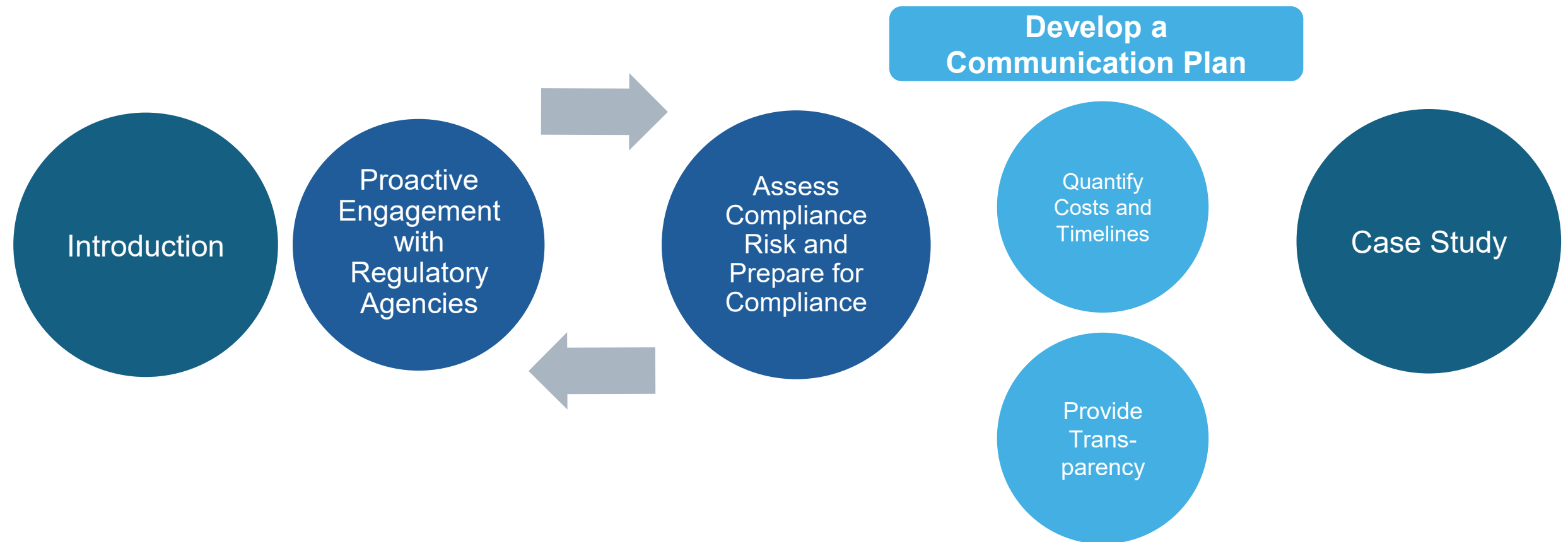


MANAGING COMPLIANCE THROUGH EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

