



CITY OF VINCENT

COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY



Our vision: to be a connected and engaged community through greater participation in decision making.

(City of Vincent Strategic Community Plan 2018 – 2028)

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This vision will be achieved through application of the guiding principles, completion of the action items identified within the Strategy, and through our commitment to continually learn from our experiences and improve our practices.



Introduction

The City of Vincent (the City) is committed to continuously improving the way we engage with our community and stakeholders and providing the greatest opportunity available for our community to be involved in our decision-making process. Community and stakeholder engagement is invaluable in its ability to enhance Council’s capacity to make well-informed and sustainable decisions.

Under the Local Government Act 1995, every Local Government in Western Australia must develop a Strategic Community Plan (SCP), as part of an Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. The SCP represents the community’s long-term vision, values, aspirations, and priorities and what the City will do to help achieve them. This Strategy aims to support the SCP by becoming a connected and engaged community through meaningful and smarter community engagement activities.





The SCP 2018 – 2028 was informed by the *Imagine Vincent* campaign and has been the City's biggest ever community engagement initiative. The campaign asked the community what was important to them before starting the consultation and then took the consultation to places people actually wanted to go. This process included focused meetings, community conversations, social and traditional media, quick polls, surveys, on-going pop-up meetings (at the footy, coffee shops, bars, pubs, and schools), direct contacts, and creation and use of a Community Engagement Panel.

The City of Vincent and the *Imagine Vincent* campaign was recognised and awarded the *2018 International Association Public Participation (IAP2) Australasia Core Values Award for Community Development*. The *Imagine Vincent* campaign highlighted the importance of connecting with and involving the community wherever possible. It meant rethinking the way we engage, looking for new ways to remove barriers and being as accessible as possible.

The Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy (Strategy) and the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Policy (Policy) are designed to guide the way the City engages with its community and stakeholders to ensure that the community's views and aspirations are continually represented and help to inform the decisions made.

The Strategy is supported by the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Policy. The Policy considers the guiding principles identified below and details the process for developing community engagement activities. The Strategy and Policy will be used as the platform to guide and foster a commitment to working together so decisions are evidence-based and reflect the views of the people of Vincent.

IAP2 SPECTRUM OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation was designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's roles in any public participation process (IAP2 International Federation 2018). This approach has informed the City's Strategy and Policy and will be considered in all engagement activities.

WHO WILL USE THE STRATEGY?

The Strategy will be used by the City's Administration staff, Mayor and Elected Members, and will be available to the community for transparency and shared responsibility.

The Strategy will be continually reviewed and updated to ensure it reflects the City and community's views in relation to community engagement practices. A minor and major review of the Strategy will be undertaken every two and four years, respectively.



Guiding Principles

Public participation practices will be guided by the following principles. These principles have been developed from engagement with the Elected Members, administration and community members and are based on the IAP2 Core Values.

Make well informed decisions that are supported by evidence, aligned with strategic direction, and based on the needs and interests of everyone involved.

Hearing and understanding what is important to the community is essential in making well-informed decisions. The community are most affected by decisions made, highlighting the need to listen to and understand their opinions and experiences.

Before a decision is made, decisions makers should feel confident they have access to all relevant information, including but not limited to technical information, evidence, existing strategic direction and community views. This information will allow evidence-based decisions to be made that reflect the needs and interests of everyone (the community, stakeholders, and the City) involved.

The ability to make well informed decisions will ensure the City is accountable for its decisions and can easily explain the reasons behind them.

Hear and understand our community.

Communication is a core function of what we do and is vital to the success of delivering our services. Effective communication will ensure that the community have an opportunity to be involved, to be heard and to be understood. No matter who makes the first contact, we will take the time to hear and understand what our community has to say and use this information to inform our decisions.

Hearing and understanding what is important to our community also helps us to advocate for the community when the City is not the decision maker.

Meaningfully include the community in the decision-making process.

Involving the community as early as possible maximises their ability to influence decisions that affect them and helps to make better informed decisions, for the greater good of the community. It also creates a sense of ownership and belonging for the community.

