agreed compromise of interests and outcomes, agreed priorities or consensus on a vision and direction
- provision of timely, objective and independently sourced/verified information
- sufficient time to participate (often half day sessions spread across several weeks)
- support to participate (including independent facilitation, reimbursement for time, hardships and expenses incurred and sometimes co-design of the process)
- a commitment to participants on the level of influence their recommendation or decision holds (usually high).

Deliberative Standing Panels

Deliberative engagement is conducted by forming either a single-purpose deliberative engagement group or a Deliberative Standing Panel (DSP).

Whereas DSPs are formed to operate over a long-term period, one-time deliberative engagement groups are formed as required, for a particular purpose (such as the Council Plan). At Yarra, we use single-purpose deliberative engagement groups as required.

Engagement approach guide for Council activities

The table attached to this Policy as 'Appendix 1' provides guidance for the various engagement activities that are undertaken by Council and the engagement approach that should be expected. Parking related engagements are categorised on a case-by-case basis and further guidance will be included as part of the Kerbside and Parking Strategy.

While the table is a comprehensive guide there may be circumstances where the engagement approach differs from what is outlined. For any engagements undertaken regardless of categories, there will generally be targeted and direct stakeholder engagement included.

Our community

At Yarra, we define “community” as individuals or connected groups of people who live, work, visit, own property, do business, study, travel through, visit or access services in Yarra.

About Yarra

Yarra City Council spans across 8 vibrant inner-city suburbs and is home to a diverse community of almost 100,000 people.

The area now known as Yarra stands on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people and we deeply value the contribution Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have made, and continue to make, to the area.

We also value the historical and continued contributions of the many migrant communities who have settled in Yarra.

Our community

Communities of people can be temporary or permanent and are connected by shared location, shared interest or shared identity.

Our community are all these people and organisations that are impacted by Council decisions. There is also intersectionality within our community which is important to understand.

One way to understand the complexity of communities of people in the City of Yarra is through an assessment of how they relate or are impacted by an issue or decision. The types of connections below may overlap and intersect.

Types of connections

Connections of place

Often the most interested and impacted communities are those that live or work around these projects.

This also includes groups of people who hold a particular connection to a place because of its historical or cultural significance, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and LGBTIQA+ communities.

People may also closely associate with the activities that take place there, for example members of sporting, community gardens or cultural groups. They might belong to less formal groups, such as people using the local library or community centre.

Connection of Interest

Connection of interest organise around an issue or activity.

These may include different business sectors, large corporates or owners of small local businesses, professions we engage, peak bodies, advocacy and industry groups, not-for-profit organisations and services with a common purpose.

Connection of interest may form advocacy groups and networks, and such communities may also convene around a shared activity.-

Connection of Identity

Communities with this connection define themselves.

They include First Peoples, LGBTIQA+ and culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Within communities there may also be smaller groups.

They may gather around cultural and religious beliefs or may associate by age. Sometimes these groups form because of shared experiences.

Connection of Need

Communities with this connection are more infrequent, but an example of such connection is The Covid-19 pandemic.

During this period, communities had trouble accessing services and needed Council to understand and address their vulnerability to participate in daily life and Council decision-making processes.

Connection of future

Communities with connection of future have perspectives which are difficult to identify and then consider such as children and young people.

Types of Communities

Stakeholder groups

We identify stakeholders who are most affected by the decision and invite them to participate in our engagements. Examples of stakeholders include (but are not limited to):

- nearby residents
- local businesses
- people who use our services and facilities (for example: libraries, parking, playgrounds)
- early learning centres and schools
- emergency services agencies
- sports clubs
- community advocacy groups and resident associations.

Advisory committees

Yarra City Council works with several advisory committees that represent different groups, identities and interests within our diverse community.

We work closely with Yarra's Advisory Committees and leverage their expertise and networks when engaging on topics that impact and are connected to them.

In response to community feedback on Advisory Committees, we will consider how we can improve the way in which we involve these groups in the consultation process (e.g. attend meetings, connecting before, during and after relevant consultations and getting assistance with advisory committees to close the loop).

More information about our Advisory Committees can be found on the **Yarra City Council website.**

Traditionally underrepresented communities

- Some groups have been identified as underrepresented in our engagements and may face extra barriers when engaging with us:
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Children and young people
- Culturally and linguistically diverse people
- LGBTIQA+ people
- Older people
- People living with a disability
- Public housing residents
- Renters.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

The Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people are the Traditional Owners of the land, and Yarra is a place of special significance for the broader Aboriginal community.

