

# Presentation objectives

- Understand vulnerabilities
- Learn to PLAN your outreach
- Tools for working with difficult audiences



# Why are some meetings less successful than others?

- Indications of a predetermined outcome or preference
- Project appears driven by outsiders/federal government
- Lack of friendly audience participants
- No strong moderator
- Weak coalition



# Organizing and Outreach

- Develop **working groups**
- **Meet regularly** with closest partners
- **Offer** resources, ideas, materials to partners (don't always ask, offer as well)
- Have **ONE point of contact**



# Before the meeting...

What is the  
Format?

What is the  
Venue?

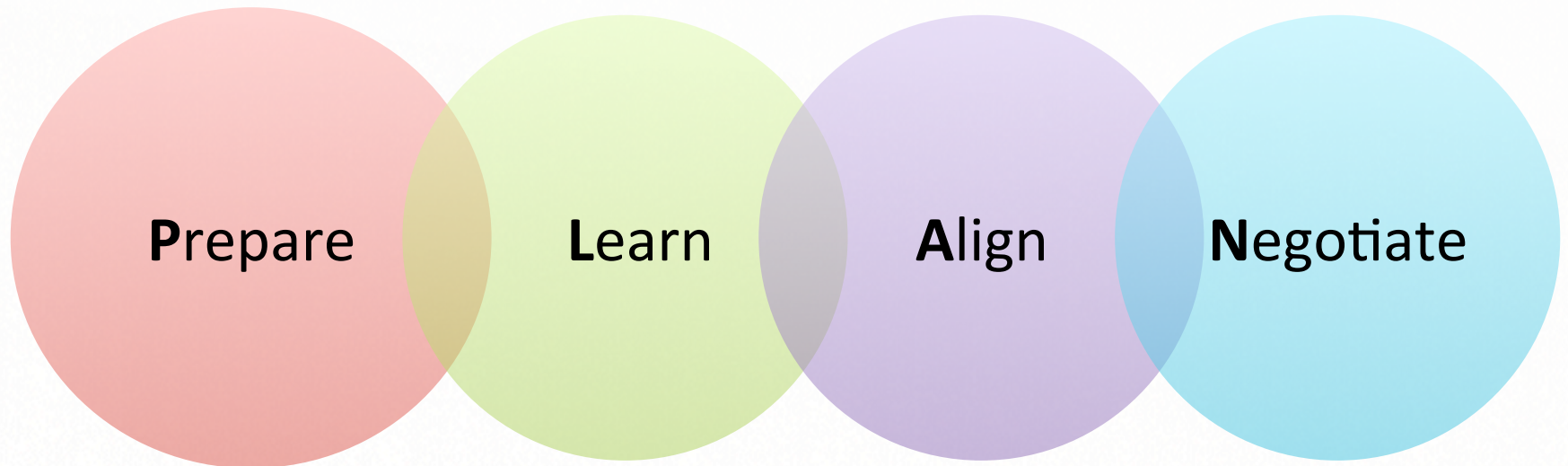
Who are the  
Participants?

Possible  
Questions?

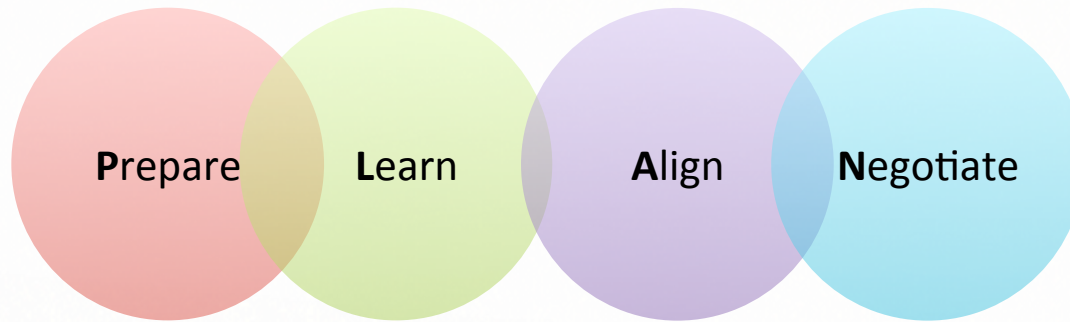




# Planning for success



# Planning for success



Prepare appropriately

Learn about attendees and listen for potential conflicts

Align with others

Negotiate with those who might raise concerns or surface conflicts



# There are three kinds of people when it comes to sustainable communities

- The friendly people who agree with you and want to work with you
- The undecideds who can be and need to be persuaded
- The hardcore opponents who will never agree with you and are trying to derail you



# Some people will pick apart the project if it is predetermined





# The role of “fear” in today’s discourse

- Be prepared to hear some opposition that includes fears and being afraid of change.
- RESPECT people’s fears, don’t disregard them.
- Offer solutions to allay those fears, and reassure people that they are in charge of their own community



# Positive Messaging: the talking points YOU WANT to deliver

Be proactive.