PRESENTED BY: Theresa Tucker, York Sewer District, ME

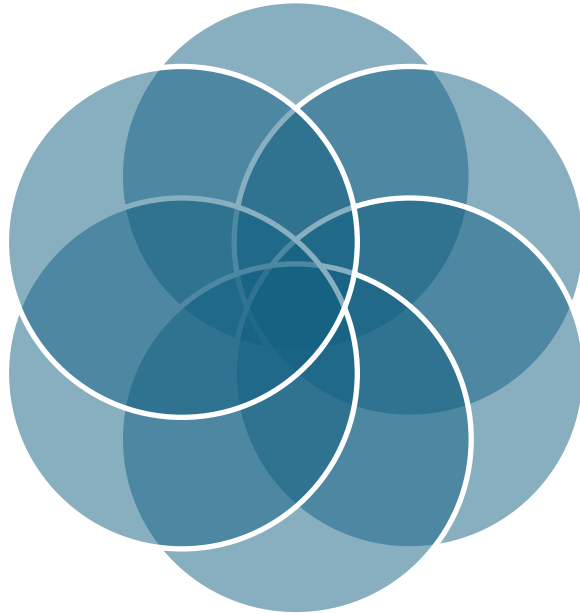
Agenda Overview



HOW TO ENGAGE PROACTIVELY WITH REGULATORY AGENCIES

Engagement with Regulatory Agencies

Know your Regulators



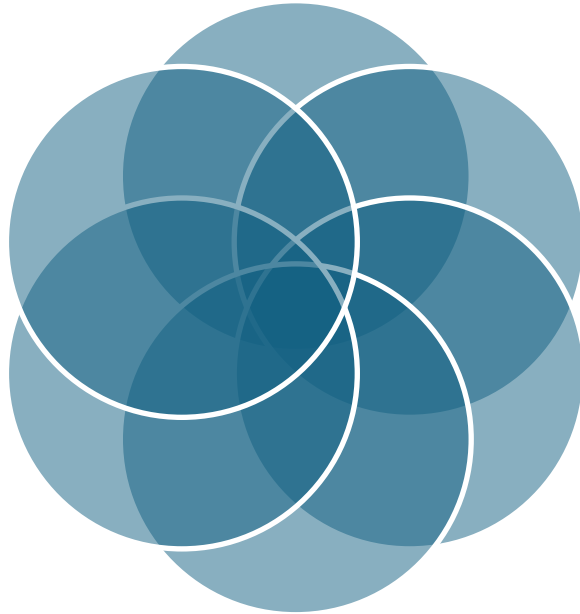
You have the opportunity to define your relationship with regulatory agencies

- Acting as an informed collaborator can foster mutual respect – rather than hostility
- Know relevant levels of government + distribution of responsibilities:
 - City / Municipal
 - Regional / District
 - County
 - State / Province
 - Federal
- Don't wait for enforcement, research what's coming down the pipeline

Engagement with Regulatory Agencies

Know your
Regulators

Consider
Partnering

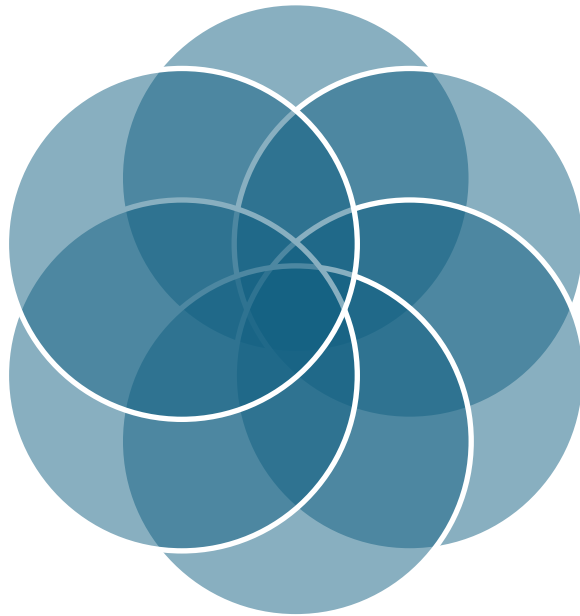


- **Identify and empower** your internal subject matter experts to engage with regulatory agencies
 - Most regulators **want to help you** achieve compliance
 - Dialogue early and often can reduce or eliminate unpleasant surprises.
- Removing barriers to communication can lead to better results
 - Experts who are forced to communicate through intermediaries waste valuable time

Engagement with Regulatory Agencies

Know your
Regulators

Consider
Partnering



Invest in the
Relationship

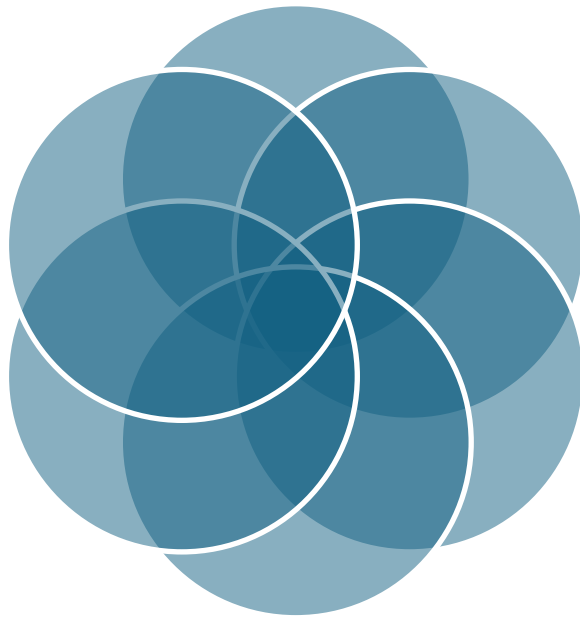
Nobody likes surprises:

- Involve regulatory agencies when working on a project
- Involve them early - don't wait for them to find out "through the grapevine"
- Ask questions, especially if unfamiliar with a particular regulation
 - Lean on the expertise of regulators:
 - *"Is there anything else we haven't brought up that would be helpful?"*

