# **This version of Guideline for effective stakeholder engagement: Planning for settlements exposed to natural hazard and climate change risks March 2022 has been prepared for use with screen reader software. The printed publication may contain design features that have been necessarily omitted from this version. In other respects, this document contains identical text to that in the PDF version of the document which is available at** [**www.delwp.vic.gov.au/planning**](http://www.delwp.vic.gov.au/planning)**.**

# **Guideline for effective stakeholder engagement**

## Planning for settlements exposed to natural hazard and climate change risks

## March 2022

Photo credit | Visit Victoria | Rob Blackburn

## Acknowledgment

We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it.

We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

We are committed to genuinely partner, and meaningfully engage, with Victoria's Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities to support the protection of Country, the maintenance of spiritual and cultural practices and their broader aspirations in the 21st century and beyond.

## **Preface**

The Guideline for effective stakeholder engagement (Guideline) is an initiative under Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 Direction 6.2 to ‘reduce the likelihood and consequences of natural hazard events and adapt to climate change’. It delivers on Action 86 of the Plan Melbourne 20172050 Five Year Implementation Plan as a strategic response to strengthen ‘whole-of-settlement adaption and risk mitigation strategies’.

The Guideline has been developed by the Planning Group, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) for strategic land use planners and has been informed by a consultation process. It builds on research and analysis into current stakeholder engagement practice undertaken as part of the strategic planning of settlements exposed to natural hazard and climate change risks.

Engaging stakeholders, including communities is an important part of settlement planning when deciding locations for new settlements and urban growth, particularly where there is exposure to natural hazard and climate change risks. This includes considering the impact of settlement planning on natural hazards. It is a Victorian regulatory requirement for local and state governments when undertaking planning scheme amendments and should involve stakeholders across a range of agencies and organisations, business and industry representatives and community members.

The Guideline provides a resource for how to undertake, and achieve effective engagement outcomes, including when required by regulation. Effective engagement provides opportunities for stakeholders to inform key stages and decisions in the strategic settlement planning process, build local capacity and knowledge and establish a shared resilience vision for communities.

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## Definitions

* **Collaboration**. The process of working together to solve a problem.
* **Communication.** Imparting or exchanging information or ideas, utilising a range of channels and mediums.
* **Community**. A group of people who live in the same geographical area or have a shared background, interest, affiliation or membership.
* **Consultation**. Seeking feedback or advice on a select topic or project.
* **Engagement**. A process to strengthen relationships, increase local knowledge and inform decision making.
* **Hazard**. A source of potential harm or a situation with a potential to cause loss.
* **Inclusion**. The practices that allow all people to feel valued and respected. This is irrespective of age, disability, gender, religion, sexual preference or nationality. This is evident when anyone who wishes to can fully participate. This means they can access, understand, and contribute their perspectives and talents to the engagement.
* **Partnership**. Two or more people or organisations working in a formalised relationship with a clear sense of purpose. Accountabilities and responsibilities are shared.
* **Process.** A relationship between key steps, activities, tasks, policies and/or resources.
* **Public**. Individuals who live, work, visit or have an interest in a defined place.
* **Risk**. The likelihood and consequence of a hazard, including the impacts on people, property and the environment.
* **Stakeholders**. Individuals or organisations, which affect, or can be affected by project decisions. Organisations can include not-for-profit and community-based groups, business and industry, and volunteer networks. They may also include other departments or agencies across federal, state and local government.

# **1. Introduction**

## 1.1 Purpose

The Guideline will assist strategic land use planners to engage with stakeholders, including communities, when undertaking settlement planning. It supports active stakeholder involvement in the early stages, and throughout the settlement planning process to help communities understand and respond to natural hazards that may affect them. Reference made to natural hazards throughout the document means the risks they pose and their impacts exacerbated by climate change.

## The objectives of the Guideline are:

* Set out a proactive engagement process to support settlement planning using a principles based approach.
* Provide tools to undertake detailed stakeholder analysis to support engagement and build local knowledge.
* Describe the stakeholder engagement process, including who, when and how to engage.
* Describe how the Guideline relates to other relevant planning engagement and consultation processes, government policies and the Victorian planning system.
* Provide information and examples about how to engage communities on the impacts of natural hazard risks.
* Engage with Traditional Owner groups throughout the settlement planning process.
* Demonstrate how local insights and technical knowledge and information can strengthen the planning process for settlement planning.

## 1.2 Why do we need the Guideline?

The Victorian Government’s policy is to achieve safer and more resilient communities. Encouraging input on settlement planning from a wide range of stakeholders, and being inclusive, will lead to improved preparation for, and response to natural hazard risks affecting where communities live and work.

Research tells us that either a ‘people’ or ‘risk’ focused direction is usually taken when engaging stakeholders on natural hazards. In Victoria, planners generally apply a ‘risk’ focus to engagement.

The engagement approach for this Guideline supports the integration of a ‘people’ and ‘risk’ focus, to ensure the inclusion of views from a wide range of stakeholders.

## 1.3 When to use the Guideline?

The Guideline should be used at any stakeholder engagement stage of a settlement planning project, including when undertaking engagement and consultation for planning scheme amendments to meet the requirements under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (the Act).