In recognition of the significant engagement demand placed on the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation from councils, water authorities, state government departments and other entities, and with respect for the time and contributions of Elders, a structured approach to engagement has been established between the Corporation and Yarra City Council.

This includes quarterly meetings between Wurundjeri Elders and Council officers, a forward schedule of business, and the provision of sitting fees to acknowledge Elders' time and cultural leadership. Council is committed to involving the Corporation early in projects that involves Wurundjeri engagement.

We also have a strong commitment to work with, support, learn from and celebrate local Aboriginal communities, and the broader Aboriginal community connected to Yarra. We record Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity in our demographics and report on our progress in reaching and including this community in our engagements. Our specific commitments and guidelines for engaging with First Peoples are included in our Yana Ngargna Policy.

Children and young people

Children and young people are active citizens who have the right to be involved in engagements.

As a child safe organisation, we're committed to adapting our engagement approach to cater for the needs of children and young people so that they can feel empowered to participate and have their voices incorporated into our decision-making processes.

We're committed to protecting children and young people from the risk of harm or abuse during engagement activities and interactions. We will ensure that engagement activities that involve young children are planned and delivered in consultation with the expertise required from staff and educators.

Culturally and linguistically diverse people

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities tend not to participate in engagements typically due to language barriers or cultural reasons.

Council is committed to reducing participation barriers by providing accessible engagements and providing in-language support where possible using Bicultural Liaison Officers, engagement reach, to promote engagements and encourage participation.

We commit to record participation by the CALD community in our demographics to determine whether our engagement reach has been successful.

LGBTIQA+ people

We recognize that there are historic barriers to participation experienced by LGBTIQA+ people. We commit to record participation in our demographics to determine whether our engagement reach has been successful.

Older people

We will engage effectively with older people by actively listening and genuinely involving them in decisions on topics that affect them.

Our engagement design factors in different preferences for providing feedback and offers both online and in person opportunities to participate.

People living with a disability

We assist people with disability in Yarra to participate in engagements by providing both in person and online opportunities and ensuring that our communications are accessible.

We consult with Yarra's Disability Advisory Committee to improve our reach with this community.

We commit to record participation by people with a disability in our demographics to determine whether our engagement reach has been successful.

Renters and Public housing residents

Over 50% of our residents reside in rental properties, and approximately 8% live in social housing (higher than the average of 2.3% in Greater Melbourne).

We commit to actively encourage and seek participation from residents who rent across the City to ensure their voices are captured.

Our commitments to our community

- We will use methods that enable and encourage everyone, including people in harder to reach sections of the community, to be able to participate in engagements.
- We will aim to have better representation of our diverse community in our engagements and aim for equal representation when undertaking deliberative engagements.
- We will use inclusive and non-discriminatory language when promoting our engagements.
- We will offer multiple opportunities for engagement and different methods to suit different ages and abilities (including face-to-face and online).
- We will use targeted approaches that suits the needs and expectations of our underrepresented communities to increase their representation in our engagements.
- We will provide information and promote engagements in wording that is easily understood including translations and in plain English.
- We will arrange for interpreters where required.
- We will make sure to organise engagement activities that meets the need of the community.
- We will ensure to organise engagement opportunities at accessible locations and at accessible venues also considering public transport, parking access and access to buildings.
- We will engage with the community on their terms and go to places where the community naturally meets and socialises.

Our actions for the next 4 years

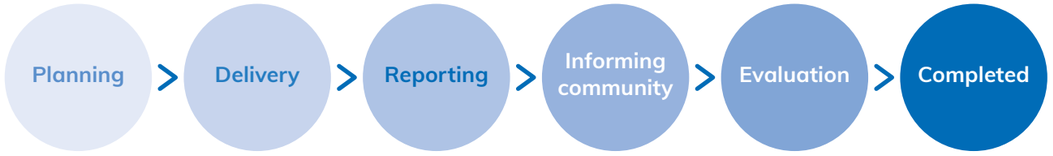
Over the next four years, we will have a particular focus on achieving an increase in participation from the following groups:

1. People with a disability
2. Renters and people in multi-unit developments
3. Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities
4. Children and young people.

How we engage

This section outlines standards for how we will engage with our community throughout each phase in the engagement cycle.

Phases of community engagement



Engagement planning phase

Community Engagement Plans are written for all engagements undertaken at Yarra (except inform-only).

