

PART B

Chapter 1 Community Engagement

June 2013

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Chapter 1 Amendments – June 2013

Revision Register

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Table of Contents

1.1	INTRODUCTION	B1-1
1.2	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESOURCES	B1-1
1.2.1	Community Engagement Principles	B1-1
1.2.2	Levels of Engagement	B1-2
1.3	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLANNING	B1-3
1.4	ROAD LANDSCAPE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS	B1-4
1.4.1	Research and Data Collection	B1-4
	Identification of Stakeholders	B1-4
1.4.2	Engaging with the Community	B1-6
	Design Goals and Objectives	B1-6
1.5	COMMUNITY CONSULTATION PROCESS	B1-7

Figures

Figure B1-1	Engaging with the community can provide a unique insight into local history and the environment	B1-2
Figure B1-2	The Department's community engagement plan	B1-3
Figure B1-3	The relationship between the Department's community engagement process and requirements of the road landscape design process	B1-4
Figure B1-4	Consultation ensures community facilities are designed and implemented to meet council and community requirements	B1-5
Figure B1-5	Conveying concepts to the public is a reiterative process	B1-6
Figure B1-6	Implementing the outcomes of the community engagement process	B1-7

Part B – Chapter 1 Community Engagement

1.1 Introduction

This section provides a brief overview of how the Department's community engagement process supports the road landscape design process. The road landscape is a significant contributor to the public's perception of how responsive the Department is to public and community needs and expectations. The objective of the community engagement process is to build relationships that foster understanding of the decision making process, minimize impacts and adds value to the project outcomes. This process seeks long term solutions that will ensure the community's needs for the future are met.

1.2 Community Engagement Resources

The Department has developed a suite of documents to assist the undertaking of community engagement.

This suite consists of the:

- Community Engagement Policy Statement, Standards, Principles and Guidelines;
- Engagement Planner;
- Engagement Resource Guide; and
- Community Engagement Toolbox.

These resources may be accessed on the Department's website.

1.2.1 Community Engagement Principles

The Department has adopted six principles of community engagement community engagement principles which are:

“Inclusiveness – more inclusive practices will increase connection with the community, including those who are the hardest to reach.

Reaching Out – using innovative ways to connect to government and communities so they can work together for better outcomes.

Mutual Respect – listening, understanding and acting on experiences different from those of the department.

Integrity – open and accountable engagement as a means of promoting trust in the processes of government.

Affirming Diversity – incorporating diverse opinions and perspectives to help the processes of government achieve effective and sustainable outcomes.

Adding Value – communities and governments that work productively together will add value to policies, programs, services and projects.” (Community Engagement Resource Guide, 2004).

1.2.2 Levels of Engagement

There are three levels of community engagement:

Information- a one-way relationship in which the Department gives information to communities and receives information from the communities;

Consultation- a two-way relationship in which the Department seeks and receives community views; and

Active participation- actively involving communities and individuals in shaping policy, programs, services and projects. (Community Engagement Resource Guide, 2010:p8).

Community participation is an important tool for determining locally significant areas; particularly environmentally sensitive locations, and those that have historical or cultural value. Active involvement can shape the design of these places; especially those areas that have particular meaning to the local community (Figure B1-1).



Figure B1-1 Engaging with the community can provide a unique insight into local history and the environment

The level of consultation undertaken is driven by the size, complexity and impacts of the transport and road infrastructure project. Major corridor planning and design development; that is, those projects acknowledged in the Queensland Transport and Roads Implementation Program, should involve active participation by stakeholders directly and indirectly affected by the proposed project. In contrast, a minor road widening project may only warrant an information exchange with stakeholders. The project manager needs to carefully consider what level of engagement is warranted for each project. It may be that a series of different methods and measures are required in order to ensure the best possible project outcomes.

Refer to the Department's community engagement resources to complete this assessment of the level of engagement required.

1.3 Community Engagement Planning

The Department's *Community Engagement Planner* should be used in planning all community engagement activities. It should be utilised prior to the physical engagement of the community, and aids the user in directing the engagement process effectively towards appropriate topics and outcomes. It also allows for progressive evaluation of the engagement process itself.

Figure B1-2 shows how the various inputs of community engagement come together in a plan.