The Guideline applies when preparing strategic planning documents, such as regional growth plans, local settlement plans, including structure plans and precinct structure plans, and planning scheme reviews involving areas of natural hazards.

The engagement approach can be adapted to suit a project’s specific need, recognising that each project is different in the context of engaging the community. It can also be informed by relevant state-endorsed natural hazard and climate change adaptation guidance.

## 1.4 What are the natural hazards?

The Guideline only addresses engagement on natural hazards. Climate change will have a significant impact on the way natural hazards are managed in future as it exacerbates the impacts of events.

Natural hazards are a source of potential harm or a situation with a potential to cause loss. Not all natural hazards are relevant to settlement planning in Victoria. Natural hazards can include:

**Bushfire.** A fire, occurring in bushland and grassland hazards, but which can also consume houses or agricultural resources.

**Coastal.** A coastal hazard can include erosion and inundation.

**Drought.** A prolonged period of abnormally low rainfall, leading to a shortage of water.

**Flood.** A flood occurs when water inundates land which is usually dry. Flood includes stormwater and rivers.

**Heatwave.** A period of uncharacteristically hot weather, generally lasting several days.

**Landslide.** The movement of mass earth materials down a slope.

**Severe Storm**

Includes:

• windstorms

• dust storms

• blizzards

• storm tides

• severe thunderstorms (including hailstorms, tornadoes and heavy rain).

# **2. Role of the Guideline**

## Existing engagement requirements

The Guideline is not prescriptive. It is not a substitute for the engagement and consultation undertaken by a planning authority to meet the requirements under the Act for a planning scheme amendment. It assists a planning authority to enhance engagement associated with this process.

The Guideline should be used to inform broader engagement beyond those processes associated with the Act. Section 7 outlines when extra attention should be given to engagement practice.

Figure 1 below summarises the mandatory or discretionary stages of engagement and consultation for a relevant planning scheme amendment.

## Figure 1: Summary of stakeholder engagement on planning scheme amendments

**Stage of amendment**

1 Requesting an amendment

**Engagement process**

Requests:

• by individuals - discuss with relevant council

• by councils - discuss with relevant DELWP regional office

• within an area planned by Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) discuss with the VPA.

**Engagement requirement**

Discretionary

**Stage of amendment**

2 Authorisation

Engagement process Not applicable

**Stage of amendment**

3 Preparation for Exhibition

**Engagement process**

Strategic planners may undertake engagement with stakeholders or the community to inform the proposal.

Note: bushfire must be addressed in amendment documentation and include the views of the relevant fire authority.

**Engagement requirement**

Discretionary

**Stage of amendment**

4 Exhibition

**Engagement process**

Section 19 of Act requires the listed stakeholders:

* are notified of the proposed amendment
* have access to view relevant documentation
* can make a submission about a proposal

Note: Planning authorities and the Minister for Planning may be exempt from the Act requirements. Engagement requirement

Mandatory

**Stage of amendment**

5 Submissions, panel and advisory committees

**Engagement process**

* Submissions made to the planning authority if notice has been given.
* Request for advisory committee (by anyone other than Minister for Planning).
* Amendment referred to panel if planning authority does not accept submissions seeking to change amendment.
* Submitters can present at a panel hearing.

**Engagement requirement**

Mandatory/Discretionary

**Stage of amendment**

6 Adoption

**Engagement process**

Adoption of amendment by resolution of the planning authority.

**Engagement requirement**

Mandatory

**Stage of amendment**

7 Approval

**Engagement process**

Minister for Planning can require further consultation/consideration on amendment.

**Engagement requirement**

Discretionary

# **3. Engagement approach**

## There is a range of Victorian and national government policies and frameworks to address the resilience of communities.

Figure 2 lists those reviewed, providing an overview of current policies and standard practices when engaging stakeholders in settlement planning. They emphasise the importance of engaging stakeholders while responding to natural hazards.

Although aligned in the need for engaging stakeholders, overall approaches show different focus areas of engagement: either a ‘people’ or ‘risk’ focus. Having a focus in one area does not mean the other area is disregarded or is less important. For example, a policy might have a risk focus, but within this priority, people still play a large role.

The ‘risk-focused’ approach uses engagement with stakeholders to identify, analyse, evaluate and mitigate risk. Based on feedback from natural resource managers and emergency services, the engagement practice of strategic planners lends itself more towards a ‘risk-focused’ approach to considering how natural hazards impact settlement planning. This is likely influenced by planning policies that advocate a risk-based approach to planning, then determining the engagement approach to meet statutory requirements.

The ‘people-focused’ approach recognises that for communities and their settlements to be resilient and safe, communities need to be at the centre of decision making and participate in prevention and mitigation approaches. Policies and frameworks with this focus consider engagement essential for the development of resilient and safe communities. For settlement planning this means engaging with stakeholders early in the settlement planning process to create a tailored response.

Interviews with planners found that when strategic planners engage outside of the Act requirements for planning scheme amendments, engagement.

generally had a ‘people’ focus that set different expectations for engagement.

The Guideline supports both a ‘people’ and ‘risk’ approach. It equips strategic planners with tools to

consider the integration of ‘people’ as well as ‘risk’ in their engagement approach through connection and collaboration.