Engagement with Regulatory Agencies

Know your
Regulators

Consider
Partnering



Invest in the
Relationship

Work with
your
regulatory
agencies

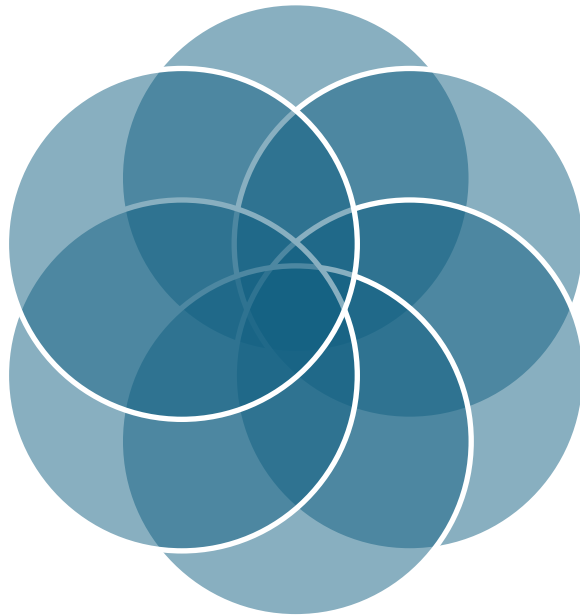
Participation is a **two-way street**

- When regulation is developed in working sessions, **join and participate!**
- When feedback is solicited, take time to provide thoughtful responses
- Take steps to build a working relationship
- Attend meetings, read e-mails, filings, and supporting documents