Community engagement plans document the objectives, stakeholders, project risks, level of community influence, engagement methods and questions. We create tailored promotional communications to reach the community and inform them about their opportunity to participate.

The purpose of engagement questions is to allow the community to have their say on the project while also gathering crucial information for officers to understand community ideas, needs and expectations in relation to the project. Questions should be directed to the areas of the project where there is community influence.

As part of the implementation of the new Policy, we will review how engagement questions are designed and assessed to help make good decisions. Officers will be required to justify the reason for asking questions and outline how they will be reported on and responded to.

We set targets for engagement activities and reach. Once the engagement is closed, these targets are measured against the results.

Engagement delivery phase

The general standard engagement period at Yarra City Council is 4 weeks.

Complex engagements, such as the Council Plan, may take place between 4 to 6 weeks. Engagements with low community impact and/or influence may take place between 2 to 3 weeks.

Engagements usually open within 2 weeks following approval at a Council Meeting. Where possible, engagements should open on the first Monday of the engagement period at 9am. and close at 11:59pm on the final Sunday of the engagement period.

We aim to provide more than one method for each engagement, generally combining online engagement (Your Say Yarra) and in-person opportunities.

We will identify an alternative indoor location during the engagement planning process so that in person events can be moved indoors if needed, due to poor weather (above 35 degrees, heavy rain, thunderstorm etc.).

Engagement reporting phase

Engagement reports provide the community with a transparent account of engagement activities, result findings and outcomes.

Feedback received is collated and analysed to understand community sentiment and views about the topic being engaged on and to evaluate the success of the engagement.

Engagement reports identify and highlight the views of community members who are most affected and impacted by the decision.

Demographic information will be analysed and when needed (e.g. when there are less than 75% of respondents who are Yarra residents) reports will be segmented so that separate results are provided for responses by Yarra residents.

Where possible, we will identify campaign-driven responses and templated submissions made by advocacy groups and transparently highlight these responses in engagement reports.

Duplicate responses

At the end of each engagement, we conduct a comprehensive data analysis to identify any potential duplicate responses.

We have a comprehensive process in place where officers identify data duplications after consultations close as part of the data collation and analysis process.

Duplications are identified by IP addresses, email address and demographic information collected, and duplicate responses are managed appropriately.

Qualitative versus quantitative

Community engagement results include both qualitative and quantitative data to enable Council to make informed decisions.

Qualitative data allows Council to understand the lived experiences and perceptions of our diverse community.

Informing community "Closing the loop" phase

We close the loop with our community and inform participants how their feedback was considered in the decision-making process. We provide email updates to participants who ask to be kept informed about the project.

Engagement results and a detailed report |are made available following a Council decision at a Council Meeting. This is published on the Your Say Yarra project page after the engagement closes.

Evaluation phase

At the end of each engagement, we identify what worked well and what we could improve for future engagements. Engagement activities and reach are measured against targets that are set in the community engagement plan.

Privacy

Participants' privacy is protected under the *Australian Privacy Act 1988, the Spam Act and the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*. This legislation governs how we use your demographic information and your email address.

Information provided by participants is collected in accordance with the **City of Yarra Privacy Policy** and will only be used or disclosed for the purpose for which it was collected or otherwise authorised by law.

Community engagements during the Council election period

We ensure that all community engagements are completed prior to entering the election period before Council elections are held (every 4 years).

In the lead up to Council election, we will move into 'caretaker mode' where all active consultations are temporarily disabled and no new consultations commence.