## Figure 2: Engagement focus of the policies and frameworks reviewed

**Focus**

PEOPLE

**Policies and Framework**

Focus area:

Documents put stakeholders at the centre. Key themes include empowering, connection, collaboration, acting as one, building knowledge, and working better together.

**Policies and Frameworks:**

Emergency Management Victoria 2017,

Community Resilience Framework for

Emergency Management 2017, State of Victoria

Emergency Management Victoria 2019,

Victorian Emergency Management

Strategic Action Plan Update #4 2019–2022, State of Victoria

Department of Environment, Land,

Water and Planning 2018, DELWP

Community Charter , State of Victoria

Department of Premier and Cabinet,

Public Engagement Framework 2021, State of Victoria

Victorian Auditor-General’s Office 2015,

Public Participation in Government

Decision-making: Better practice guide

**Focus**

RISK

**Policies and Framework**

Focus area:

Documents have a risk mitigation focus. In these examples, different stakeholders are involved at key points in the decision-making process to identify, analyse, evaluate and treat risks.

Policies and Frameworks:

Australian Standard AS5334:2013, Climate change adaptation for settlements and infrastructure – A risk-based approach, Standards Australia

Victoria State Government 2015, Safer Together: A new approach to reducing the risk of bushfire in Victoria , State of Victoria

Victoria State Government 2016,

Victoria’s Climate Change Adaptation

Plan 2017–2020, State of Victoria

# **4. Engagement principles**

## There are eight engagement principles that provide a basic reference to good stakeholder engagement.

If each of the principles can be considered in the design and delivery of the engagement, planners should be confident a quality outcome will be achieved.

These principles should always be applied in ways that suit your engagement. They acknowledge that each engagement has a different purpose, and each community will have different external influences.

The eight principles listed in Figure 3 include the intended approach to deliver on the principles.

## Figure 3: Engagement principles

**PRINCIPLE**

We work with Victorian Traditional Owner groups from the outset

**APPROACH**

* Make contact and invite engagement with the Traditional Owner groups at the earliest stage of the project.
* Ask if and how they wish to be engaged and their required timeframes.
* Should a request to participate be accepted, build clear communication channels and pursue regular dialogue.

**PRINCIPLE**

We have a clear engagement purpose

**APPROACH**

* Identify and communicate the purpose of the engagement, including negotiable and non-negotiable elements.
* Communicate how information will be considered during the decision making process.

**PRINCIPLE**

We identify stakeholders who are impacted and/or interested

**APPROACH**

* Identify all stakeholders by undertaking a stakeholder analysis.
* Understand their interests in the project.

**PRINCIPLE**

We use a range of different tools and techniques

**APPROACH**

* Ask stakeholders how they would like to be engaged, understand their capacity to be involved, and how they can be accommodated.
* Use a range of complementary and tailored engagement approaches including conventional and online activities.

**PRINCIPLE**

We provide information to build community capacity and knowledge

**APPROACH**

* Provide the community with information about settlement planning, relevant natural hazards, and climate change.
* Respond to any community questions or concerns during the planning process.
* We strengthen stakeholder and engagement processes ensuring information is considered in decision making
* Respect existing engagement processes by providing approaches that can be integrated with those already established.

**PRINCIPLE**

We are respectful, fair and equitable towards all stakeholders

**APPROACH**

* Provide a variety of opportunities for stakeholders to openly express their views and opinions, including vulnerable groups and Traditional Owner groups.
* Recognise that stakeholders may have conflicting issues and provide space for open discussion.
* Provide flexible opportunities for stakeholders to participate.
* Check-in with your own feelings and potential biases towards stakeholders.

**PRINCIPLE**

We provide feedback on process outcomes and how decisions were made

**APPROACH**

• Publish updates and final outcomes of engagement using relevant forms of communication.

# **5. Why engage?**

## Stakeholder engagement is important in the development of all strategic planning processes.

The purpose and style of engagement depends on a range of factors including, the objectives, locations, stakeholders involved, and the time available.

There are two key reasons to undertake engagement with stakeholders when settlements are exposed to natural hazards:

1. **Building community understanding, adaptability and resilience**

Engagement with stakeholders can lead to a deeper understanding of unique and diverse communities, including their needs, strengths, and vulnerabilities.

Engagement creates stronger and more trusting relationships. It provides people with information to build their own understanding of the social, economic and environmental costs and to consider the consequences of adaptation, mitigation or retreat, and even maladaptation.

Stakeholder engagement through a settlement planning project strengthens local networks and enables planners to understand the roles people play in a community. It also enables individuals and groups to understand their role in planning settlements while accounting for natural hazards.

1. **Building technical understanding in identifying and mitigating risks**

Stakeholder engagement provides an opportunity for planners, project partners, and the community to share knowledge, expertise, and better identify the risks associated with natural hazards.

By bringing a range of stakeholders into the engagement process a comprehensive view of risks will be obtained from a range of perspectives. It may identify:

* potential policy conflicts
* appropriate mitigation measures (short, medium and long-term)
* the capacity to adapt from different perspectives, such as community resilience, strategic planning and built form
* potential maladaptation
* that no mitigation measures are possible.