We will understand who should be involved and engage them as early as possible, ensuring they are aware of the strategic intent of the project. Participants will be aware of how their influence aligns with the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation, how their participation will influence the outcomes of the subject project, and any future projects or outcomes that may be delivered thereafter. The engagement activities will be targeted and inclusive to encourage both widespread, but specific participation. For example, when a project will have a greater impact on the community, engagement activities will be designed to provide opportunity for maximum participation by removing as many barriers as possible. We will also be mindful of engagement fatigue and seek opportunities for joint engagement activities or designing activities that are targeted to those who are interested or affected. In each situation when we receive feedback, we will actively listen to what is being said.



Engage in a way that facilitates the involvement of impacted communities.

We know that different methods of engagement will reach different people and groups within our community. Through careful consideration of the engagement methods we use, we will make ourselves easily accessible to all members of the community who would like to connect with us. This includes identifying who might be hard to reach and understanding lifestyle constraints. We can then take action to remove barriers and plan engagement activities that allow the City to personally connect with the community.

Projects will be planned and aligned with the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation. This will increase the community's ability to be involved early and have ability to influence the direction and outcome of the project. We will go to the affected community and engage on site to ensure that interested, impacted and hard to reach groups are able to participate in decision making. Engagement activities will include the information needed so those who want to, can participate in a meaningful way. The information that is shared will be relevant, accurate and transparent. We will do our best to ensure everyone involved will understand what is being discussed, why it is important and what we can do about it. As a result, we will have mutually respectful dialogue and work together to achieve the best possible outcome.

Communicate before, during and after a decision is made.

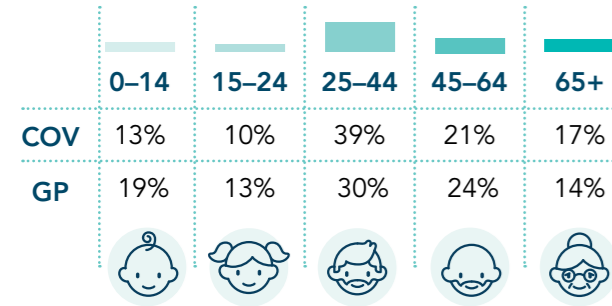
We manage many different projects and programs and deliver a large range of services to our community every day. All the projects, programs and services are aligned to the priorities in the Strategic Community Plan. We will work to ensure that community members are aware of any projects or works which may be of interest or affect them directly.

Different engagement methods will be used depending on the stage of the project and the purpose of the engagement activity. For example, a new project that has maximum level of influence available may use engagement methods that encourage comprehensive and open dialogue to seek solutions. As the project progresses, engagement methods may become more specific and seek direct feedback using surveys or written feedback.

No matter the stage of a project, engagement activities will occur as necessary to ensure the community is informed of how the project is progressing, how they can participate and how their input will be used. Lastly, when a decision is made the community will have access to the decision and the reasons for it. Those who provided feedback will be informed of how their input was considered as part of the decision-making process.

VINCENT AT A GLANCE

AGE (ABS 2016)



Vincent has a **lower proportion of young people** compared to Greater Perth. The **largest proportion of Vincent's population is aged 25 – 44 years old**. Vincent has a **greater proportion of persons aged 65+** compared to Greater Perth.

Because of our broad range of ages, we will provide a range of ways for people to engage with the City.

EDUCATION (ABS 2016)

Vincent has **40.8% of people with a bachelor's degree or above**, compared to **22.9% in Greater Perth**.

Although Vincent has a highly educated community, engagement activities should be designed so that everyone can participate if they want to.

DIVERSITY (ABS 2016)

3.9% of the population within the **City of Vincent and Greater Perth** require assistance for core activities.

To ensure that everyone can engage with us and participate in the decision-making process, engagement activities should be as accessible and inclusive as possible.

When compared to Greater Perth (2%), the **City of Vincent (0.9%)** has a slightly lower **proportion** of persons who are **Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders**.

The City of Vincent acknowledges the traditional lands of the Whadjuk Noongar people. We will strengthen our relationship with persons who are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders by continuing to have conversations and seeking input from the Whadjuk Working Group.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS (ABS 2016)

Of the people living in Vincent who are employed, **61.5% work full-time** and **31% work part-time**.

FAMILY COMPOSITION (ABS 2016)

Within Vincent, **48% of households are made up of a couple family without children** and **49.4% of households include children**.

Lifestyle constraints often affect people's ability to participate in engagement activities. Understanding typical lifestyles will help to plan suitable engagement activities around the needs of the community members.

