CITY OF BELMONT

Engagement Strategy 2023 & Beyond

BELMONT
CITY OF OPPORTUNITY

Contents

Acknowledgement of Country

The City of Belmont acknowledges the Whadjuk Noongar people as the Traditional Owners of this land and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We further acknowledge their cultural heritage, beliefs, connection and relationship with this land which continues today. We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living within the City of Belmont.

Alternative Formats

This document is available on the City of Belmont website and can be requested in alternative formats including electronic format by email, in hardcopy both in large and standard print and in other formats as requested. For further information please contact the PR and Stakeholder Engagement team on (08) 9477 7222.

For language assistance please contact TIS (Translating and Interpreting Service) on 131 450.

Message from the Mayor

It is with great pleasure I present the Engagement Strategy 2023 and beyond.

This document signifies our commitment to building a stronger, more inclusive, and vibrant community in the City of Belmont through better engagement.

The Engagement Strategy is not merely a collection of words on paper; it is a blueprint that outlines the important connections between effective communication, exceptional customer service, and genuine engagement with our community, customers and stakeholders.

At its heart, we aim to be real in our interactions, ensuring that voices are heard and valued in an environment where diversity is celebrated, relationships are nurtured, and your feedback is actively sought and remembered.

The core themes of "Be Real," "Accessible and Inclusive," "Build Relationships," "Listen and Remember," and "Quality and Innovation" serve as our guide. These themes and the principles that underpin them were crafted through extensive engagement with our community, gathering insights and perspectives from various sources, such as ideas boards, pop-up events, surveys, and community workshops.

This document is not just about setting goals; it's about setting a path forward. Change is a journey that takes time. Following on from this strategy is a comprehensive plan to embed the principles of better engagement into the very fabric of our organisation.

As we embark on this exciting journey together, I invite each of you to be an active participant in shaping our City of Opportunity. Your input, your ideas, and your passion are essential to our shared success.

Together, we will build a stronger, more vibrant community where every voice matters, and everyone feels they have the opportunity to belong.

Cr Phil Marks

Mayor

What this strategy includes

The strategy explains how we want to talk to and listen to our community, stakeholders, and customers.

It understands that there are links between how we communicate, provide customer service, and engage with the community and stakeholders. It sets out actions and plans in these areas:

1. Consultation (also known as Engagement) – to have open conversations, where both parties can share their thoughts, ideas and work together to solve problems.

2. Communication – to make sure we share important information with everyone.

3. Customer Service – to provide attention focused on you as a customer.

In this strategy we think about customer experience as well as engagement, which is a slightly different approach to how others may view engagement.

We believe if we focus on improving engagement with our community and stakeholders, this will also improve engagement with our customers.

Why we engage

We engage with our communities because it leads to better results for everyone.

Engagement provides a place for information sharing between the City of Belmont and members of the community or important stakeholders.

Basically, good engagement is built on good communication and makes sure that we listen and think about the needs of our customers, stakeholders, and our diverse community.

Better choices and actions

We can make better choices and take good action when we know what people need and value.

Builds trust

If we engage well, people are more likely to trust that their needs are being thought about and met.

Better future planning

Helps to see trends and issues, allowing the City to respond better and more quickly to new challenges.

Open and accountable

Good engagement openly shows the reasons for our choices and actions.

Good business

Good engagement and customer service is at the centre of good business.

The strategic context

Our Strategic Community Plan 2020- 2040 explains the importance of including the community in decisions we make. Part of the Strategic Community Plan is:

Goal 5: Responsible Belmont – We are inclusive, engaging and act with integrity.

These outcomes under Goal 5 support this Engagement Strategy.

- The Community is actively involved in decision making through engagement.
- Engagement is a part of everything the City does.
- The Community has a high level of trust in the Council and the City of Belmont.
- The City is well governed and acts with the highest level of integrity.

5.1 Support collaboration and partnerships to deliver key outcomes for our City

5.2 Manage the City's assets and financial resources in a responsible manner and provide the best possible services for the community.