Engagement with Regulatory Agencies

Know your
Regulators

Consider
Partnering



Invest in the
Relationship

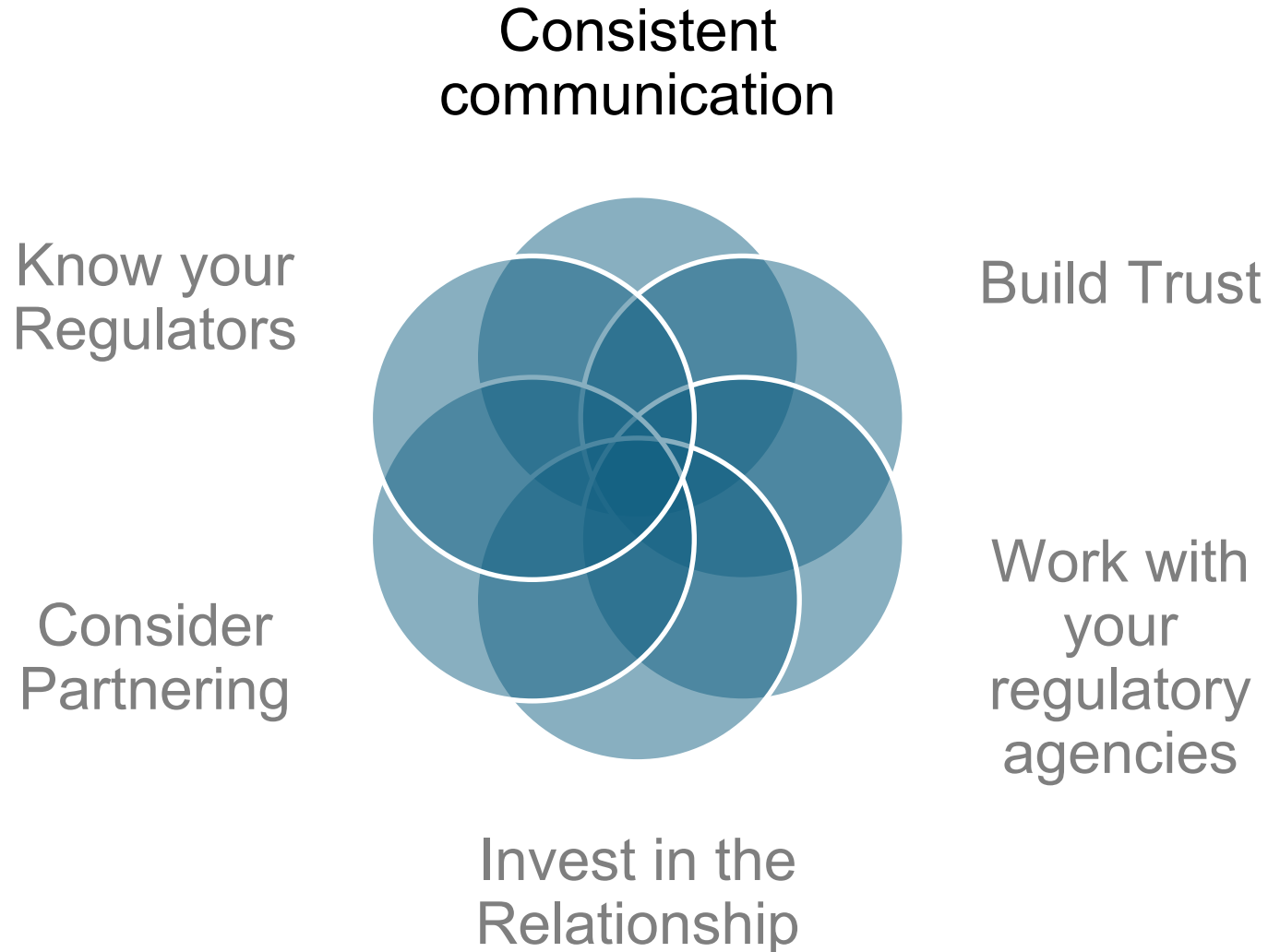
Build Trust

Work with
your
regulatory
agencies

Predictability is key to establishing long-term trust.

- Do regulators know what to expect from you?
- Does your agency know what to expect from them?
- Can you set up processes that can survive the departure of key individuals?
- **Do what you say you're going to do**

Engagement with Regulatory Agencies



Communicating frequently eliminates unpleasant surprises.

- Keep everyone on the same page
- Consistent communication allows information to flow among all key stakeholders
- Required communication is usually the bare minimum
- Go above and beyond

ASSESS COMPLIANCE RISKS AND PREPARE FOR COMPLIANCE

Assess Compliance Risk

Compliance begins with the heart

- Understand community priorities and core values
- Encourage organizational flexibility for staff and resource changes
- New regulations and compliance could result in new operational efficiencies
- Timely and proactive organizational changes could lead to more opportunities for more systemic solutions for compliance with new regulations



Assess Compliance Risk

Create a Map

- Define the compliance environment for your organization such as staffing roles and responsibilities
- Identify goals and objectives for compliance
 - Success starts at the top – show that leadership cares!
- Identify key personnel and administrative structure
 - What is the chain of command for compliance activity?



Prepare for Compliance

Count the Stakeholders

- Identify business and organizational needs
- Engage other stakeholders
- Define alternative compliance options and evaluate



Prepare for Compliance

Champion a Solution

- More study/research may be required
- Define clear and concise needs
- Identify the best solution and prepare for a communication plan
 - Don't let the perfect be the enemy of the good!





DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATION PLAN

What is a Communication Plan, anyway?



*An outline of how to communicate **important**, ongoing project information to **key stakeholders***

Key Stakeholders



Regulatory Agencies

EPA, State /
Province Agencies



Regulatory Authorities

Water & Sewer utilities



Public

General public, special
interest groups, permit
holders, corporations

Who?

Key stakeholders

What?

Project information,
tailored to your audience

When?

Engage early and often

Where?

Use multiple channels:
Meetings
Public outreach
(schools, community events)
Website
Social media

How?

