
Planning for Public Involvement in Solid Waste Decisions

Ann Zimmerman, AZA Planning & Public Involvement
2005 Annual Meeting
Colorado Rocky Mountain SWANA Chapter
Glenwood Springs, CO

What, Why and How to Involve Others in Your Solid Waste Planning and Management Decisions

Acknowledgement:

International Association of Public Participation

Public Participation for Executives and Decision Makers

Overview of Today's Presentation

- What is Public Participation?
 - Who is the public and why involve them?
 - When wouldn't you involve the public?
 - How can the public be involved—Spectrum of Involvement
 - PI Components—Must haves
 - Planning Steps
 - Sample Solid Waste Applications
-

What is Public Participation?

- Using the public in problem-solving or decision-making.
 - Preventative: While in the family of dispute resolution—begin participation before disputes arise
 - Useful in any solid waste planning steps: identifying problems, developing alternatives, & making decisions.
 - Who is the public? Any groups or individuals affected by the decision or process
-

How do solid waste projects
fail?

What is your experience?

Inadequate technical information?

Unprepared decision-makers?

No project supporters?

Last minute issues or people surface?

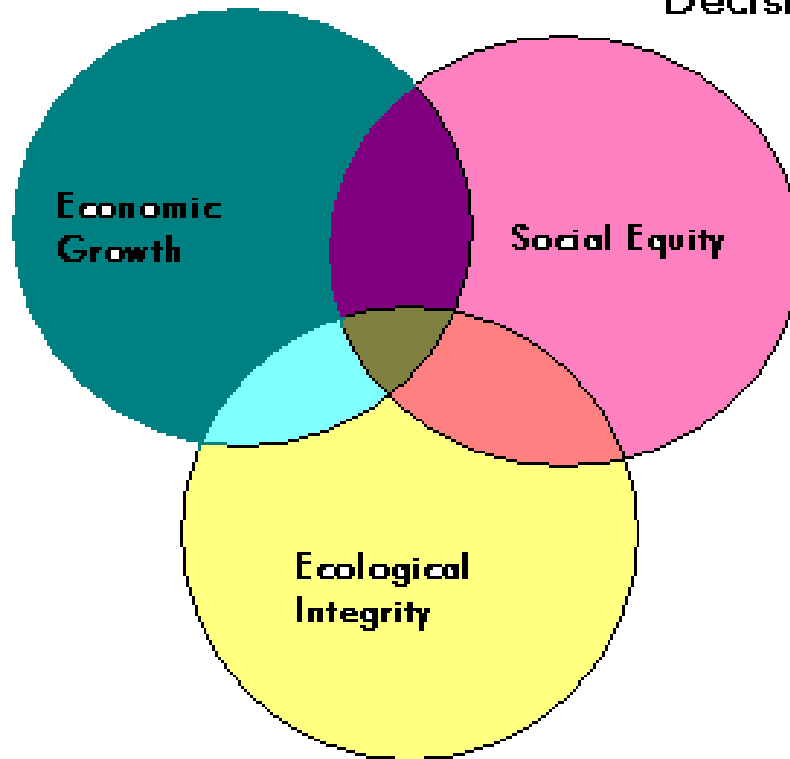
Technical information misunderstood?

Others?

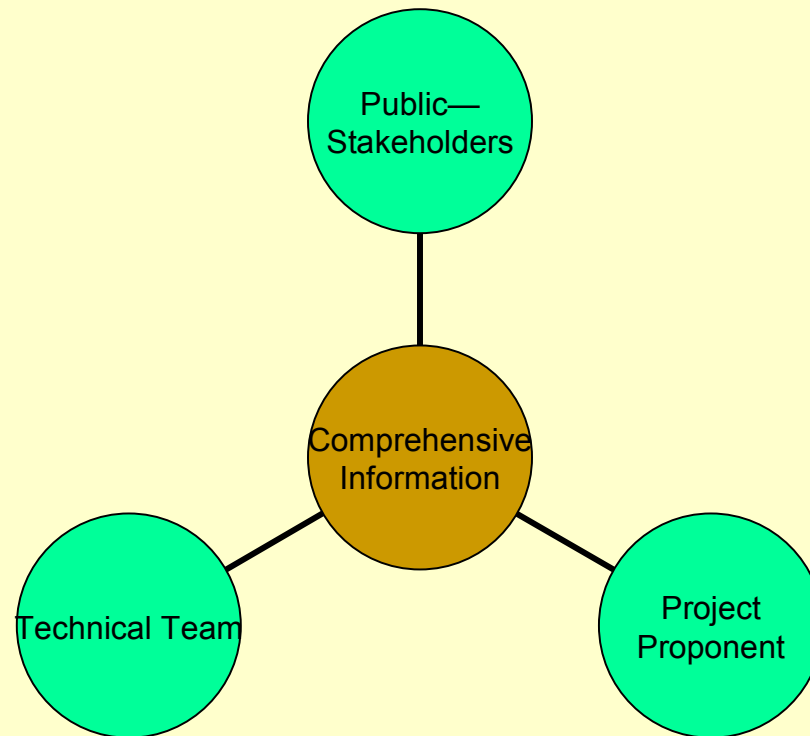
Who is the Public?