5.3 Invest in services and facilities for our growing community.

5.5 Engage and consult the community in decision-making.

5.6 Deliver effective, fair and transparent leadership and decision-making, reflective of community needs and aspirations.

This strategy will last at least five years, which matches the City of Belmont's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.

Links with other City strategies

This strategy is intended to work with other City of Belmont strategies and plans that support the community.

There are other City strategies that have actions on engagement and communications, including strategies to support different groups of people in our community which might go into more detail about how we engage with those groups.

About our community

Population

45,762 in 2023

63,729 Forecast 2041

48% of residents under the age of 34

19% of our residents are over the age of 60 years old.

2,042 (or 5%) people require assistance with core activities.

Diversity

40.9% born overseas.

89 different cultures.

31% speak a language other than English.

2.5% identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders

Household

22% are couples with children.

24% are couples without children.

9% are single parent families.

31% are lone person households.

Education

54.5% of people hold a tertiary qualification, including vocational qualifications.

35% of people have no qualifications.

5.6% of people are neither working nor studying.

*Based on 2021 data in Profile ID (profile.id.com.au/Belmont)

Trends and opportunities

There are many trends happening in the areas of communications, consultation/ engagement, and customer service that we need to think about when making a strategy for the future.

Accessibility

Organisations are being asked to make sure that their services and information can be easily used and understood by everyone. This includes using accessibility standards and guidelines and providing different communication and engagement options. This increased focus on accessibility makes sure local governments are meeting the needs of a diverse community, and making sure services are fair for everyone.

Digital transformation

Many people are becoming more comfortable with digital communications. Mobile devices are used more often for communications. They are also used to find information on what is happening in the local community. Artificial intelligence is also changing how customers and businesses communicate.

Personalisation

Community members and stakeholders are expecting that services will match their specific needs. This also applies to how organisations engage with and serve customers. This means we may need to understand community needs and choices better, along with delivering services and communications in many different ways.

Collaboration

Local governments are working more closely with other agencies, community groups, and businesses to build better relationships and deliver more services. This includes providing information to community groups and organisations and involving them for engagement activities.

Openness

Communities are asking for more openness from their local governments and more information about projects, programs and services. There is also an increased focus on local governments needing to be open and honest about how they make choices.

Data-driven choices

Organisations have a growing amount of information to make better choices and improve service delivery. This includes better ways to collect information and use the information to make good choices that meet the needs of the community.

Information security and privacy

As government services become more digital and the need to collect better information increases, there is also an increasing need to better protect that information.

Government reform

Government organisations at all levels are being asked to meet the increased needs of their communities without increased costs. In Western Australia, changes to the Local Government Act include a focus on engagement, access to information and how organisations keep and use that information.

How we currently engage

Customer Service

- Customer enquiries – in person, online or by phone
- Applications
- Direct Messages
- Compliments and complaints
- Service interactions

Customer Service / Communications

- Email
- Letters
- Website
- Social Media

Customer Service / Consultation

- Feedback forms

All

- Pop Ups
- Event stalls
- Meetings

Consultation

- Advisory Groups
- Co-design groups
- Stakeholder meetings
- Surveys

Communications

- Enewsletters
- Signs
- Print materials
- Advertising
- Video
- Publications

Communications / Consultation

- Information sessions
- Webinars
- Forums
- Belmont Connect
- Workshops

How we are performing

The City of Belmont often asks our local community to rate our services through a scorecard that shows how we are performing. It also shows how we are going compared to other local governments who also do the scorecard.

Here were some of the results collected in 2022 that involve consultation, communications and customer service.

Doing well:

- Above industry average for customer service (86% positive rating) and communications (78% positive rating).
- Industry leader on some of the ways we communicate. Fortnightly email newsletter 'BeNews' (93%), bimonthly printed newsletter 'Belmont Bulletin' (93%), City of Belmont website (92%).

Ways we can do better:

- Below the industry average for consultation (70% positive rating).
- Most of our community feel we listen and respect community views, but we are not an industry leader in this space (82% positive rating).
- Explaining the reasons for choices and how community views are taken into account (81%).

