

**Keep
Going™**



Selecting the Right Level of Public Participation: The Spectrum

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IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum



Increasing Level of Public Impact 

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.

Example techniques

- Fact sheets
- Web sites
- Open houses

- Public comment
- Focus groups
- Surveys
- Public meetings

- Workshops
- Deliberative polling

- Citizen advisory Committees
- Consensus-building
- Participatory decision-making

- Citizen juries
- Ballots
- Delegated decision

“Levels” of Public Participation

- Not all public participation is the same
- We adjust our approach and resources based on the conditions and needs of the sponsor, decision, and community to be engaged
- The most important decision is this:

How much potential influence on the decision or action are you willing to provide to the public?

“Level” does not refer to “Effort”

- How much time and resources we spend is not the same as the “level” of public participation
- Our focus needs to be on the level of “potential influence” by the public
- Potential influence is defined by how much power the sponsor is actually willing to share
- Actual influence will be determined by the ultimate project implementation

The Promise to the Public

- Ultimately defines the level of public participation
- Outlines the key roles and opportunities for the public to help shape outcomes
- Clearly defines the limitations of public input
- Clarifies expectations for everyone
- Defines the sponsor's obligations and helps to communicate what was achieved

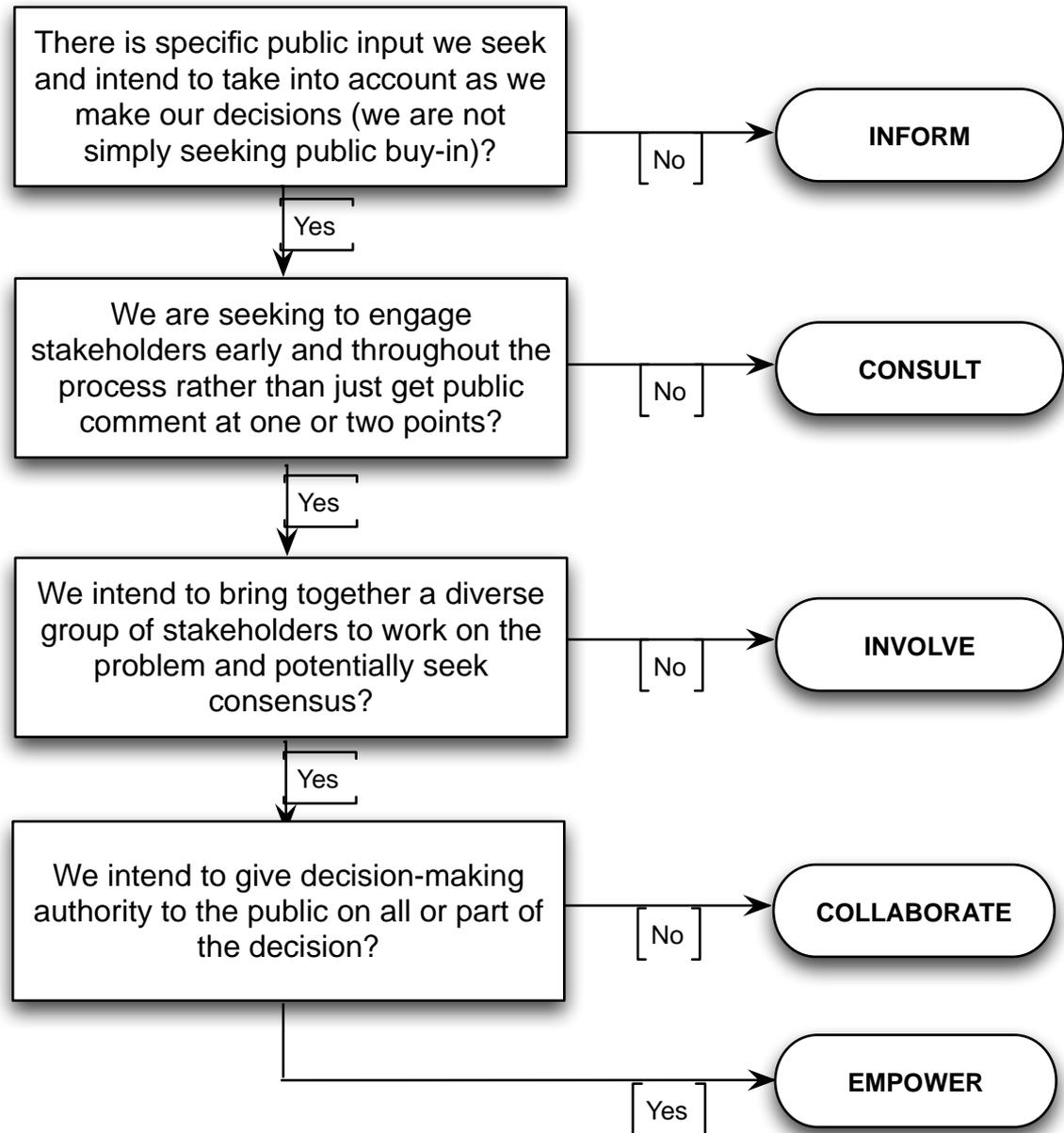
Using the Spectrum

- Higher levels are not necessarily better, choose the level that fits the conditions
- Not all stakeholders will engage at the higher levels selected, we design access at all levels up to the one selected
- Levels can change based on the stage of the project

Using the Spectrum

- Try to meet stakeholder needs
- Never promise a level higher than the sponsor will support

Using the Spectrum



Goal and Promise Statements

- The goal clarifies what the sponsor is seeking to achieve through public participation
- The promise clarifies what the public can expect from you

Goal and Promise Statements

- Be specific
- Make sure they define clear expectations
- Use them to measure and communication success

Spectrum Exercise

- Pick a situation that someone in your group is currently facing
- Using an interview approach, work as a group to define the following:
 - What is the challenge? (problem statement)
 - Where and how could public input actually make a difference?
 - How much public influence is the sponsor willing to consider?

Spectrum Exercise

- Use the flowchart and spectrum to identify the appropriate level of public participation
- Write a promise to the public that will establish clear expectations