Clear and consistent, simple and straightforward language

Consistency in communication frequency and medium

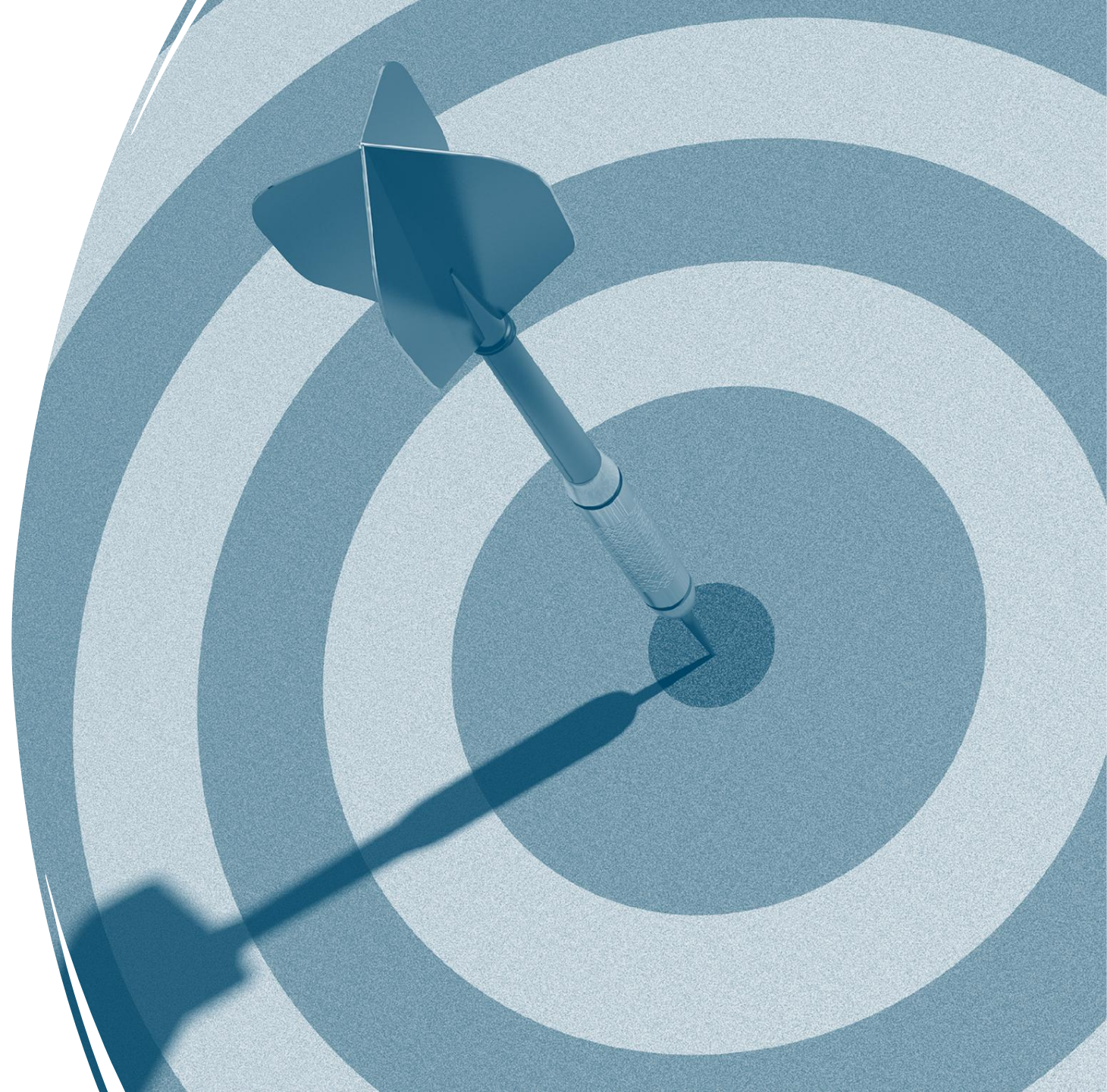
Tailor information to your audience

Understand the person/people/group you are talking to