The above results are taken from the City of Belmont MARKYT Community Perceptions Scorecard 2022.

Barriers to engagement

When collecting ideas for this strategy, we asked staff and community members about what can block good communication, consultation and customer service.

Some of the responses were:

Time:
- People were too busy and didn't have enough time.
- Not enough time given to collect views or communicate well.

Access:
- Not able to access types of engagement, communication or customer service.

Understanding and inclusion
- Cultural, language or ability blocks.
- Information was hard to understand.

Trust:
- Not trusting in the process or that their views will be heard.
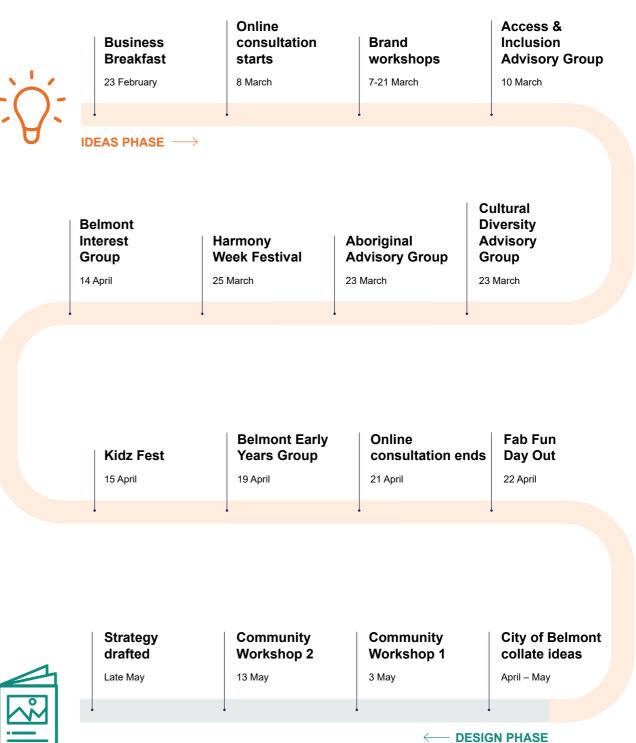- Previous bad experience.

Awareness
- Not aware of communication or consultation activities.
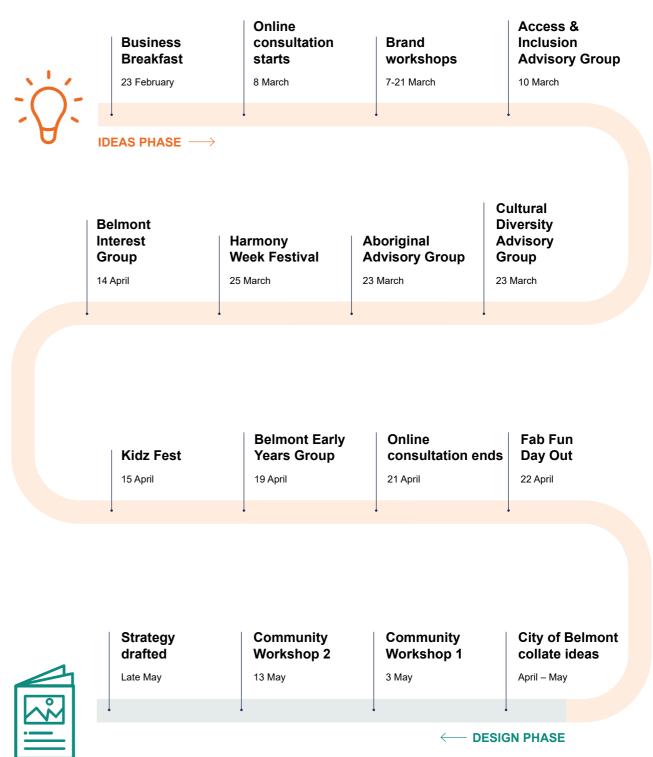- Not sure how to access information or ways to contact the City.

Our approach

This strategy was developed between February and June 2023.

Here are some of the ways we collected information and ideas for this strategy and then built the strategy with the help of community members and City of Belmont staff.