Risks should also be considered in the context of community values. Broad engagement helps planners to better understand the values of the built and natural environments that communities would like to see preserved and protected.

Often the identification of risks is iterative, occurring at multiple points in the planning process.

# **6. Who to engage?**

## A stakeholder is any person or organisation that can affect, be affected by, or perceive themselves to be affected by a decision or activity.

Engagement should include representatives from diverse sectors, including local communities, Traditional Owner groups, government, agencies, experts, business and industry. Seeking out participation from each of these cohorts will enable a vast range of experiences, impacts and interests to be identified and understood.

Engagement must prioritise the sharing of information and collaboration between stakeholder groups. Importantly, consider whether there is diversity in a project stakeholder list, and if stakeholders will face barriers that limit or block their ability to participate, and how these can be overcome. Think through other participation constraints, such as resources, to help determine how stakeholders can be engaged.

Figure 4, is an indicative example of key stakeholders, arranged by level of interest and influence. A similar approach should be taken to define the unique stakeholders of each project.

The Appendix to this document provides a stakeholder resource list, describing each stakeholder’s role, likely interest in the settlement planning process, and potential level of involvement in the decision-making process.

Figure 4: Example of stakeholders by level of influence.

Note: The list is non-exhaustive and does not replicate all stakeholders in the Appendix.

**LEVEL OF INFLUENCE**

**Inform -** Provide factual information

Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Group

Parks Victoria

Victoria Police

**Consult -** Seek feedback or advice

Ambulance Victoria

Department of

Education and Training

Environment Protection Authority

Industry ‘peak body groups’

Research Organisations

Life Saving Victoria

**Involve** - Provide a two-way exchange of information

Community groups, Friends of groups, Progress Associations (etc)

Department of Transport

Land Development and Subdivision Industry

Landowners and occupiers

Municipal Fire Prevention

Officers

Utility Providers

**Collaborate** - Work together to solve a problem

Country Fire Authority

Fire Rescue Victoria

Floodplain Management Authorities (Catchment Management Authorities/Melbourne Water)

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

Emergency Management

Committees – state, regional and municipal Local Government

Registered Aboriginal Parties

Traditional Owner groups

Victorian Planning

Authority

# **7. When to engage?**

## Engagement on strategic settlement planning needs to start early, and continue throughout the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages.

Figure 5 outlines an indicative approach on when to engage, including when it is required under the Act for planning scheme amendments. It includes broad stages of engagement from background planning to the evaluation of the planning process. It also lists examples of key stakeholders to engage with and potential questions.

## Figure 5: Engagement approach

**Settlement planning stages and purpose**

**Stage 1**

Background and existing conditions

* Gather baseline information relevant to the site or locality

**Engagement requirements under the Act**

N/A

**Example stakeholders**

Traditional Owner groups,

Registered Aboriginal Parties, relevant fire authority, DELWP, committees of management, FMA/ CMA, Local Government,

Victoria Police, VICSES, VPA, affected landowners and occupiers.

**Example questions\ Examples only, not in order of priority, nor an exhaustive list and only relate to natural hazards.**

* What is your knowledge of the site?
* What do you consider to be the key planning considerations relating to natural hazards and climate change?
* Has the site been subject to any specific land management techniques to manage natural hazards and the impacts of climate change?
* Have there been any natural hazard events that caused major impacts on the settlement or surrounding area in the past?
* What were the main effects that you know of?
* Are you aware of any changes or lessons learned following these events?
* What are the likely future changes to risk?

**Settlement planning stages and purpose**

**Stage 2**

Visioning, issues and opportunities

* Identify and analyse issues and opportunities
* Develop a statement, concepts or principles to guide plan.
* Develop options or scenarios.
* Engage with stakeholders to develop vision, identify issues, opportunities, and options for testing/ investigation.

**Engagement requirements under the Act**

N/A

**Example stakeholders**

Traditional Owner groups,

Registered Aboriginal

Parties, broader community (Community group, Friends of groups, Progress Associations), relevant fire authority,

FMA/CMA, DELWP, Local

Government, Victoria Police, VICSES, VPA, affected landowners and occupiers.

**Example questions\ Examples only, not in order of priority, nor an exhaustive list and only relate to natural hazards.**

* How can the effects of natural hazards and climate change be better managed or reduced on the site?
* What are the opportunities and constraints for this proposal?
* What are the risks that need to be managed?
* Have hazards been identified and mapped?
* Has risk been analysed?
* How do you think future hazards may change development?
* How do you think future development may change hazards – potential maladaptation?
* Have areas most likely to be affected by a changing climate been identified?
* Are there particular vulnerabilities in the region that affect the capacity to respond to hazard events (for example, age profile, resource)?
* What are the key timescales and priorities for addressing specific threats?
* Have emerging options been tested against different climatic scenarios and other circumstances (such as change in local population, less resources, two successive events, for example pandemic and then a fire)?

**Settlement planning stages and purpose**

**Stage 3**

Draft Plan

* Develop a draft plan/ strategy
* Undertake engagement on draft plan
* Present updated draft to panel or advisory committee.

**Engagement requirements under the Act**

Post authorisation, exhibit amendment unless exemption applies.