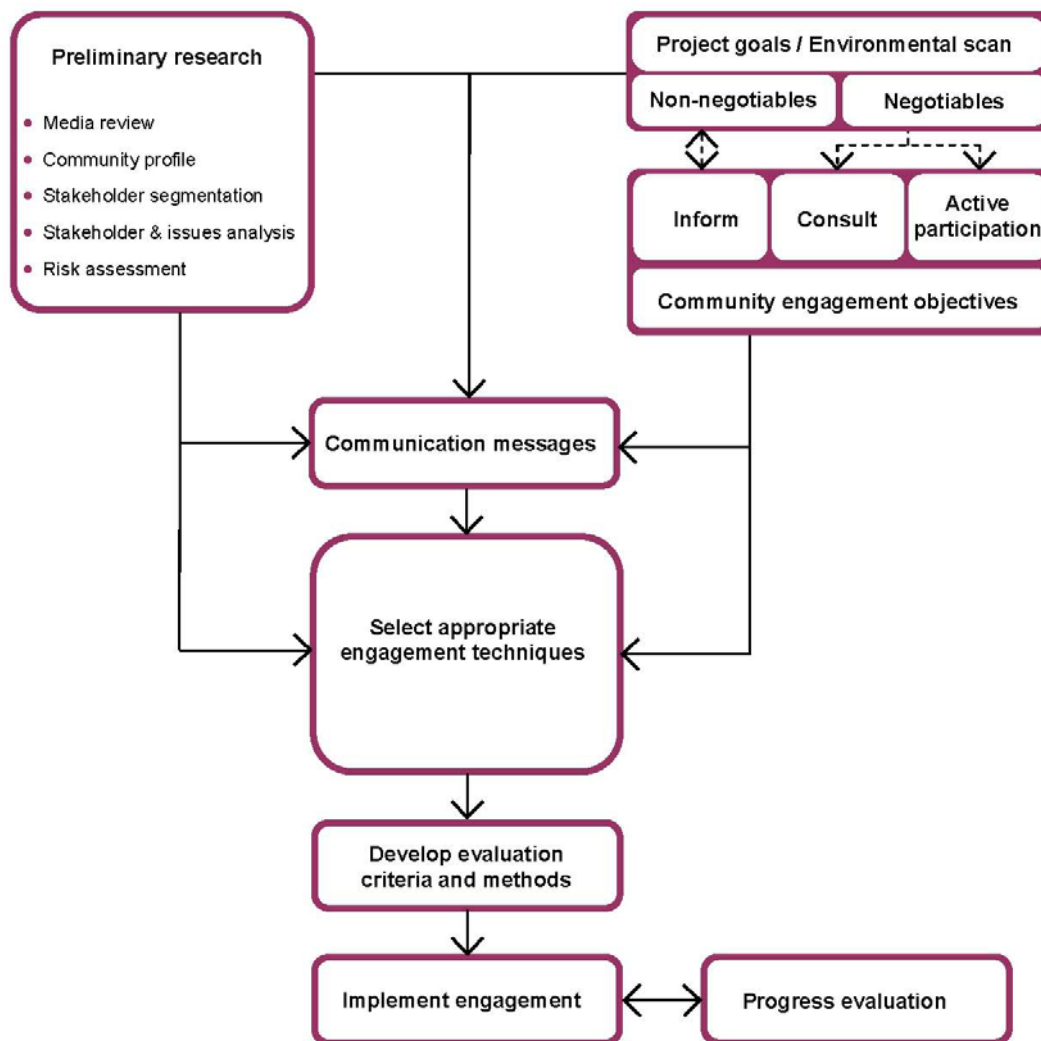


Figure B1-2 The Department's community engagement plan

Source: Main Roads (QLD), 2010: Community Engagement Planner

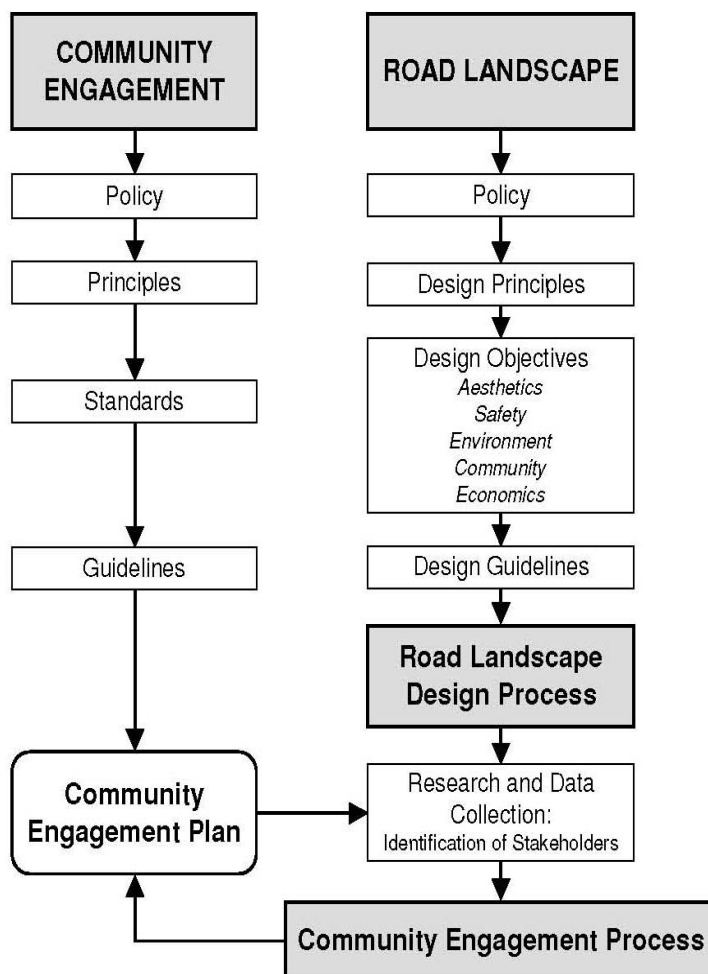


Figure B1-3 The relationship between the Department's community engagement process and requirements of the road landscape design process

1.4 Road Landscape community engagement process

There are strong parallels between the road landscape design process and community engagement (Figure B1-3). The landscape design process can merge into the community engagement process at the research and data collection stage.

1.4.1 Research and Data Collection

One of the most important parts of the research and data collection process is identifying stakeholders.

Identification of Stakeholders

The Department acknowledges the importance of proactively identifying and effectively engaging the community as key stakeholders in the engagement and consultation process.

The Department considers that communities encompass the following:

- communities of place, such as neighbourhood, suburb, region, catchment areas;
- communities of interest, such as interest groups, schools, business, working population; and
- communities that form because of a specific issue. (Community Engagement Resource Guide, 2010:p8).

Stakeholders are any single or body of people who have an interest in the proposal or are affected by it in any way or form. They have the right to be involved in all aspects of the proposal from initial decision-making, planning and design, through to completion and ongoing maintenance.

Stakeholders can include, yet are not limited to the following:

- professional individuals, organisations and special interest groups;
- environmental agencies;
- whole communities, schools and alliances;
- developers, businesses, industries, and industry bodies;
- national transport and road bodies; for example – Austroads and the Australian Road Research Board;