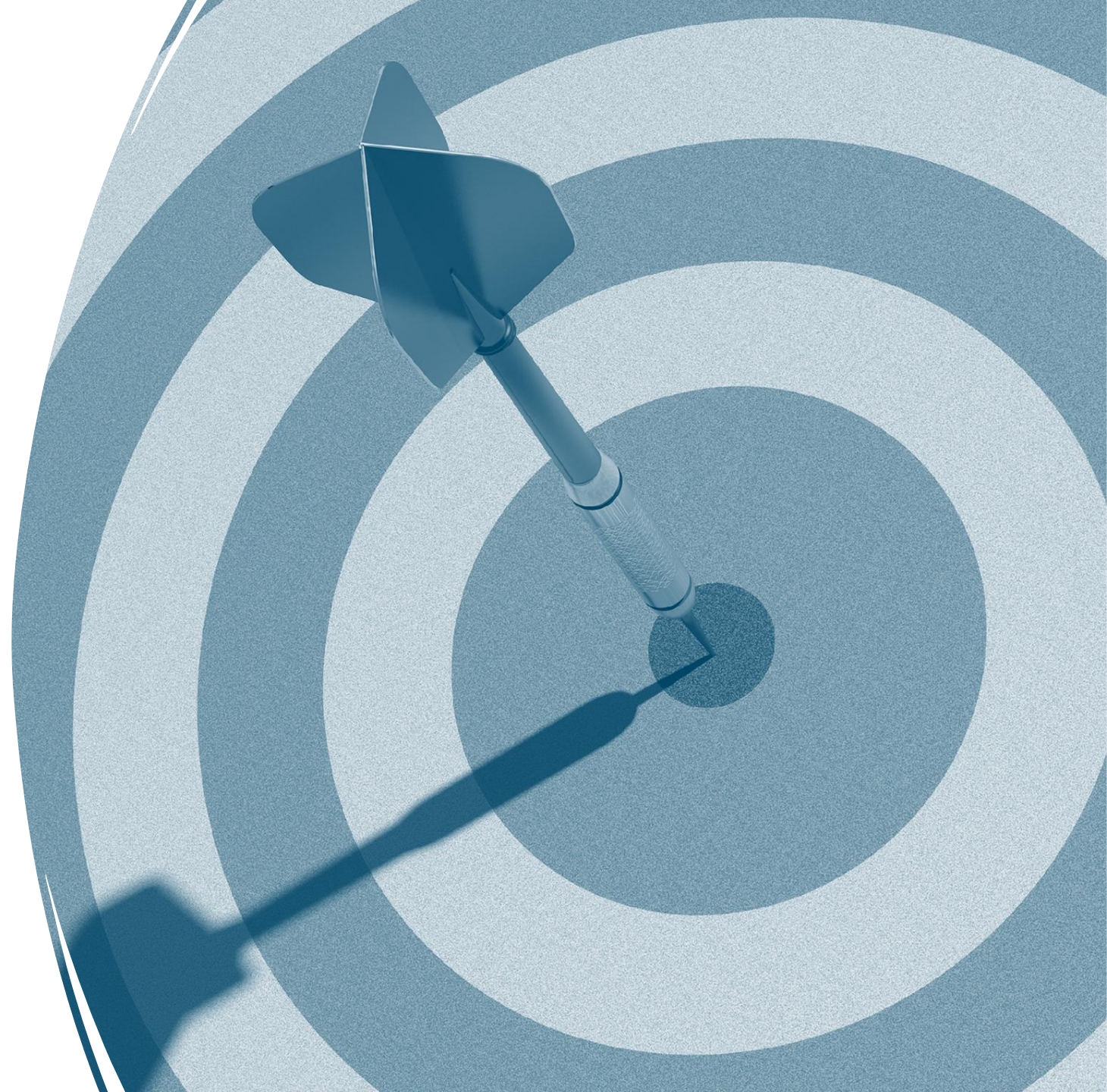
1. Establish Clear Objectives

- Define purpose
- Know your stakeholders
- Help them understand need for change and why it's important
- Understand their perspective and identify mitigation strategies