UNPAID WORK (ABS 2016)

Vincent has a large population that undertakes unpaid work, being:

- **21.6% of the population** have reported doing some form of **voluntary work**;
- **8.5% of the population** provided **unpaid assistance** to a person with a disability, long term illness or old aged persons; and
- **21.7% of people aged 15+** provided **unpaid care to children**.

The City of Vincent acknowledges and values unpaid work that supports home and community life. Understanding our community's commitments will help to plan suitable engagement activities around the needs of the community members.

LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH (ABS 2016)

25.9% of the households in Vincent speak a language other than English. Other languages spoken includes, but is not limited to Italian, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Cantonese, and Spanish.

Of those who speak a language other than English, **18.2% speak English well or very well** and **3.7% do not speak English well or not at all**.

Plain English will be used and translation services will be available so that everyone can understand what is being said.

DWELLING TYPES (ABS 2016)

Vincent has a **higher proportion of flats or apartments (26.6%)** and **lower proportion of separate houses (51.2%)**, compared to **Greater Perth which comprises 6.6% flats or apartments and 76.9% separate houses**.

Vincent is more densely populated than Greater Perth. Engagement activities should be targeted, but accessible. Opportunities to minimise engagement fatigue should also be investigated.



PREFERRED METHODS OF ENGAGEMENT (COV COMMUNITY WORKSHOP 2020)

Community members have identified the preferred methods of engagement include email, social media, local newspaper, website, letters, newsletters and personal contact (City of Vincent Community Workshop, 2020).

These preferred methods will be considered when selecting appropriate engagement activities to suit the needs of the project.



OUR STAKEHOLDERS

- **Community members** – residents, rate payers, customers, visitors
- **Businesses** – local businesses, suppliers, contractors, service providers
- **Government** – other LG's, state government, federal government
- **Industry associations and peak bodies** – i.e. Western Australian Local Government Association
- **Community interest groups** – Town teams, community groups, sporting associations, schools
- **Inclusion groups** – people with disabilities, culturally and linguistically diverse, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, Seniors, Youth and Young People, LGBTIQ+
- **Internal** – Mayor and Councillors, Administration Staff

Understanding who our stakeholders are allows us to better understand how we can build relationships and engage with them.

What is Community and Stakeholder Engagement?

Community engagement is an intentional 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 (IAP2) Australasia 2020).

The word **'community'** includes individuals and groups of people; stakeholders, interest groups and citizen groups (IAP2 Australasia 2020). This includes our residents, ratepayers, business owners, community groups, customers, employees and visitors in Vincent.

The word **'stakeholder'** defines individuals, a group of individuals, organisations or a political entity with a specific stake in the outcome of the City's decisions.

The word **'engagement'** describes the interaction we have with our community and stakeholders and includes terms such as communication, participation, consultation and customer service.



Why we engage?

We live in a complex environment. Our population is ageing and becoming increasingly urbanised, technology is advancing rapidly, and people can access information quicker than ever before. To adapt to these changes the City must understand and be more responsive to environmental impacts, financial constraints, and the needs of its community members. This ensures it can act in the best interest of everyone and be accountable to all decisions made.

To be responsive to our changing environment, the City relies on the community to understand what is most important to them. Community and stakeholder engagement are the driving force that enable the City to lead change, helping to:

- Make better decisions.
- Decisions are consistent with community interests and values.
- Increase community ownership of decision making.
- Build advocates for decisions in the community.
- Keep our community informed of what we are doing.
- Keep the City informed of key themes within the community.
- Meet statutory obligations.

Where do we want to be?

When we engage meaningfully, we maximise the opportunity to understand what is important to the community and stakeholders. This helps us to make informed decisions that are aligned with the key priorities of the Strategic Community Plan 2018 - 2028.

Our stakeholders can contribute significantly to the decision-making and problem-solving process. People who are interested and/or affected by a project can help us as they will:

- Be aware and understand key issues or potential improvements within the community.
- Understand the context, issues and potential impacts.
- Establish whether further research is needed into the problem.
- Assist us with creative solutions that can address the concerns of the Council and the community.