Referral of submissions/consideration of amendment to a panel or Advisory Committee.

Consideration of panel / Advisory Committee recommendation report.

**Example stakeholders**

Traditional Owner groups, Registered Aboriginal Parties, affected landowners and occupiers, broader community (Community group, Friends of groups, Progress Associations), relevant fire authority, FMA/ CMA, DELWP, Local Government, Victoria Police, utility providers, VSES, VPA.

**Example questions\ Examples only, not in order of priority, nor an exhaustive list and only relate to natural hazards.**

* Does the plan adequately address relevant policy, strategy and guidance regarding the natural hazards?
* Is the information on natural hazards clear and concise?
* Does any of the language or content relating to natural hazards need to be changed or strengthened?
* Do you have any other feedback on the draft plan and how it responds to the risk of natural hazards?
* Is any critical information to assist with developing the plan not available? If so, what approach is in place to resolve this shortfall.

**Settlement planning stages and purpose**

**Stage 4**

Approval of Final Plan

* Council resolution to apply for approval.
* Minister decides
* Decision gazetted.

**Engagement requirements under the Act**

Adoption and approval of amendment

**Example stakeholders**

* Engagement with key stakeholders involved in process.

**Example questions\ Examples only, not in order of priority, nor an exhaustive list and only relate to natural hazards.**

* Communicate approved changes.

**Settlement planning stages and purpose**

**Stage 5: Evaluate**

* Evaluate the plan/ strategy and engagement process.

**Engagement requirements under the Act**

N/A

**Example stakeholders**

* Engagement with key stakeholders involved in process.

**Example questions\ Examples only, not in order of priority, nor an exhaustive list and only relate to natural hazards.**

* Could the plan and engagement process have been done differently?
* Can you identify opportunities to improve future processes?

**Settlement planning stages and purpose**

Stage 6 (out of scope)

**Implement and evaluate plan**

* Implement the plan/ strategy
* Evaluate the settlement planning process

**Engagement requirements under the Act**

N/A

**Example stakeholders**

* Engagement with key stakeholders involved in process.

**Example questions\ Examples only, not in order of priority, nor an exhaustive list and only relate to natural hazards.**

Create and implement separate communications and engagement plan.

# **8. How to engage?**

## This section outlines how to design a stakeholder engagement process based on leading practice engagement approaches.

Follow the steps below to ensure the engagement program is strategic, purposeful and accessible. The steps should be aligned with the engagement principles in Section 4.

**Step 1: Define your purpose**

A purpose is a broad statement that defines what you plan to do during and after the engagement. It is important to start the engagement process by defining its scope and purpose, and to communicate the parameters of the engagement broadly and clearly.

Tips for defining the purpose include:

* Use the right language. The term ‘engagement’ can have different meanings or definitions depending on an organisation’s sector, resources, intent and stakeholders and communities involved.
* Use engagement tools such as the IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum to help define your purpose.
* Speak to people with diverse experiences and interests in the project to ensure the purpose meets the needs of all internal stakeholders.
* Research similar engagement programs and contact those involved to hear their reflections and lessons learnt.

**Step 2: Design your objectives**

At the beginning of any engagement the objectives should be clearly defined so stakeholders understand the process and intended outcomes.

Objectives also need to be commonly understood and ‘owned’ by the broader project team. They should be carefully worded to accurately represent the project purpose and to avoid any misunderstanding. This will also allow for effective monitoring and evaluation of the project.

Tips for designing objectives include:

* Keep them meaningful and succinct.
* Use accessible and appropriate language.
* Present the objectives in a logical order.
* Develop both process and content objectives; process being the how, content being the what.

**Step 3: Identify the negotiables and non-negotiables**

It is important to identify the negotiable and nonnegotiable elements of the project.

By identifying and understanding what is negotiable, it is possible to:

* Clearly communicate and provide information about what decisions have already been made.
* Identify and communicate what is outside your sphere of influence or project scope.
* Clarify the areas that the decision-makers are seeking to engage with stakeholders and the community.
* Be honest with stakeholders and the community about what outcomes will and will not be possible as a result of the engagement and the project.
* Clearly defined and communicated non-negotiable elements avoid unrealistic expectations and minimise the risk of conflict or confusion.
* Tips for identifying negotiables and non-negotiables include:
* Include all relevant project team members and partners in the conversation.
* Try to list as many negotiables and non-negotiables as you can.
* Consider each phase or stage and consider all streams of work being completed.
* Think of additional elements which could be negotiated to complement the project, such as creating events or establishing reference groups or programs.

**Step 4: Understand the stakeholders**

Determining who should participate in the engagement is a key stage in planning for engagement as outlined in Section 6.

Each engagement project involves different groups of people with varied ideas about the issue. It is very important to identify the people or groups who are affected by or have influence on the project, and to understand their level of interest in the project, their motivations, and their ability to participate in the engagement process.