Cancelling in person events

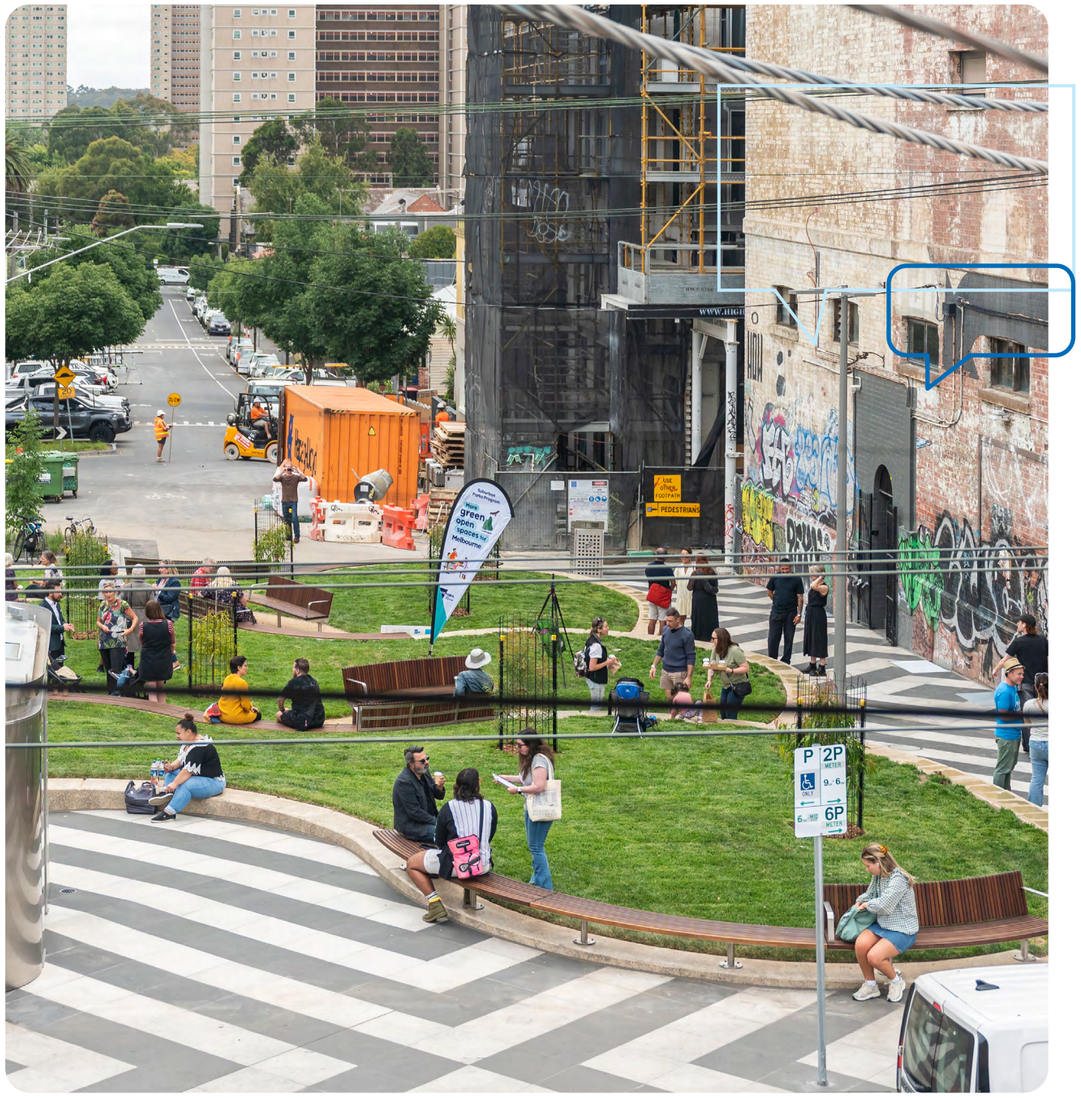
If an in-person event is cancelled, or the location changes, we will update the Your Say Yarra project page and post an alert on our social media channels. We aim to inform the community 48 hours before the event is scheduled.

In circumstances where the safety of attendees and staff cannot be guaranteed (e.g. thunderstorms) it may be necessary to cancel an event closer to the scheduled time.

Council staff may cease an engagement activity part way through if there are concerns about the safety of staff and attendees due to circumstances such as |poor weather or concerning behaviour.

Customer experience, engagement and reputation

Our approach to community engagement is aligned to Yarra's overall commitment to delivering excellent customer experience and applying customer-centric approaches that enhance our reputation as a customer-responsive organisation.



How we promote our engagements

We are committed to promoting community engagement opportunities in a way that is clear, transparent and accountable.

Communications methods

Community feedback on the draft version of this Policy emphasised the importance of understanding the preferences of different stakeholders and community groups within the Yarra community and providing a range of communications methods and engagement options to suit various needs.

We use a variety of methods to reach our intended audiences. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Your Say Yarra project page (on Yarra's online engagement participation platform)
- Frequently asked questions (FAQs) on the Your Say Yarra project page
- Social media posts on Council's accounts (organic and advertisements)
- Email newsletters (including Yarra Life)
- Yarra News
- News items (Yarra City Council website)
- Postcards with QR codes delivered to nearby residents (within 200m radius) and/or at key Council venues like Libraries and Customer service centres
- Letters delivered to property owners (within 200m radius)
- Translated materials and advertising on CALD community radio
- Digital Screens in customer service centres
- Ward newsletters
- Ward meetings promoted by the Councillors.