You want to consistently reinforce: “This is a community driven process in which we decide what our future should look like.”



# Positive Messaging: the talking points YOU WANT to deliver

## Role of Government

- “The government is going to spend **our tax dollars** no matter what, **We’ re here to get a say** in how they’ re spent.”
- “This is a **democratic process**, driven by the community, so we can decide what we want our future to look like.”



# Positive Messaging: the talking points YOU WANT to deliver

## Property Rights

- “When you make decisions that increase congestion, raise our taxes, and increase the school load, then **you impact all of our property rights.**”
- “We have always been a land of **rights AND responsibilities.**”



# Positive Messaging: the talking points YOU WANT to deliver

## Community's Future

- “A community that fails to plan will face more **congestion, traffic and higher taxes.**”
- “We want our **children and grandchildren** to be able to live here.”
- “Making our community attractive and preparing for growth allows **businesses** to know what to expect and plan for their future.”



# Positive Messaging: the talking points YOU WANT to deliver

## Personal Stories

- Why you **love** your town/city/area
- Examples of **failed local planning**
- Local or state **ordinances** that already require planning (if applicable)

# Some opponents are only interested in disrupting the process





# What is the opposition to Sustainable Communities?





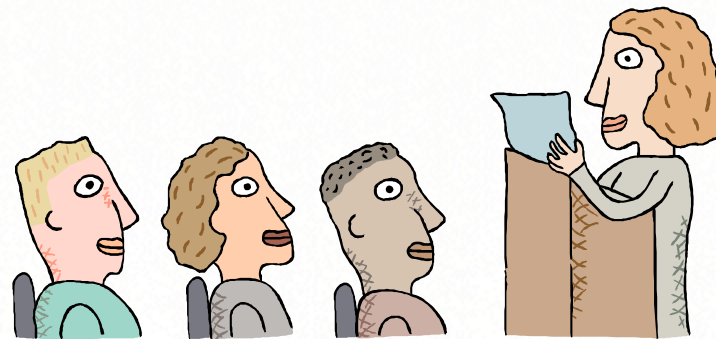
# Opposition' s Messaging

- United Nation' s **Agenda 21**, New World Order,
- The three “E”s: **Environment, Equity, Economy**
- “**Sustainability**”, climate change is a hoax
- Federal government coming in and **taking your land away**
- **Social engineering** designed to make us all live in dense city apartments, get rid of cars



# Why the attacks?

- Primary Reasons:
  - **Audience** is very skeptical of government and is responsive to an anti-smart growth message
  - **Organizational and messaging failures** by coalitions



# Anticipating the Opposition

<p><b>Them on Them</b></p> <p><b>Their main message.</b></p>	<p><b>Them on You</b></p> <p><b>Their criticism.</b></p>
<p><b>You on Them</b></p> <p><b>Your response to get back to your message.</b></p>	<p><b>You on You</b></p> <p><b>Your main message.</b></p>



# Opposition Messaging

- “I’ m here to stick up for my **property rights** and to maintain my freedoms.”
- “I want to be able to live the **lifestyle** I want without anyone coming and telling me how to change to meet their ideals.”

<b>Them on Them</b>	<b>Them on You</b>
<b>You on Them</b>	<b>You on You</b>





# Opposition Messaging

- “You want to change the **zoning** to take away my property rights so it will be impossible for me to sell my land later.”
- “Government has **no place in making decisions** like this.”
- “This is an **illegitimate process**, driven by socialists at the U.N.”

Them on Them

**Them on You**

You on Them

You on You



# Opposition Messaging

- “We can use this process to make decisions to protect **our property rights and provide certainty for the future.**”
- “This will help our businesses and our **economy.**”
- “Disrupting this process means that others don’t get the freedom to **participate in our local process.**”

Them on Them	Them on You
You on Them	You on You



# Opposition Messaging

- “This is our community’ s planning process, and we all deserve the **right to be heard.**”
- “We need to **plan for our future.** This is an opportunity for everyone to share their ideas and priorities for our community.”
- “I want to be a part of this to make sure my **great community** is there for my kids and grandkids.”

Them on Them	Them on You
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You on Them	You on You
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# Next steps and practical application

- Make your websites and public documents in plain language, not planner or engineer industry terms.
- If you received a funding grant from the federal gov' t, don' t just post the grant docs and think that equals outreach.
- **KNOW** if opposition is organizing
- **Plan ahead** to anticipate challenges