Develop a comprehensive list and deep understanding of the relevant stakeholders by following these steps:

**1. Research your stakeholders**

* Learn about public perception of the project.
* Consider past experiences and previous engagement with stakeholders concerning similar issues.
* Identify your stakeholders
* Create a list of key stakeholders and stakeholder groups. Work with a cross section of staff within your organisation to identify all potential stakeholders.
* R each out to other organisations and community members.
* Consider advertising in local papers and other media.
* Prioritise your stakeholders
* Create a list that identifies the stakeholders most likely to be highly affected by the outcomes of your project.
* Identify who might find it harder to participate in the engagement process.

**4. Understand your stakeholders**

• What are the stakeholder perceptions of the project?

• How much influence do stakeholders have?

• What things are important to them?

• How have they participated in the past?

• What is their willingness to change?

• What are their barriers to engagement?

• How can we prepare for their participation?

**Step 5: Select the tools and techniques**

There are endless tools and techniques that can be used for your engagement. Depending on the purpose and the stakeholders, some will be more suitable than others.

Common engagement tools include workshops, small group discussions, briefings, interviews and surveys. It is important to combine a range of tools and techniques that enable, and support, diverse stakeholders to participate.

Questions to consider when selecting the best tools for the engagement are:

* What are the engagement questions and what is the best technique to present them to the community?
* What resources are available to you to support the engagement?
* What is realistic within the timeframe of the engagement?
* A re you hoping to engage a breadth of stakeholders and community members, or go in-depth with a small group?
* What are the stakeholder and community barriers to engagement and how can they be overcome?
* Which engagement techniques have been successful in the past with the stakeholders and community in question?
* Which tools and techniques will assist in achieving the objectives of the engagement?
* H ow will you ensure the engagement is inclusive and accessible to everyone?
* I s there a mix of online and face-to-face engagement?

**Step 6: Manage the engagement data**

Capturing the engagement effectively is very important. For example, capturing the knowledge, thoughts and opinions drawn out by the engagement process. This information will be used to influence future decisions, and for public reporting purposes.

The methods used to capture this information are likely to be different for each project and could include formal minutes of a meeting, a facilitator’s notes from a workshop, or a recorded interview.

Tips for planning to capture engagement data include:

* Consider the data to be captured and whether it will be qualitative and/or quantitative.
* Do not alter your engagement materials or questions once the process has started. This can be misleading and will affect the validity of your data.
* Prepare a template sign-in sheet for workshops or meetings to capture details of participants and brief team members to assist participants to sign in correctly.
* Explain to participants how their details and information will be used during the engagement. This can make some participants feel more comfortable in sharing their thoughts and opinions.
* Seek permission from participants to record or film discussions.

**Step 7: Provide feedback**

You need to plan what you are going to report, which feedback you are likely to share, and how this will be communicated.

‘Closing the loop’ refers to any process which feeds back the engagement findings or outcomes to the participants. This process is important because:

* Participants can see how their feedback was used, instilling trust in your process.
* Provides transparent implementation of actions with a widely understood evidence base.
* Maintains relationships for future engagement.
* Provides a plan for how the feedback process will happen.

Tips for planning feedback include:

* Set up a centralised database, ready to store participants’ details from the beginning.
* Ask participants during the engagement for their preferred method of receiving feedback.
* Thank participants via telephone or email at appropriate moments, even if their participation was minimal.
* Plan how and when findings will be published online, and how interested participants will be notified.
* Prepare to issue newsfeeds for participants by communicating information on the progress of the project. This is important, even if there is little to report.
* Devise a method to keep track of who has received what information to avoid spamming people or overlooking some participants.

# **Appendix**

## Stakeholder resource list

Note: It is a non-exhaustive list. The level of interest and influence for each stakeholder should be determined by the project working group for a project – refer to Sections 6 and 8.

**Community Stakeholders**

Traditional Owner groups

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Aboriginal people who have traditional connection to an identified geographical area of Country.

Interest: Impacts to their Country, cultural practices and other traditional owner values. Impacts on existing planning processes where they have responsibilities, including cultural heritage management plans.

**Level of interest**

High

**Level of influence**

High

**Community Stakeholders**

Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAP)

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Traditional Owner groups that are legally recognised under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006, with responsibilities for managing and protecting Aboriginal Cultural Heritage on Country within the RAP area.

Interest: Impacts to Cultural Heritage sites, rights and interests including through legislation, policy, land management and zoning, settlement.

Registered Aboriginal Parties can be found at. https://www.firstpeoplesrelations.vic.gov.au/

**Level of interest**

High

**Level of influence**

High

**Community Stakeholders**

Landowners and occupiers

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Landowners may be private or commercial, and property use may be residential, commercial or industrial. The landowner may or may not be a resident or commercial user of a property. This group will be particularly diverse, including those more socio-economically vulnerable.

Interest: Property values, development opportunities/ restrictions, population growth, land management and zoning, environmental management, infrastructure, risk and emergency management, education and employment.

**Level of interest**

High

**Level of influence**

Low

**Community Stakeholder**

Community groups, Friends of groups, Progress Associations

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Provide a wide range of services and support in their local communities. Their impact may be through hands on action or advocacy.

Interest: Population growth, land management and zoning, environmental management, infrastructure, property values, risk and emergency management, education and employment.

**Level of interest**

High

**Level of influence**

Low

**NON-GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Industry ‘peak body groups”

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Industry ‘peak bodies’ or trade associations are industry groups with allied interests. They share industry information, discuss issues, develop standards, support education and training, and establish rules for best practice within their industry.