Promotion by Councillors

Councillors can participate in the promotion of engagements by handing out materials, attending pop-up sessions and promoting engagements at their Ward meetings or other community events that they attend.

Accessible communication and design

We aim to make our engagements as accessible and inclusive as possible to allow everyone in the community an opportunity to participate.

This includes:

- Using simple and inclusive language and avoiding jargon in our communications
- Accessible webpage design with use of headings and short sentences
- Offering alternative feedback methods for each consultation (online as well as in-person opportunities)
- Providing contact details for interpreters and a language translation tool on Your Say Yarra which allows the page to be translated into 15 languages
- Using Bicultural Laison Officers (BLOs) at selected in-person sessions
- Radio advertising in Yarra's top languages on CALD community radio and offering translated digital and printed materials (for selected consultations)
- Ensuring that alternative text is provided for online images
- Making our designs for printed materials visually accessible and easy to read with use of headings, white space, high contrast between the text and background and QR codes with links to find out more information
- Translation panels on all printed materials

We will investigate innovative options to continually increase reach, awareness and improve participation of our diverse community in our engagements.

Relevant legislation

Our community engagement practice is guided by the following Victorian Government legislation.

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*
- *Spam Act 2003*
- *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- *Disability Act 2006*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*

Appendix – Engagement Matrix for Council activities

Category number	Category definition	Engagement and Comms approach	Projects/ Project types
Category 1	Project includes 3 stages of engagement including deliberative engagement	**Stage 1 – Consultation** • Broad community engagement through Your Say Yarra with optional social research component. • Up to 9 in-person opportunities provided across Wards and targeted outreach • Promotion through standard communication channels: general social media, email newsletters, Yarra News magazine, distribution of collateral to Council buildings, CALD radio advertisement (within subscription), digital screens and social media advertisements Possible other promotion: • CALD newspaper advertisements • Street posters/billboards • Bi-cultural Liaison Officers outreach to networks • Videos • Other community newsletters such as Yarra Estates • Targeted engagement outreach across the municipality to underrepresented communities **Stage 2 – Deliberative** • Support the recruitment of the consultant and assist with the project scope • Promotion of EOI process for recruitment of participants through standard communication channels and social media advertising • Deliberative engagement sessions through Community Working Group or Community Panel facilitated by the consultant with an aim for equal representation of the community **Stage 3 - Consultation** • Broad community engagement check-in through Your Say Yarra • Up to 3 in-person opportunities provided across Wards and targeted outreach Promotion through: • Standard communication channels: general social media, email newsletters, Yarra News magazine, distribution of collateral to Council buildings, CALD radio advertisement (within subscription), digital screens • With additional promotion through other channels if required	• Council Plan • Community Vision • Asset Plan • Long Term Financial Plan (10-year plan) • Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan

Category number	Category definition	Engagement and Comms approach	Projects/ Project types
Category 2	Project involves 2 stages of engagement	**Stage 1 - Consultation** • Broad community engagement through Your Say Yarra • Up to 4 in-person opportunities provided across Wards for municipal-wide engagements or up to 3 for place-based, and targeted outreach Promotion through: • Standard communication channels: general social media, email newsletters, Yarra News magazine, distribution of collateral to Council buildings, CALD radio advertisement (within subscription), digital screens • Corflute signage (for place-based) • Letters and/or postcard drop to property owners and occupiers (place-based) • With additional promotion through other channels if required **Stage 2 - Consultation** • Broad community engagement check-in through Your Say Yarra • Up to 2 in-person opportunities provided across Wards for municipal-wide engagements or up to 2 for place-based and targeted outreach Promotion through: • Standard communication channels: general social media, email newsletters, Yarra News magazine, distribution of collateral to Council buildings, CALD radio advertisement (within subscription), digital screens • With additional promotion through other channels if required	• Local Law • Precinct wide road safety or traffic studies • Strategic Transport Corridors (NDC projects) • New Council Buildings or Redevelopment of Council Buildings i.e. Richmond Library
Category 3	Project involves 1 stage of engagement	**Single stage - Consultation** • Broad community engagement through Your Say Yarra • Up to 3 in-person opportunities provided across Wards for municipal-wide engagements or up to 2 for place-based and targeted outreach Promotion through: • Standard communication channels: general social media, email newsletters, Yarra News magazine, distribution of collateral to Council buildings, CALD radio advertisement (within subscription), digital screens • Corflute signage (for place-based) • Letters and/or postcard drop to property owners and occupiers (place-based) • With additional promotion through other channels if required	• Council Budget • Governance Rules • Strategies, Policies and plans (higher impact – people centric) • Playgrounds, play spaces and dog park upgrades • New Park (pocket parks) – follows a road discontinuance • Council building extensions (renewals) • Urban Design Frameworks

