

Your Voice. Your Council.

A Simple Guide to Community Engagement at Ararat Rural City Council

What is Community Engagement?

Community engagement is about having conversations with you on decisions that affect your life in Ararat Rural City. We listen, we consult, we act, and we report back. Whether it's about planning for our future, developing new services, or improving what we already do, we want to hear from you. Your local knowledge, experience, and ideas help us make better decisions for our community.



How Community Engagement Works: Our 8-Step Process

When we engage with the community, we follow a clear process to ensure it's meaningful and effective:

1. Define the purpose: We clearly identify what we're engaging on and why
2. Understand who's affected: We identify the people and groups who have an interest in the topic
3. Design the engagement: We choose the right methods and timeframes to reach you
4. Deliver genuine engagement: We create opportunities for you to participate and have your say
5. Review what we heard: We carefully analyze all the feedback and ideas we received
6. Apply your input: We use what we learned to inform our decisions
7. Evaluate the process: We reflect on what worked well and what we can improve
8. Close the loop: We report back to you about what we decided and why



Your rights

When you participate in community engagement, you have the right to:

- Access information about the issue
- Understand how your input will be used
- Be treated with respect
- Have your privacy protected
- Receive support to participate meaningfully
- Be informed of outcomes

Contact Us

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This guide is based on our Community Engagement Policy 2026, developed in line with the Local Government Act 2020 and international best practice standards from the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2).



Ararat Rural City



When will you be engaged?

We're Required to Engage on:

- Long-term Community Vision
- Council Plan (4 years)
- Financial Plan
- Asset Plan
- Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan
- Other matters required by legislation

We Also Engage on:

- New strategies and policies
- Service changes or improvements
- Major projects and infrastructure
- Budget priorities
- Local area planning
- Issues you tell us are important

Get Involved

- There are many ways to stay informed and have your say: Visit the Engage Ararat website to see current and upcoming engagement opportunities
- Visit our main website for the latest news
- Attend Council meetings, community forums, workshops, and drop-in sessions advertised in local media and online
- Follow us on social media
- Subscribe to our newsletter via Engage Ararat

When we engage with the community, we promise to be clear about what we're engaging on, why it matters, how you can influence the outcome, and give you objective, relevant and timely information. We promise to involve those most affected, and to always close the loop by reporting back on what we heard, what we decided, and how your input made a difference, along with much more.



Your voice matters. Your participation makes our community stronger.