Interest: Employment and education, poverty and disadvantage, settlement impacts on existing industry/ industrial estates.

**Level of interest**

Medium

**Level of influence**

Medium

**NON-GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Land Development and Subdivision Industry

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Predominantly prepare land new dwellings and are also involved in developing land for non-residential buildings and other applications such as transport infrastructure.

Interest: Greenfield development, land development opportunities/restrictions.

**Level of interest**

High

**Level of influence**

Medium

**NON-GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Life Saving Victoria

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: To prevent aquatic related death and injury, and educate communities in water safety, swimming and resuscitation, and ensure the safety of aquatic environments and venues.

Interest: Population growth in coastal areas, community education on water safety.

lsv.com.au

**Level of interest**

Medium

**Level of influence**

Low

**NON-GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Research Organisations

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Drive studies in a wide variety of fields, including but not limited to environment, climate change, health, finance, and agriculture. Organisations may be private business, government funded or aligned to universities.

Interest: All impacts of settlement planning.

**Level of interest**

Medium

**Level of influence**

Low

**NON-GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Universities

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Universities are higher education providers and undertake research.

Interest: Education and employment opportunities, associated research in planning, environmental management, sustainability, climate change, sociology, psychology, and public health.

**Level of interest**

Medium

**Level of influence**

Low

**NON-GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Utility Providers

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Include both infrastructure providers (distributors) and service providers (retailers) for electricity, water, oil, gas, sewerage and communication services to communities and businesses.

Interest: Network expansion, demands and stability, network stability in high risk areas, network impacts to areas of environmental sensitivity, supply risks in the context of climate change.

**Level of interest**

High

**Level of influence**

Medium

**GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Agriculture Victoria (Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions)

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Creates the conditions to sustainably develop the Victorian economy and grow employment.

Interest: Drought, loss of agricultural land, food security, financial and environmental impacts to agricultural productivity, and loss of employment in the sector.

Website: Home | Agriculture Victoria.vic

**Level of interest**

High

**Level of influence**

Low

**GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Ambulance Victoria

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Provides pre-hospital care, medical transport and emergency medical response across Victoria.

Interest: Population growth, support infrastructure, hospital facilities, emergency management, settlement in high risk environments.

Website: ambulance.vic.gov.au

**Level of interest**

Medium

**Level of influence**

Medium

**GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Committees of Management

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Are committees of volunteers appointed to manage, improve and maintain Crown land reserves that have been set aside for the benefit of the people of Victoria.

Interest: Coastal foreshores, recreation reserves, public halls, rail trails.

**Level of interest**

Medium

**Level of influence**

Medium

**GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Department of Education and Training (DET) Purpose: Offers learning and development support and services.

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Interest: Population growth, infrastructure and community services, education and employment. Department of Education and Training Victoria

**Level of interest**

Medium

**Level of influence**

Medium

**GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Portfolios cover climate change, energy, environment, water, forests, planning, land services, Aboriginal self-determination, and emergency management. Aim is to maximise connections between the environment, community, industry and economy.

Interest: Population growth, land management and zoning, environmental management, infrastructure and planning, risk management, emergency management.

Website: delwp.vic.gov.au

**Level of interest**

High

**Level of influence**

High

**GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH)

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Portfolios cover housing, child protection, disability, ageing and carers, prevention of family violence, women, veterans, youth, multicultural affairs and LGBTQI+ and equality. Aim to ensure a fairer, safer and more inclusive Victoria.

Interest: Resilient accommodation, temporary and accessible accommodation, emergency management.

**Level of interest**

High

**Level of influence**

High

**GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Department of Health (DH)

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Portfolios cover health, ambulance services, mental health and ageing. Aim is to ensure the improvement in the health and wellbeing of Victorians.

Interest: Resilient accommodation and buildings, road networks, emergency management, temporary buildings for service provisions.

**Level of interest**

High

**Level of influence**

High

**GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR)

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Portfolios cover precincts and suburbs, mining and resources, local government, regional development, small business, agriculture, tourism, sports and major events. Aim is to ensure Victoria’s strong economic performance by growing industries and regions.

Interest: Precincts and suburbs, mining and resources, regional development, small business.

Website: djpr.vic.gov.au

**Level of interest**

High

**Level of influence**

High

**GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Department of Transport (DOT)

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Portfolios cover transport infrastructure, public transport, ports and freight, roads, fishing and boating.

Interest: All aspects of transport planning for new settlements.

Home | Department of Transport

**Level of interest**

Medium

**Level of influence**

High

**GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Emergency management committees – state, regional and municipal

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Committees are involved in emergency management governance, planning and advisory functions at state, regional and municipal levels.

Interest: Emergency management, risk mitigation and resilience, settlement in high risk areas, capability and response planning.

**Level of interest**

High

**Level of influence**

High

**GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Emergency Management Victoria (EMV)

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Supports the Emergency Management Commissioner to lead and coordinate emergency preparedness, response and recovery across Victoria’s emergency management sector in conjunction with communities, government, agencies and business.

Interest: Population growth, risk and emergency management, settlement in high risk areas.