When the community is confident that their opinions will be heard and will influence the decision or result in an action, they are more likely to participate in the process, leading the decision-makers to be more confident in the decisions they are making. When we engage effectively, the community and the Council will benefit in the following ways:

COMMUNITY	COUNCIL
Improved participation in Council's decisions	The process provides the ability for interested and affected community members to participate
Feelings of inclusion and confidence that opinions will be heard	Increased understanding of community issues
Shared vision and a better understanding of Council strategies, policies, projects and decisions	Decisions are informed by an understanding of community values, feelings, opinions and aspirations
The information included for consultation is accurate, and it is understood why comments are being sought	Projects can be prioritised to meet the needs and wants of the community
Increased ownership of projects within the City	Gains early buy-in and strengthened trust
Strengthened relationship with the City	Better project and service delivery outcomes
Better understanding of the perspectives of others in the community	Build more resilient relationships with the community
Increased confidence in one's ability to participate in community engagement activities.	Increased opportunity for community participation by excluding technical jargon and ensuring information shared is user friendly and accessible.



How will we get there?

ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBILITY
Implementation of the Strategy	
Comment: The City's Policy No. 4.1.5 Consultation Policy was formally adopted in 2014. A major review has not been undertaken since then. This presents opportunity to review the existing Consultation Policy and our practices to ensure our community engagement activities align with the vision and principles of the Strategy.	
Action 1.1: Develop a Community and Stakeholder Engagement Policy to guide how the City will engage with its community, taking into consideration the guiding principles of the Strategy. Timeframe: 2020/21	Policy & Place
Action 1.2: Develop a Community and Stakeholder Engagement Toolkit (comprising of guidelines, information sheets and templates) to assist staff in delivering community engagement plans. Timeframe: 2021	Policy & Place
Action 1.3: Review internal processes for community consultation as part of the Promapp process. Timeframe: 2021/22	Marketing & Partnerships
Action 1.4: Develop a Marketing and Communications Plan, including a live community and stakeholder engagement calendar to help strategic planning of engagement activities and avoid engagement fatigue. Timeframe: 2020/21	Marketing & Partnerships
Training and development	
Comment: The Strategy adopts the IAP2 approach to community engagement. Training in community and stakeholder engagement would improve the City's success in delivering the vision of the Strategy and improve our engagement practices.	
Action 2.1: Develop and implement a training and development plan for City staff and Elected Members to achieve the guiding principles and outcomes outlined within the Strategy. Timeframe: 2021/22	Human Resources
Improved information sharing	
Comment: The Strategic Community Plan 2018 – 2028 identifies the need to improve access to information on all that we offer to our community and to provide a single location for all information sharing. This presents an opportunity to review our existing resources (such as the City of Vincent website). Connecting with our community groups and researching other best practice efforts locally, nationally and internationally will inform how we can improve how we share information.	
Action 3.1: Review and update the City of Vincent website and other digital platforms, considering the quality and effectiveness of information provided. Timeframe: 2022	Marketing & Partnerships

ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBILITY
Action 3.2: Investigate ways to remove barriers of sharing information and participating in engagement activities and implement more effective ways to engage with our community and stakeholders. Timeframe: 2022	Marketing & Partnerships
Action 3.3: Develop information sheets for connecting and engaging with minority and other hard to reach groups. Timeframe: 2022	Marketing & Partnerships
Action 3.4: Review the City's practices for targeted engagement with professionals and skilled community members to ensure most effective use of these resources. Timeframe: 2022	Marketing & Partnerships
Action 3.5: Establish a Community Engagement Panel Timeframe: 2021/22	Marketing & Partnerships
Action 3.6: Develop a guide to support planning location-based engagement activities for significant projects. Timeframe: 2022	Marketing & Partnerships
Reviewing and reporting	
Comment: Understanding the results of our community engagement practice will inform the decisions we make. Similarly, regular review and report of the Strategy will ensure our engagement activities align with the community's views and aspirations.	
Action 4.1: Develop a consistent approach to reporting on community engagement outcomes to Council so they are provided with the relevant information to make an informed decision. Timeframe: 2022	Marketing & Partnerships Governance
Action 4.2: Research and implement ways to seek feedback on community engagement activities and outcomes. Timeframe: 2022	Marketing & Partnerships
Action 4.3: Undertake a minor and major review of the Strategy every two and four years, respectively. This should include yearly surveys to understand community perceptions and review of whether engagement activities and practices are achieving the desired outcomes of the Guiding Principles, and improvements implemented. Timeframe: Next minor review 2022/23	Policy & Place Marketing & Partnerships



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This document is available in other formats and languages upon request.