

Public Engagement as Risk Management

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HIGHLAND PLANNING

What Is Public Engagement?



Why Do Public Engagement?

Better dialogue

leads to

Better decisions

1. Get input
2. Share information
3. Minimize risk



RISK =
HAZARD
+
OUTRAGE



What is a hazard?



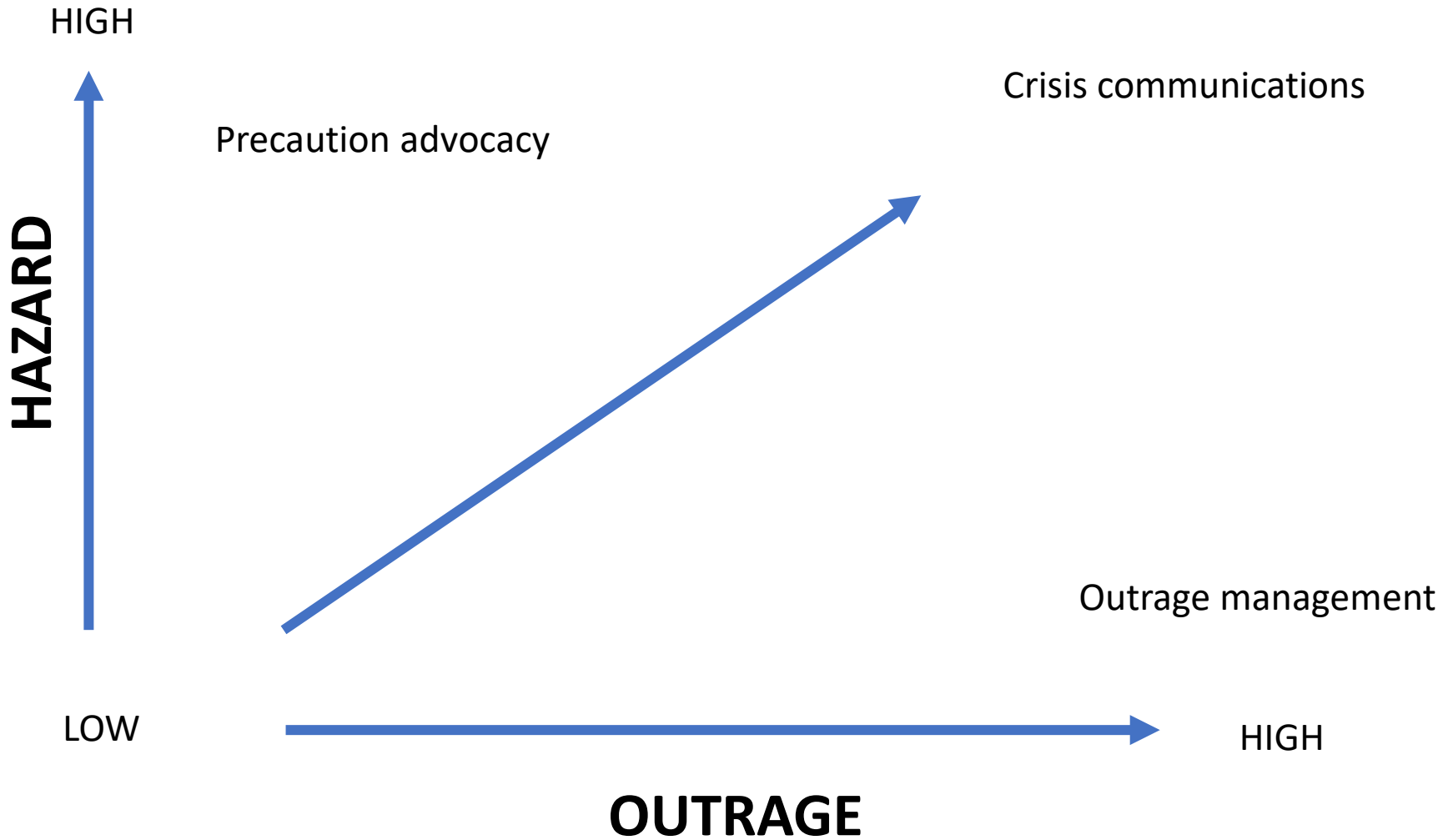
What causes outrage?

- Coerced
- Industrial
- Exotic
- Memorable
- Dreaded
- Catastrophic
- Unknowable
- Controlled by others
- Unfair
- Morally relevant
- Untrustworthy sources
- Unresponsive process

Source: International Association of Public Participation (IAP2)



$$\text{Risk} = \text{Hazard} + \text{Outrage}$$



Source: International Association of Public Participation (IAP2)

How do we minimize risk?



Clear expectations



Stakeholder identification and understanding



Transparency



The right approach

Clear Expectations: Decision Statement

Who will do what by when

For more than 20 years, I-198 in Buffalo has been a subject of discussion and outrage. Cutting through several established neighborhoods and a historic park, I-198 is a highway with dangerous on-and off-ramps, a speed limit of 30 mph, and a history of severe accidents. It is also an eyesore that runs next to and over a creek and pond. The public is divided between raising the speed limit to 55 mph and removing the highway altogether. GBNRTC has hired you to study and propose a solution that benefits the community in the surrounding area (Region Central) within 2 years.