Website emv.vic. gov.au

**Level of interest**

High

**Level of influence**

High

**GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Environment Protection Authority (EPA)

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Prevent and reduce harm to the environment and human health from pollution and waste, including managing compliance and enforcement, issuing works approvals and licenses.

Interest: Building/zoning compliance for new settlements, land management, environmental impacts, emergency management.

Website epa.vic.gov.au

**Level of interest**

Medium

**Level of influence**

Medium

**GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Fire authorities – Country Fire Authority CFA & Fire Rescue Victoria FRV

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: CFA is a volunteer fire service responsible for fire suppression, rescues and response to other accidents and hazards across most of the state of Victoria. The CFA shares responsibility for fire services with FRV who employs full time staff across Melbourne and Victoria’s major regional centres, responding to fires, complex rescues, road crashes, emergency medical calls and hazardous chemical spills.

Interest: Population growth, support infrastructure, settlement in high risk environments, built environment, property maintenance and regulation, climate change and bushfire risks.

CFA (Country Fire Authority)

Website to Fire Rescue Victoria frv.vic.gov.au

**Level of interest**

High

**Level of influence**

High

**GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Floodplain Management Authorities (Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs) and Melbourne Water MW)

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Develop and implement regional floodplain management strategies in consultation with local stakeholders and communities. They also provide flood advice to municipal councils and landholders. The Marine and Coastal Act 2018 enables coastal CMAs and MW to provide advice on matters relating to coastal erosion.

Ten floodplain management authorities operate across

Victoria comprising nine CMAs within rural areas and MW within Port Phillip and Western Port Catchment Region.

Floodplain Management website water.vic.gov.au

Catchment management authorities website viccatchments. com.au

**Level of interest**

High

**Level of influence**

High

**GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Local Government

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Has an important role in land use planning and development approvals and administering the local planning scheme. Also coordinate and provide physical and community infrastructure, including the local drainage network.

Interest: Population growth, property tax, property values, land release/supply, development opportunities/restrictions, land management and zoning, strategic planning, environmental management, infrastructure, risk and emergency management, settlement in high risk areas, education and employment.

**Level of interest**

High

**Level of influence**

High

**GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Group

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Responsible for coordinating and facilitating the delivery of waste management and resource recovery across metropolitan Melbourne, including municipal solid waste, construction and demolition waste and commercial and industrial waste.

Interest: Waste management in new settlements, waste minimisation, environmental impacts.

Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Group website mwrrg.vic.gov.au

**Level of interest**

Low

**Level of influence**

Low

**GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Minister for Planning

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Regarding planning has a range of functions and powers relating to the Victoria Planning Provisions, planning schemes and planning permit applications, and the Heritage Act 2017.

Interest: All aspects of settlement planning.

Website premier.vic.gov.au/category/ministers/minister-forplanning

**Level of interest**

High

**Level of influence**

High

**GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Municipal Fire Prevention Officers

Purpose: Act as the executive officer of the Municipal Fire Prevention Committee and are responsible for issuing permits to burn during the fire danger period and issuing fire prevention notices for hazard removal to private landowners in their municipality.

Interest: Settlement in high risk areas, landowner compliance with fire hazard removal.

**Level of interest**

Medium

**Level of influence**

High

**GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Parks Victoria

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: A statutory authority of the Victorian Government, responsible for managing land and marine parks and reserves making up 18 per cent of Victoria’s landmass, 75 per cent of Victoria’s wetlands and 70 per cent of Victoria’s coastline.

Interest: Population growth and parks visitation increase, environmental impacts of settlement, settlement in high risk areas, environmental protection.

Parks Victoria

**Level of interest**

Low

**Level of influence**

Low

**GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

VicRoads

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Responsible for vehicle registration and licensing functions and some heavy vehicle functions.

Interest: Service provision to new settlement communities.

vicroads.vic.gov.au

**Level of interest**

Medium

**Level of influence**

High

**GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Victoria Police

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Provide policing services to the Victorian community within 21 divisions and four regions - North West Metro, Southern Metro, Eastern and Western.

Interest: Population growth and increased need for service provision, regional service boundaries, road safety, community safety, community health, emergency management, settlement in high risk areas.

police.vic.gov.au

**Level of interest**

Low

**Level of influence**

Low

**GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES)

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: A volunteer based organisation, providing emergency assistance to minimise the impact of emergencies and strengthen the community’s capacity to plan, respond and recover, when emergencies occur.

Interest: Population growth, settlement in high risk areas, risk and emergency management, community education for risk reduction.

Home Victoria State Emergency Service website ses.vic.gov.au

**Level of interest**

High

**Level of influence**

Medium

**GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER**

Victorian Planning Authority (VPA)

**Description of purpose and likely interest in planning process**

Purpose: Undertake visioning and long term planning, including strategic planning and infrastructure coordination for future growth in cities and regional towns to ensure Victorians have equitable access to employment, public transport, attractive public space and affordable housing.

Interest: Infrastructure, employment and education opportunities, housing affordability.

Website vpa.vic.gov.au

**Level of interest**

High

**Level of influence**

High

The State of Victoria Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning 2022

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**ISBN** 978-1-76105-912-4 (pdf/online/MS word)

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