- Federal Government and other statutory authorities;
- other state road authorities and statutory authorities;
- local government and other statutory authorities;
- services and public utility providers;
- road administrators; for example – Queensland Motorways Limited;
- affected landowners and users of an affected facility;
- conservation groups;
- historical societies and Indigenous groups;
- internal departmental branches; and
- general public.

Formal and dynamic consultative procedures with associated local authorities are also necessary when engaging with the community. Local government authorities are an integral and valued member of the planning and design of state controlled roads. Working with local authorities seeks to achieve a whole of government approach to consultation and also serves to provide the community with local representation (Figure B1-4).



Figure B1-4 Consultation ensures community facilities are designed and implemented to meet council and community requirements

1.4.2 Engaging with the Community

Design Goals and Objectives

The road landscape design objectives provide an overall framework for the development of project specific design goals and objectives. These will be formulated as a result of the community engagement process in combination with the road landscape design process (Chapter 2 of Part B). The data collection and assessment process will occur at a suitably relevant design phase of the project.

There are many methods to convey the project specific design goals and objectives to the public. A reiterative approach (Figure B1-5) is most common whereby:

- concepts are developed, and then reviewed and commented upon by the public;
- design alternatives are explored by the project team and then further reviewed and commented upon by the public;
- refinements made to designs, with a final review and feedback undertaken by the public; and
- preferred option selected.