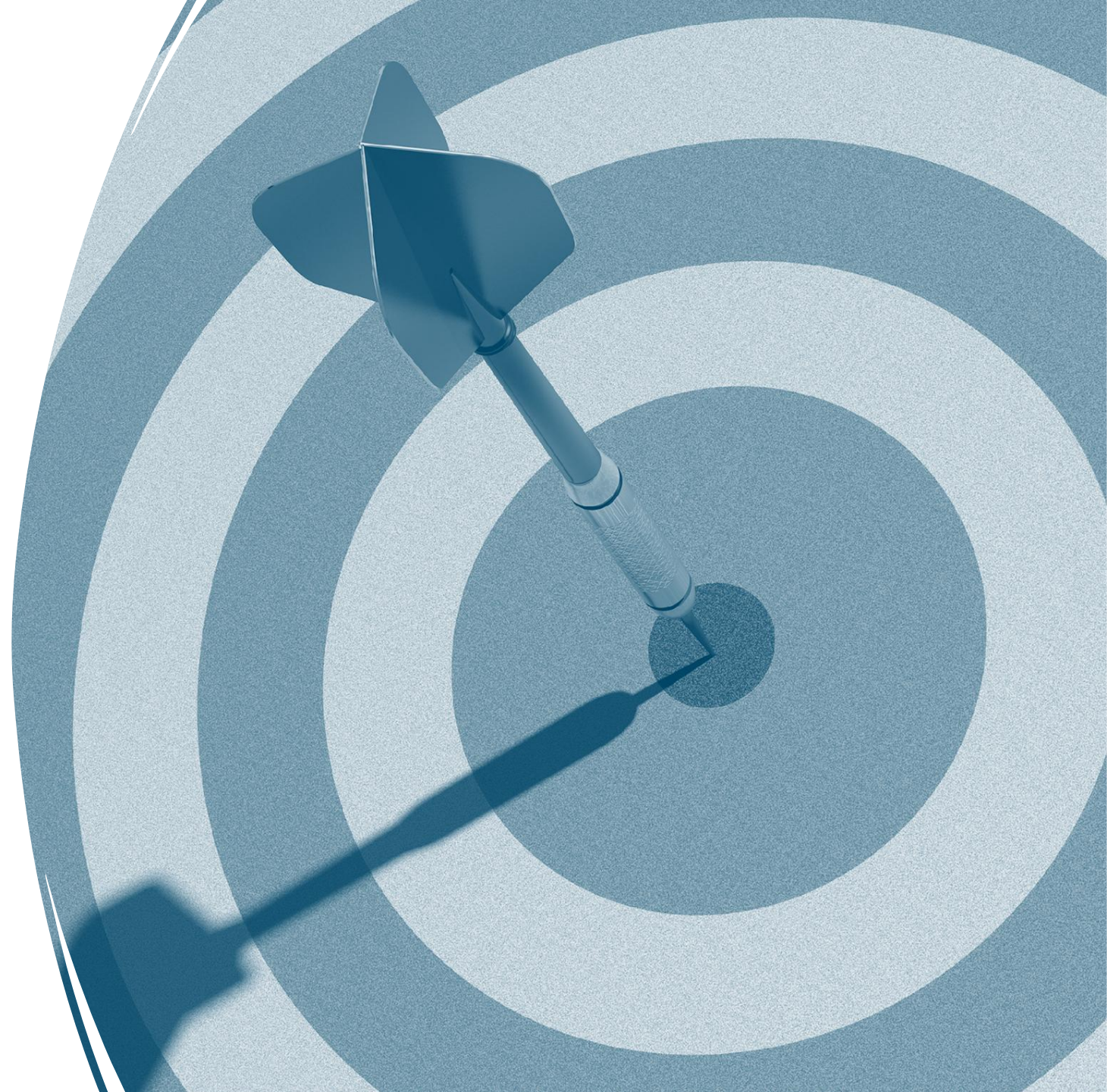
2. Quantify Costs and Timeline

- Clear messaging to the public
- Timeline of project (construction schedule, ratepayer impact, compliance)
- Be prepared to offer and accept alternatives



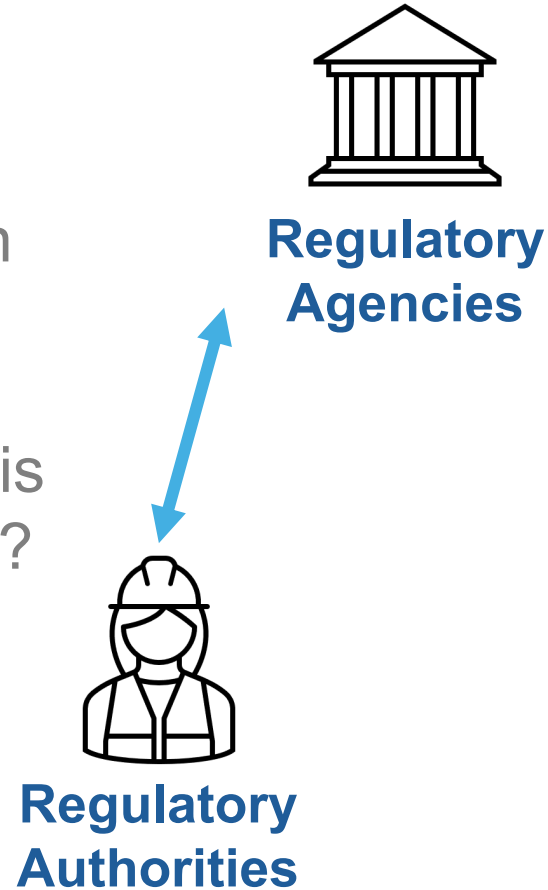
3. Provide Transparency

- Sharing positive implications of a project is not “spin”
- Communicating the good and bad is essential for understanding
- Builds trust and reduces costly challenges