Consider a Range of Voices from these 3 sectors

Stakeholders for Sustainable
Decisions: 3 Dimensions



The public—one contribution to comprehensive information



Not all Public Involvement is
Approached in the Same Way—

Select a Level of Public Involvement
that corresponds to the project need
and the promise you are willing to
make and keep!

Increasing Level of Public Impact

Inform

P2 Goal:

To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives and/or solution.

Promise to the Public:

We will keep you informed.

Example Tools:

- ◆ Fact sheets
- ◆ Web sites
- ◆ Open houses

Consult

P2 Goal:

To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.

Promise to the Public:

We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.

Example Tools:

- ◆ Public comment
- ◆ Focus groups
- ◆ Surveys
- ◆ Public meetings

Involve

P2 Goal:

To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public issues and concerns are consistently understood and considered.

Promise to the Public:

We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and issues are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.

Example Tools:

- ◆ Workshops
- ◆ Deliberative polling

Collaborate

P2 Goal:

To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.

Promise to the Public:

We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.

Example Tools:

- ◆ Citizen Advisory Committees
- ◆ Consensus-building
- ◆ Participatory decision-making

Empower

P2 Goal:

To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.

Promise to the Public:

We will implement what you decide.

Example Tools:

- ◆ Citizen Juries
- ◆ Ballots
- ◆ Delegated decisions

Why Involve the Public?

What are the risks and costs of not involving them?

- Lawsuits based on lack of process
 - Legislative interventions-referendums
 - Planned project disruption by alienated factions
 - Delays
 - Lost trust and deteriorated relationships
-

Planning Model: **Decide, Announce, Defend**

DECIDE

Define problem, gather information, survey alternatives, narrow alternatives, determine criteria for analysis, analyze, and decide or recommend. (Technical)

ANNOUNCE

Prepare a report and make a presentation on the decision.

DEFEND

Explain to decision-makers and public why this is the best and most reasonable choice.

Why involve the public?

- Democratic Principles
 - Improved Process
 - Early warning system
 - Manage single-issue viewpoints
 - Create a better understanding of the underlying problem need
 - Develop ownership and constituency
 - Get it right the first time--keep moving forward
-

Why involve the public, cont.

- **Better results & decisions**
 - Local knowledge, broader understanding thru more information
 - More perspectives
 - Increased mutual understanding
- **Builds relationships**
- **Meets regulations and requirements**

Characteristics of Good Public Involvement

- Values-Based
 - Decision-Oriented
 - Goal-Driven
-

Public Involvement Process

Component Summary

- Clarify the decision and who makes it
 - Research the issues and understand who needs to be involved
 - Set the level of participation—keep promises made at the level of participation, and don't go beyond promises in approaches and methods.
 - Be guided by ethics of PI and needs of the organization and participants.
-

Planning Steps

1. Gain Internal Commitment
 2. Learn from the public
 3. Select the level of participation
 4. Define the process; set participation objectives
 5. Design a public participation plan
 6. Implement while evaluating and adjusting
-

Public Involvement Process

Component Summary, Cont.

- Design process according to values and budget and schedule constraints.
 - Evaluate and Adapt
 - Evaluate at the conclusion of the process
-

Public Participation Practitioner Ethics

- IAP2 7 Core Values: Meeting promises made to the public in the design and execution of the project, fairly communicating interests, communicating back to the public how their input was considered; making the process meaningful to the participants.
 - IAP2 Code of Ethics: Responsibility to the public; commitment to trust, openness, good faith, and honesty
 - EPA Initiatives, such as Environmental Justice
 - Others, appropriate to the locale and study
-

Solid Waste Planning Study Examples

Siting Studies?

Change in Recycling Service?

Shift to alternative daily cover?

Increasing Level of Public Impact

Inform

P2 Goal:

To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives and/or solution.

Promise to the Public:

We will keep you informed.

Example Tools:

- ◆ Fact sheets
- ◆ Web sites
- ◆ Open houses

Consult

P2 Goal:

To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.

Promise to the Public:

We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.

Example Tools:

- ◆ Public comment
- ◆ Focus groups
- ◆ Surveys
- ◆ Public meetings

Involve

P2 Goal:

To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public issues and concerns are consistently understood and considered.

Promise to the Public:

We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and issues are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.

Example Tools:

- ◆ Workshops
- ◆ Deliberative polling

Collaborate

P2 Goal:

To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.

Promise to the Public:

We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.

Example Tools:

- ◆ Citizen Advisory Committees
- ◆ Consensus-building
- ◆ Participatory decision-making

Empower

P2 Goal:

To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.

Promise to the Public:

We will implement what you decide.

Example Tools:

- ◆ Citizen Juries
- ◆ Ballots
- ◆ Delegated decisions