Category number	Category definition	Engagement and Comms approach	Projects/ Project types
Category 4	Project involves 1 stage of engagement	**Single stage - Consultation** • Broad community engagement through Your Say Yarra or another platform • Up to 2 in-person opportunities provided across Wards for municipal-wide engagements or up to 2 for place-based engagements and targeted outreach • Focus on targeted stakeholder engagement Promotion through: • Standard communication channels: general social media, email newsletters, Yarra News magazine, distribution of collateral to Council buildings, CALD radio advertisement (within subscription), digital screens • With additional promotion through other channels if required	• Strategies, policies and plans (low impact) such as the collection policy • Intersection upgrades, spot improvements, transport trials and pilots.
Category 5	Notification/ Inform with comments accepted from key affected stakeholders No content on Your Say Yarra page but clear methodology on how to provide feedback to project team Small level of influence	**Notification** • Comments provided by email, phone or a digital platform • Letters sent to directly affected key stakeholders and properties (occupiers only) • Comments from key affected stakeholders sought • Notice of Works – at least 7 days before works commence • Signage on site	• Tree planting and landscaping in streets

Category number	Category definition	Engagement and Comms approach	Projects/ Project types
Category 6	Notification with no space for change or feedback. Only designed to serve as a notification of project. No level of influence Conversations about timing	**Notification** • Letters sent to directly affected key stakeholders and properties (occupiers only) • Notice of Works – at least 7 days before works commence • Signage on site	• Tree planting and landscaping in parks • Turf replacements • Sports ground maintenance • Tree removal – safety reasons • Temporary road closure permits • Raised/wombat pedestrian crossings • Road humps / slow-points • Bike hoops and other bike facility upgrades • Footpath widening • Kerb outstands installation • Approved parklet applications • Stormwater/ drainage • Kerb and channel upgrades • Road maintenance • Line of sight/ safety concerns • Building maintenance • Announced changes to service provision

Statutory engagements

Category number	Category definition	Engagement and Comms approach	Projects/ Project types
Council Property Services			
Category 7	• Process guided by the *Local Government Act 1989* • Consultation	• 28 days submission • Advertised in newspaper, Council website and Your Say Yarra online engagement platform	Road Discontinuances
Category 7	• Process guided by *Local Government Act 2020* under section 112 and 114 • Consultation or Notification	**Consultation or Notification** If consultation is required: • Single stage of engagement • Advertised on Council website and Your Say Yarra online engagement platform for 28 days If notification: • News item on Council website	Land acquisition, disposal and exchange
Category 7	• Process is guided by the *Local Government Act 2020* under section 115C, including when consultation is required • Consultation or Notification	**Consultation or Notification** If consultation is required: • Single stage of engagement • Advertised on Council website and Your Say Yarra online engagement platform for 28 days If notification: • News item on Council website	Licensing and leasing of land

Category number	Category definition	Engagement and Comms approach	Projects/ Project types
Planning			
Category 7	• Process guided by *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. • 1 to 2 stages of consultation which is worked out on a case-by-case basis	**Consultation** • Submission or feedback process managed through Your Say Yarra online engagement platform • Promotion of engagement through required channels (e.g. Public Notice advertisements) - managed by project teams • With additional promotion through Council channels as required	Planning scheme amendments
Other			
Category 7	• Process guided by *Local Government Act 1989*, 2020 or other legislation • Consultation or Notification		Additional Fees and Charges outside of Budget process e.g. Special Charges
Category 8	• Projects managed by other organisations or State and Federal Government departments (where consistent with resolved position of Council)	**Notification or Consultation** • Letters • General social media • Content created, finalised and distributed by responsible organisation • Display of promotional materials at Council buildings on behalf of the third-party organisation.	• Flood mapping engagement • Upgrade works

Yarra City Council

PO Box 168, Richmond, VIC 3121
9205 5555
info@yarracity.vic.gov.au
yarracity.vic.gov.au

Customer service centres

Richmond Town Hall
333 Bridge Road, Richmond

Collingwood Town Hall
140 Hoddle Street, Abbotsford