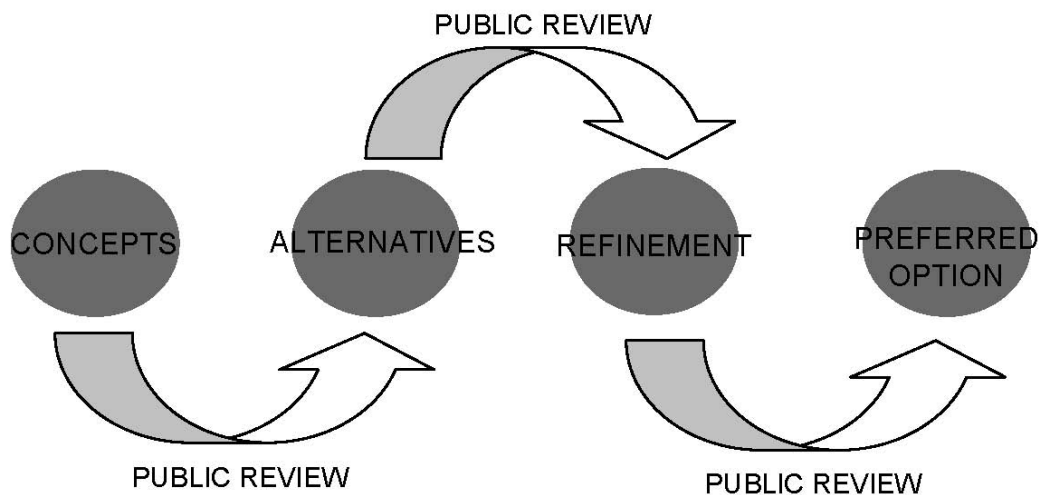


Figure B1-5 Conveying concepts to the public is a reiterative process

(Adapted from Farr, D, 2007, p82)

This is an effective approach to engaging with the public as it allows for constant feedback to be given as design options are explored, modified and refined into options. The process repeats itself as design alternatives are narrowed into the preferred option (Figure B1-6). Once this final option has been decided, more detailed planning and design can commence. The level of community engagement will determine the actual method and amount of communication with the public.

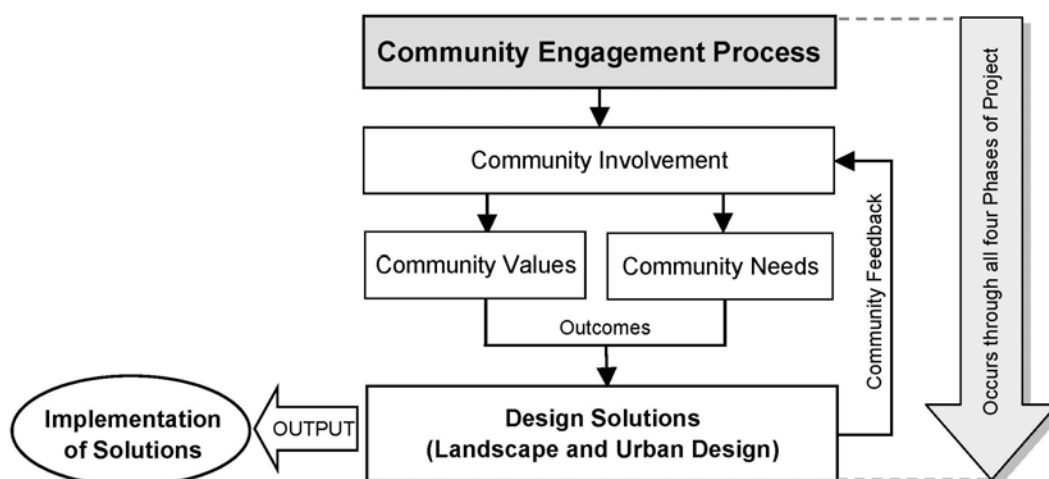


Figure B1-6 Implementing the outcomes of the community engagement process

The road landscape community engagement process ensures that the road landscape design approach is integrated with community values and needs. By engaging the community, it is possible that a common understanding of the project proposal is reached that manages public expectations and desired outcomes. It also allows for a professional assessment of design opportunities and constraints to be relayed from all disciplines.

1.5 Community Consultation Process

Prior to and during the actual engagement of the community, a seven stage process must be adhered to, to ensure best practice and required outcomes.

- Step one: project identification and phase of business;
- Step two: develop a community engagement plan;
- Step three: monitoring communication and evaluation;
- Step four: final checklist;
- Step five: approval;
- Step six: ongoing actions; and
- Step seven: next phase.

Further information on these phases can be found in the *Community Engagement Planner* on the Department's website.

Below are examples of how the community can be involved in the consultation process:

Directly: such as

- face to face interaction;
- operating on a regular basis;

Public / Community meetings: such as

- forums and briefings;

- small group discussions and focus groups;
- workshops and information awareness sessions;
- site/field office and staffed public displays;
- information days and exhibitions;
- project open days and community events;

Indirectly: such as

- media releases and advertisements;
- information bulletins, brochures, newsletters and community letters;
- surveys, written submissions, letter drops;
- hotline and project information lines, comments and complaints systems; and
- web-based tools.