Business Breakfast
23 February

Online consultation starts
8 March

Brand workshops
7-21 March

Access & Inclusion Advisory Group
10 March

IDEAS PHASE →

Belmont Interest Group
14 April

Harmony Week Festival
25 March

Aboriginal Advisory Group
23 March

Cultural Diversity Advisory Group
23 March

Kidz Fest
15 April

Belmont Early Years Group
19 April

Online consultation ends
21 April

Fab Fun Day Out
22 April

Strategy drafted
Late May

Community Workshop 2
13 May

Community Workshop 1
3 May

City of Belmont collate ideas
April – May

← **DESIGN PHASE**

Ideas phase

Over nine weeks we collected ideas on good consultation, communication and customer service, as well as ideas on what can block good engagement. We also did three brand workshops to help us understand how the brand fits in with the Engagement Strategy.

We collected these ideas in many ways, from online ideas and surveys to in person pop ups at events and meetings. The aim was to consult widely to gather a variety of views.
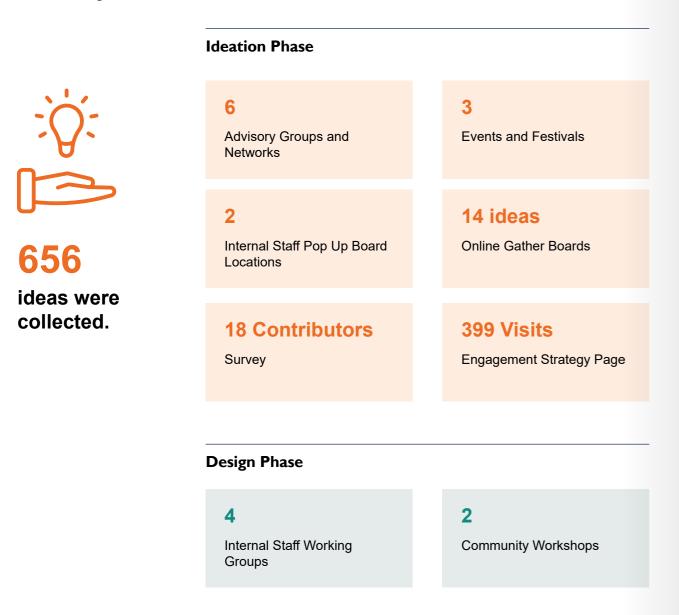
Design phase

We asked three staff working groups to put the ideas into main themes. We also asked about how we can be successful with this strategy.

We took these main themes to community workshops to create a principle for each area. We also asked our community members to describe how this strategy can help us to be successful. The aim of this was to involve community members in building key elements of the strategy.

Summary

656 ideas were collected.

Ideation Phase

6 Advisory Groups and Networks	**3** Events and Festivals
2 Internal Staff Pop Up Board Locations	**14 ideas** Online Gather Boards
18 Contributors Survey	**399 Visits** Engagement Strategy Page

Design Phase

4 Internal Staff Working Groups	**2** Community Workshops

Key themes

Be real

Some things we heard:

Kindness and helpfulness.

Treat others how you want to be treated.

Friendly engaging communication.

If they can repeat back to you what you have spoken, it shows they are listening.

Yarning – talking openly.

Theme	Principle	Initiatives
Be real	We will respect you when we engage with you. We will be fully present and open in our communications.	• Engagement and customer service toolkits and training for staff. • Clear guidelines for communication and engagement • Improve our brand assets and style guide. • Deliver a brand strategy that respects our past, present and future.

Accessible and inclusive

Some things we heard:

Make things easy to understand.

When engaging with the community, it is important to think about their cultural backgrounds - cultural awareness and safety is important.

Different ways of connecting are needed for different age groups.

All types of communication thought about: print, large print, audio, braille, AUSLAN, email. Interpreter services (AUSLAN)

Make more ways for customers who are getting older, have disabilities, or are vulnerable, to engage.

Theme	Principle	Initiatives
Accessible and inclusive	We will support an understanding of diverse groups in the City.