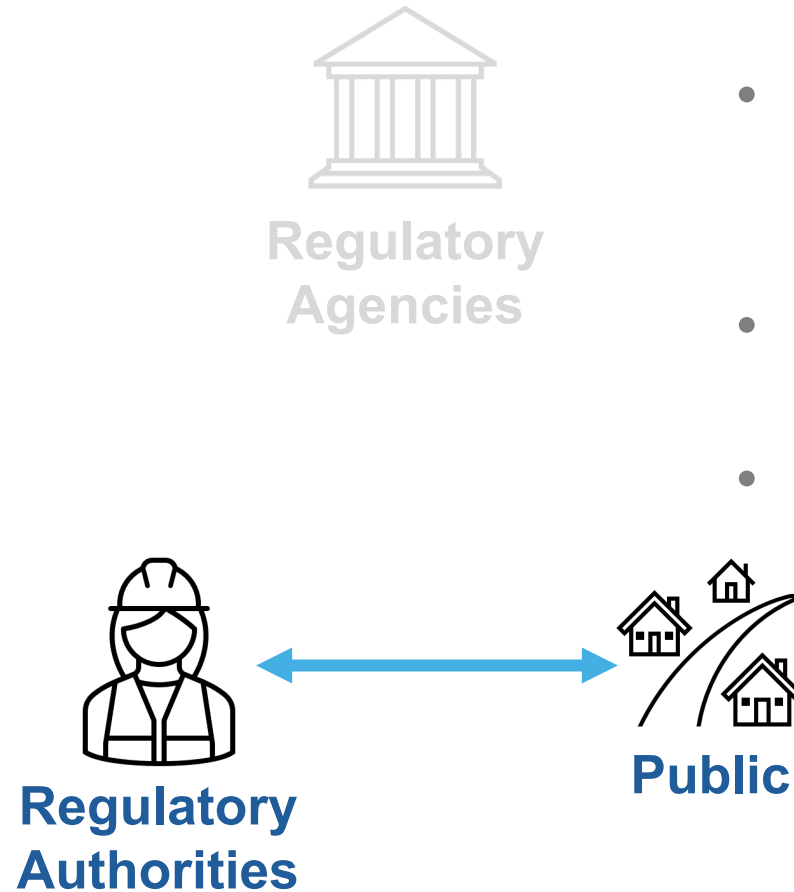


Stakeholder Communication

- Understand intention of new policy and transition period
- Demonstrate benefit
- Understand the “how” – is the technology available?



Stakeholder Communication



- Understand impacts and benefits of new regulation on general public
- Work with industry groups if regulation impacts them
- Explain the “why” – who and what will benefit from compliance

CASE STUDY
OF A \$54M UPGRADE
TO THE CITY OF SACO'S
WATER RESOURCE RECOVERY FACILITY
and
HOW USING A COMMUNICATION PLAN
HELPED THEM



● **2019**

- Climate Adaptation Plan was adopted

● **2021**

- Completed EPA AAA Evaluation
- Long term facility planning
- Engineering design began

●

2020

- Maine Climate Council & Coastal Resiliency Committee with EPA





How does AAA add to a conventional analysis?

Conventional Alternatives Analysis



Augmented Steps of AAA

+ 1 Understand Community Priorities

2 Determine Project Goals

3 Define Objectives

+ 4 Rank the Importance of Goals

5 Establish Criteria

6 Choose Metrics for Your Criteria

+ 7 Create Performance Ranges

8 Evaluate Performance of Each Alternative

9 Compare Across Alternatives

10 Incorporate Cost Considerations



Choose "Best Fit" Alternative for
Your Utility + Community

UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

1. Increase Public Awareness and Appreciation of the Value of Water Services

Communicated value of underground assets and water resource recovery facility and its relation to public health, the ecosystem, and community development

HOW?

- Collaboration with Schools
- Engagement within the Community
 - Community meetings



UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

2. Bolster Community Livability

Encouraged enhanced public access and greenspace along river frontage near the water resource recovery facility and planned for long-term use of the facility to support local community and economic development

HOW?

- New walking path along the river.
- Allows for more housing / businesses in the City



UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

3. Improve System Resiliency

Ensure WRFF is resilient to effects of increasing weather events such as flooding, that cause operational disruptions, loss of plant access and functionality. Transparency on the benefits to public health were communicated to help the public understand the needs despite the cost associated with the upgrade

HOW?

- Shared long-term debt comparison with other communities.



UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

4. Ensure Financial Stability

Maintain balance of funding needs by making smart investments that consider the long-term health of Saco's WRRF infrastructure

HOW?

- Early and comprehensive studies on the necessary infrastructure to address climate change were completed.



Thank You & Credits

SUCCESS!

- **Credits & References**

- City of Saco Water Resource
Recovery Facility - Case Study

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207-650-4429

