

## 1 PURPOSE

This policy will guide the delivery of community engagement processes across the organisation to better inform planning, decision making, policy development and service delivery.

This policy aims to enhance the use of community engagement processes using best practice standards whilst also ensuring that workplace participants, Elected Members and the community understand their roles in community engagement processes.

## 2 SCOPE

This policy applies to all City of Darwin workplace participants and Elected Members.

## 3 POLICY STATEMENT

City of Darwin is committed to open, transparent and responsive community engagement.

City of Darwin recognises that residents and other stakeholders have diverse opinions, innovative ideas and a wealth of life experience, and that this information allows Council to better understand issues and provide services that are tailored to community needs.

City of Darwin aims to inform the public about decisions and to provide appropriate mechanisms for public participation in Council decision making to ensure that community needs and values are recognised in service planning and delivery.

Community engagement does not replace the decision-making functions of Elected Members; rather, it enhances and informs this decision making. Responsibility for the final decision rests with Council.

This policy operates in conjunction with City of Darwin’s Community Engagement Framework

### 3.1 SPECTRUM OF ENGAGEMENT

City of Darwin uses the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Engagement to guide our engagement process planning.

The example techniques provided in the table below may not all be used in a single engagement process. Communications tools and channels will be selected based on their suitability to the engagement topic at hand and the target audiences and objectives involved.

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**Inform-level engagement processes**

Goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.
Communication flow	One way
Our commitment to community	We will keep you informed.
The role of community	Listen
Engagement type	Informative
Example techniques	Fact sheets, websites, social media, advertising, public notices, newsletters, media release, signage, information sessions
Duration	Minimum one week

**Consult-level engagement processes**

Goal	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.
Communication flow	Two ways
Our commitment to community	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.
The role of community	Contribute
Engagement type	Consultative
Example techniques	Public comment, focus groups, surveys, community meeting
Duration	Minimum two weeks

**Involve-level engagement processes**

Goal	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.
Communication flow	Two ways
Our commitment to community	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.
The role of community	Participate
Engagement type	Deliberative
Example techniques	Workshops, advisory committees, reference groups, voting on options, interviews
Duration	Minimum six weeks

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**Collaborate-level engagement processes**

Goal	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.
Communication flow	Two ways
Our commitment to community	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.
The role of community	Partner
Engagement type	Deliberative
Example techniques	Participant-led workshops, project control groups
Duration	Minimum six weeks

**Empower-level engagement processes**

Goal	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
Communication flow	Two ways
Our commitment to community	We will implement what you decide.
The role of community	Lead
Engagement type	Deliberative
Example techniques	Ballots, delegated decision making, citizen juries
Duration	Minimum six weeks

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## 4 DEFINITIONS

**Community engagement** is a planned process with the specific purpose of working across organisations, stakeholders and communities to shape the decisions or actions of the members of the community, stakeholders or organisation in relation to a problem, opportunity, or outcome (International Association for Public Participation, 2014).

**Community** is an individual or a group of people united by at least one common characteristic such as geography, shared interests, values, experiences, or tradition.

**Elected Members** means the individuals holding the office of a member of Council in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2019*, also referred to as Councillors.

**Stakeholder** is an individual or group that has an interest in any Council decision or activity, including but not limited to Traditional Custodians and First Nations communities, other tiers of government and government agencies, businesses, educational institutes, not-for-profit organisations, visitors, community members, advocacy groups, emergency services and advisory committees.

## 5 LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES

- *Information Act NT 2002*
- *Local Government Act NT 2019*
- *Planning Act NT 1999*
- City of Darwin By-Laws 1994

## 6 PROCEDURES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

0015.100.E.R	Elected Member Protocols and Interactions Policy
0036.100.E.R	Caretaker Policy
0094.100.E.R	Breach of Code of Conduct – Elected Members
1040.010.I.N	Register of Delegations and Sub-Delegations
1310.010.I.R	Communications and Media Procedure
1310.100.E.R	Communications and Media Policy
1330.010.I.R	Social Media Procedure
1330.100.E.R	Social Media Policy
1350.010.E.R	Community Engagement Framework
1370.001.E.R	Image Management Form
1370.100.E.R	Image Management and Consent Policy
1380.001.E.R	Brand Guidelines
4000.010.I.R	Code of Conduct – Employees
	City of Darwin Reconciliation Action Plan

## 7 RESPONSIBILITY AND APPLICATION

The implementation, maintenance and compliance with this policy is the responsibility of the Executive Manager Marketing, Communications and Engagement.

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