We will make things easy to understand and make sure there are many ways to connect. | • Look at and improve accessibility in City communications.
• Put time and effort into engagement activities that support diverse representation and provide different ways for our community to take part.
• Training and guidelines for City staff to write in plain English.
• Show our diverse community in our communications.
• Keep providing training for City staff to improve diversity and cultural understanding. |

Build relationships

Some things we heard:

Build stronger relationships with community leaders who can communicate, support, and engage with community groups in a better way.

Customer services is not just being a person in line but a person with a name, history and face.

Invite the right stakeholders to be involved.

Theme	Principle	Initiatives
Build relationships	We will work to build constant connection through respect and understanding.	• Build relationships with community groups and members to improve how we share information.
• Have a better understanding of stakeholders.
• Aim to build helpful partnerships for all.
• Celebrate our community relationships and community leaders.

Listen and remember
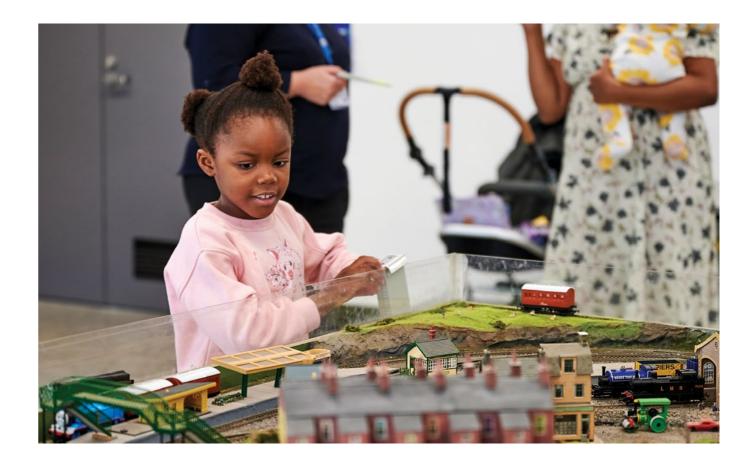
Some things we heard:

- Good consultation means listening to ideas, even if they are difficult.
- Feedback should be ongoing and not just 'thanks for your opinion'.
- Take the time to listen to what people are saying.
- Don't' be afraid of different ideas. You cannot be stale, you need to evolve.
- Provide responses and follow up complaints.
- Show how feedback and choices are linked together.

Theme	Principle	Initiatives
Listen and remember	We will support you to share your ideas, concerns and stories to create change that helps the community. We hear you and your input is important.	• Look at and improve how we receive feedback. • Improve the use of technology to get and keep community input. • Explore ways to remember people's preferred ways to communicate. • Improve processes to let people know how their views were considered and what we did, based on what we heard.

Quality and innovation

Some things we heard:

- Use technology to solve common problems.
- Use simple English and simple pictures.
- Have different options for how you do your consultation.
- Use more video and online ways to engage.
- It should not matter where good ideas come from.
- Listen, look, learn, improve.

Theme	Principle	Initiatives
Quality and innovation	We will try to be creative, open, and welcoming by communicating with people wherever they are - both in person and online. We will keep learning from our actions and the feedback we are given.	• Understand and improve our customer experiences. • Look at and improve our methods and processes for better customer service, communications and engagement. • Look at and improve how we gain information and keep it safe.

How we will deliver this strategy

Engagement Strategy

Community Engagement Charter & Customer Service

Toolkit, Training and Guidelines

Implementation Plan

What success would look like

According to our community and staff

We asked our staff and community how we can be successful, and the results were very similar.

Here are some of the shared ideas.

- A community that is proud and supportive of their local government, made through a relationship based on openness and trust.
- A connected and lively community that welcomes all abilities, cultures and diversity.
- Services that are engaging and respond to the needs of the community.
- Improvements in the local area based on community needs and aspirations.
- Lots of chances for the community to get involved, with clear and open communication about the results and choices that have been made.An engaged community that shares honest ideas and feedback to make a safe, lively, and diverse community.
- A valued, skilled, and confident workforce focused on providing very good customer service and engaging well with community and stakeholders.

