

WHAT IS COLLABORATIVE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT?

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Fundamental Paradox



People want to have a voice in public decisions that affect their lives but how can that voice be meaningful if the terms, concepts and technical trade-offs are new or distrusted by them?

What is Collaborative Public Engagement?

A process in which interdependent parties work together to address the future of an issue that affects them all. Five features are critical:

1. Stakeholders are interdependent.
2. Stakeholders are diverse, with different values, and desiring different outcomes. It means working with “the other”.
3. Allows solutions to emerge that otherwise would not by dealing constructively with differences.
4. Joint ownership of outcomes is involved.
5. Collaboration is an emergent property.

What is a Collaborative Process?

- A collaborative orientation toward multiparty **learning** first to create progress.
- It means designing and implementing events (workshops, field trips, etc.) to promote learning, creative thought, constructive debate, weighing of options, and creating the capacity to find solutions.
- Uses an iterative approach that is FOTE, (Full, Open and Transparent), inclusive and learning-based.
- Appropriate when there are multiple stakeholders who are interdependent (affected by same situation) and independent because they have different values and views.
- Suitable for NRM situations that are **wicked** . Characteristics:
 - a. conflict
 - b. complexity

What Collaborative Public Engagement is not:


- Quick, easy and simple to check off a box
- People working together in a low conflict situation.
- Without investment.
- The same every time.
- A decision-making process

IAP2 Spectrum

IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation



IAP2's Spectrum of Public Participation was designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any public participation process. The Spectrum is used internationally, and it is found in public participation plans around the world.

		INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION 				
		INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL		To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
	PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

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From the International Association for Public Participation.

Collaborative Public Engagement involves aspects of “Involve” and “Collaborate”.



Why Collaborative Public Engagement?

- Public participation tool for complex, conflictual situations.
- Can create a continuous, sustainable “table of trust” to return to over time, builds relationships, creates networks for future learning and decision-making.
- Maximizes opportunities for solutions: creates value.
- A collaborative approach decreases the chance of litigation, confusion, disappointment, enhanced conflict or no action later.

When Collaborative Public Engagement may not work

Sometimes collaborative approaches are not the right approach if:

- It's a low conflict situation.
- There is low collaborative capacity within the company/governmental i.e. organization does not support a process in its entirety.
- There is a significant conflict legacy.
- Lack of decision space (room for options).
- Outcome will be trumped by decisions in other venues (BATNA's: Better Alternatives to Negotiated Agreements).

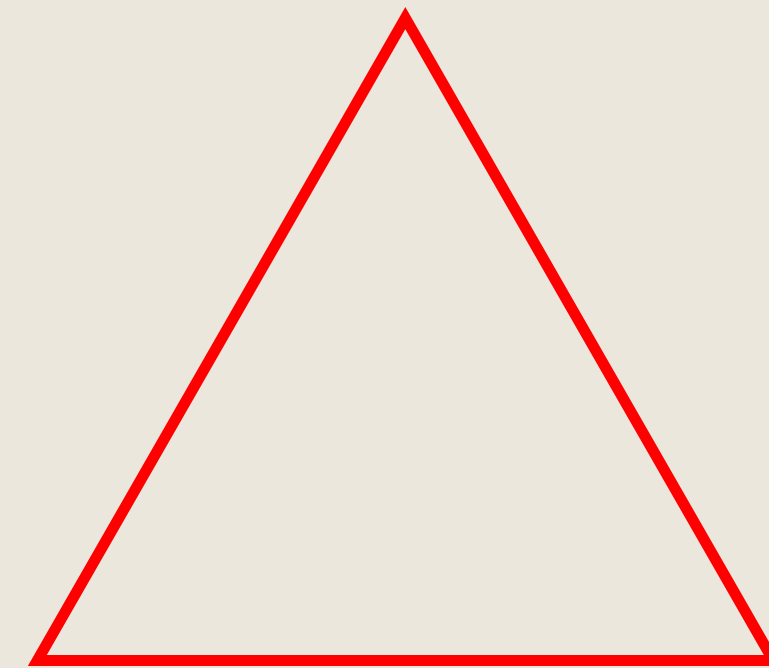


Three Dimensions of The Progress Triangle

Need to be Explored First and used to design a Process



Substance (Issue)



Procedure
(Process)

Relationship
(Stakeholders)

Tools

- Food and Beverages
- A facilitator who is experienced in CL.
- Interactive Workshops.
- Field trips.
- Documentation
- Ideally a survey that describes “silent majority”
- Participatory monitoring and/or research.
- GIS as a learning tool using multiple layers.
- Web-based tools.

Considerations related to Collaborative Engagement

- Takes time, staff and costs in the short run.
- Takes active, meaningful support throughout convening organization and other stakeholders.
- Requires open mindedness and active listening skills.
- Need to take preconceptions and agency/community/corporate cultures into consideration.
- Also takes time and travel for participants.
- All less of an issue if there is progress.