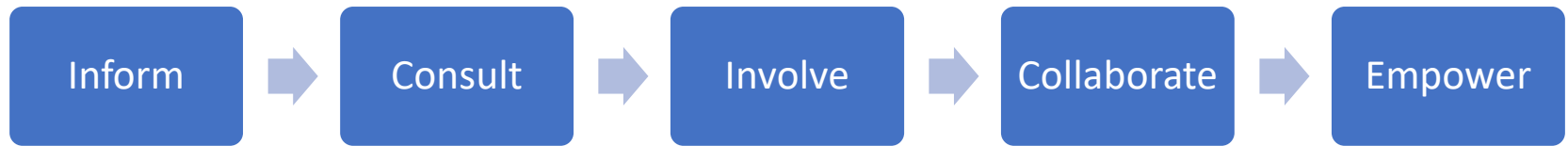


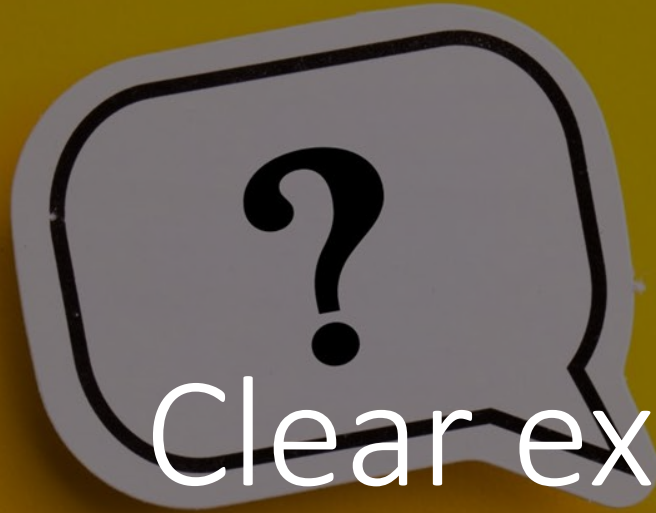
Region Central Draft Decision Statement

Working with our neighbors to envision our shared future, by Spring 2022 GBNRTC will adopt a plan that shapes the future of mobility in Region Central, strengthens our communities, and creates a safer, healthier, and more equitable and prosperous city and region for all.



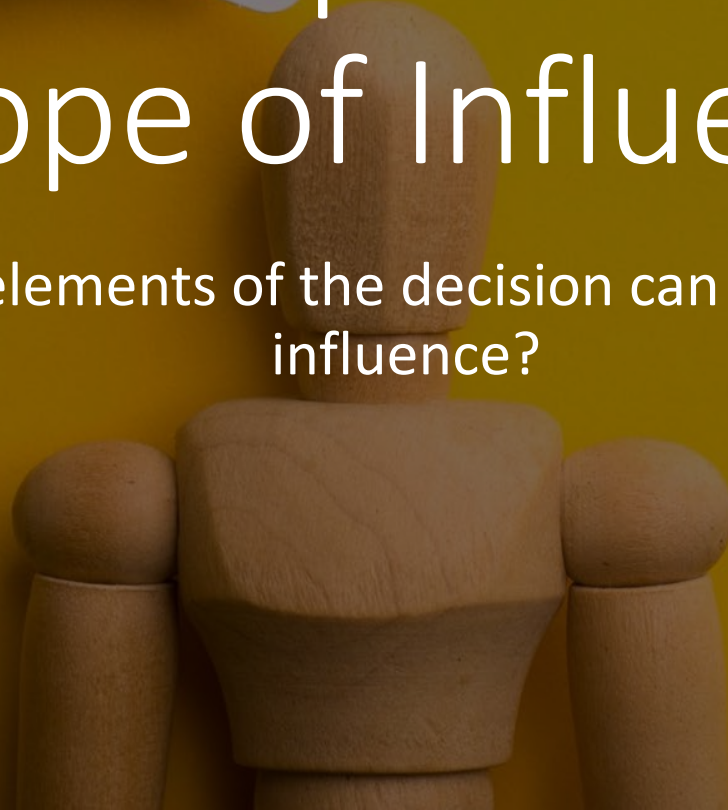
Clear expectations: Level of Engagement





Clear expectations: Scope of Influence

What elements of the decision can the public influence?



Stakeholder Identification and Understanding

Stake

High Stake, Low Influence

Need help to participate

- Door-to-door/online survey
- Advisory committee participation
- Small group meetings
- Regular e-blasts

High Stake, High Influence

Drivers

- Steering/Technical committee participation
- One-on-One Interviews
- Updates from project team/personal briefing from GBNRTC

Bystanders

- E-blasts
- Invite to public meetings
- Online survey/information online

Need to be in the loop

- Technical committee participation
- Focus on communications strategy

Low Stake, Low Influence

Low Stake, High Influence

Influence

Transparency

- All voices welcome/heard
- Acknowledge mistakes
- Acknowledge the elephant in the room



The Right Approach

Pre-engagement interviews

- What are the issues and opportunities associated with this project?
- What does an ideal process look like to you?
- Who should we be hearing from?
- Where and when is the best way to engage people? Can you help?
- Who else should we talk to?





The Right Approach

1. Don't skip the Public Engagement Plan
2. Go to them

What is Success?

“The Scajaquada Corridor Coalition, which includes Waterkeeper and several community organizations, issued statements "unified in their support" for the proposed plans. The group also praised what they considered to be an inclusive, transparent planning process offering extensive public and stakeholder input.”

- Buffalo News, January 17, 2023

Thank you!

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