Improvement in results

If this strategy is successful, we will improve our scores for communication, customer service, and consultation in our regular community perception scorecard.

	Current (2022 scorecard) Performance Index Score (PIS) & Positive Rating	Industry Average 2022 PIS	Industry High 2022 PIS	Goal range Performance Index Score (PIS) & Positive Rating
Customer Service	65 (86% positive rating)	58	68	65-69 (86%-90% positive rating)
Communications	58 (78% positive rating)	47	62	58-63 (78%-82% positive rating)
Consultation	51 (70% positive rating)	43	60	52-60 (72%-78% positive rating)

Good communication, consultation and customer service may also lead to better scores in other areas.

Key definitions

Engagement

The term engagement can have many meanings.

The definition given by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) is:

> "an intentional process with the specific purpose of working across organisations, stakeholders and communities to shape the decisions or actions of members of the community, stakeholders or organisations in relation to a problem, opportunity or outcome." [i]

The IAP2 spectrum of engagement has five different levels of engagement. The first is communications, which is telling people about what we are doing. After communications is consultation and then other forms of engagement with increasing levels of involvement in decisions or actions.

When we talked to people about this strategy, we used the word consultation to describe engagement as people found it easier to understand.

Communications

In this strategy, we are using the word communications to refer to:

> "the practice of using a combination of channels and tools to communicate with a desired market for the purpose of brand awareness, ... advertising, or promotion." [ii]

Customer experience

Customer experience has also been defined in many ways. One definition we liked is:

> ".. the sum-totality of how customers engage with your company and brand, not just in a snapshot in time, but throughout the entire arc of being a customer." [iii]

Community

Individuals and groups of people; based on geography or interest. In this instance a community may be formed based on where they live (community in place), those who share a similar interest (community of practice) or due to an affiliation with others (e.g., a sporting community)

Customer

An individual, group of individuals, business or organisation that uses the City's services.Stakeholder

Individuals, a group of individuals, organisations who are more likely to be impacted or have a specific stake in the outcome of decisions.

[i] IAP2 Your Peak Body for Engagement | IAP2 Australasia

[ii] Marketing & Communications Industry: Definition & Trends | Pearson Pathways

[iii] Adam Richardson (2010), Understanding Customer Experience, Harvard Business Review 28 October 2010 Understanding Customer Experience (hbr.org)

Other definitions

Accessible

Being easy to use or understand by many different people so more people can be included.

Artificial Intelligence

Using a computer to do tasks usually done by humans because the task requires a level of intelligence such as learning, problem solving, planning, reasoning or identifying patterns.

Barriers to engagement

Something that stops people from engaging or makes it harder to engage.

Diversity

The range of people in our community to include different backgrounds, cultures, languages, beliefs, ages, abilities, genders, sexual orientations and more.

Education

The school level that different members of our community achieved.

Household

The types of families or individuals who live in a location in our community.

Inclusive

To provide opportunities for all to be involved and to include people who might sometimes be left out.

Initiative

To do something.

In person pop up

A way of communicating with people face to face to get their feedback or to give them information in a public location or at an event.

MARKYT Community Perceptions Scorecard

A feedback exercise conducted by a business called Catalyse Pty Ltd to work out how people think an organisation is performing in a number of different areas.

Population

Some facts about the number of people in our community including their ages.

Principle

A rule or a belief that influences how we behave.

ProfileID

A website that shows information about our community that draws from the Australian Census and Bureau of Statistics as well as other sources of information.

Theme

A core idea that comes up many times and through different ways.

Thank You

Many people helped create this strategy, and we would like to thank them for taking the time to share.

- Everyone who provided an idea during the ideas phase.
- Design workshop and brand workshop participants.
- City Advisory Group members who helped.
- The Centre for Accessibility Australia who helped us write this strategy in plain English.
- Community and business partners who told others about this strategy.
- Our Council, Executive Leadership Team and Operational Leadership Team who took part in workshops.
- Our staff working group members.

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BELMONT

CITY OF OPPORTUNITY

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