



Eliminating
serious road trauma
by 2050

Communications and Engagement Strategy Development – 7 Step Engagement Approach

The importance of stakeholder engagement for Planning for Zero Framework implementation

An Engagement Strategy has been prepared to guide jurisdictions and local governments to plan and undertake engagement to support the implementation and adoption of Zero Pathways. The strategy provides a step-by-step approach to planning and implementing an effective process to engage with internal and external stakeholders to support road safety action plans and strategies, and the actions required for the adoption of Zero Pathways. Jurisdictions and local governments can adopt the Engagement Strategy at any stage of the road safety lifecycle.

It is important to note that:

- Different stakeholders will have different levels of influence at different times, depending on events, trends and the lifecycle of the program.
- The stakeholder's level of influence will evolve over time, where actions relate to their areas of interest.
- Stakeholders may be in a position of influence but lack the capacity or resources to drive change, e.g. internal stakeholders who manage the system, however, lack the mandate to impact change.
- Road safety partners have different levels of impact, e.g. across jurisdictions, police tend to be the most influential due to enforcement practices and deterrent effect, and in some cases are driving road safety campaigns. In comparison to health, who are typically more involved in the aftermath of incidents rather than the preventative, public health space.

In this context, engagement relates to the many ways in which jurisdictions and local government connect with and involve stakeholders in road safety initiatives for the development and implementation of Zero Pathways.

Engagement covers participation ranging from information sharing and consultation, through to active involvement in decision-making processes. It involves internal and external stakeholders being kept informed, involved and ultimately having responsibility for community road safety outcomes.

- Key elements to implement an effective stakeholder engagement process:
- Stakeholder landscape and engagement are clearly scoped and connected to decision-making.
- The process is simple, accessible and open.
- Engagement is inclusive, respectful and values the contributions of all stakeholders.
- Key messages and narrative are simplified, informative, educational and contribute to continuous improvement.
- Clear and reasonable timeframes.
- Outcomes are linked to building relationships, collaboration and trust.
- Provide feedback, accountability and close the engagement loop.
- Processes and outcomes are evaluated and measured.

A seven-step approach to engagement

To effectively meet the engagement needs of stakeholders, a seven-step approach has been developed to support jurisdictions and local government. The type and level of engagement will depend on the outcomes and level of resources available.

Step 1 – Clarify engagement outcomes

Clear outcomes are essential to keep the engagement process focused and aligned with decision-making. Jurisdictions and local governments should first define the intended outcomes of the engagement process — that is, what the engagement is expected to achieve and how it will support the development, adoption or implementation of Zero Pathways.

Key questions include:

- What overall outcome is the engagement intended to support?
- How will the engagement contribute to better decisions, stronger partnerships, or improved implementation?
- What would success look like at the end of the engagement process?

Typical engagement outcomes may include improved stakeholder understanding of Zero Pathways, stronger support for a proposed direction, better identification of local issues and opportunities, or stronger alignment across delivery partners.

Step 2 – Clarify engagement objectives

Once the desired outcomes are clear, jurisdictions and local governments should define the specific objectives of the engagement. These objectives should describe why stakeholders are being engaged at this stage and what the engagement process needs to deliver. Objectives should be practical, specific and proportionate to the scope of the program or initiative.

Common objectives for stakeholder engagement include:

- meeting funding or governance requirements
- informing the development of road safety programs, action plans or strategies
- gathering local knowledge and identifying emerging issues
- raising awareness and educating stakeholders
- improving program design and delivery
- developing solutions for local road safety issues
- seeking feedback, partnerships and resources
- supporting decision-making and evaluating program success.

It is also important to define what is outside the scope of engagement. Being clear about what the engagement will and will not cover helps manage expectations, maintain focus, and support a more effective process.

Step 3 – Identify and map stakeholders

After defining engagement objectives, the next step is to identify key stakeholders and their level of interest and influence. Consider stakeholders such as residents, business owners, community groups, road safety partners, and various levels of government.

Key questions to consider:

- Who is responsible for and makes decisions about the program?
- Who can influence decisions or is impacted by outcomes?

- Who are the beneficiaries and partners?
- Who can improve effectiveness or provide resources?
- Who has existing networks or might be excluded?

A stakeholder template categorises groups by interest and influence to help manage engagement, identify potential advocates, and address opposition.

Step 4 – Analyse stakeholder needs and select the level of engagement

The IAP2 Spectrum outlines five levels of engagement: Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, and Empower to define stakeholders' roles based on goals, timeframes, resources, and concerns. It clarifies the promises made to stakeholders at each level, such as keeping them informed, listening to their ideas, involving them, or collaborating on solutions.

- Inform
 - Provide balanced, objective information.
 - Help people understand the problem, alternatives, opportunities, and/or solutions.
 - Typical inclusions: fact sheets, websites, dashboards, briefings, open data, FAQs.
- Consult
 - Seek public feedback on analysis, alternatives, and/or decisions.
 - Use input to refine options, test acceptability, and identify issues.
 - Typical inclusions: surveys, submissions, public comment periods, hearings, focus groups.
- Involve
 - Work directly with the public throughout the process.
 - Ensure public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.
 - Typical inclusions: workshops, deliberative sessions, community panels, iterative co-design sessions.
- Collaborate
 - Partner with the public in each aspect of the decision.
 - Include the public in developing alternatives and identifying the preferred solution.
 - Typical inclusions: joint working groups, co-design teams, citizen juries with shared option development, advisory committees.
- Empower
 - Place final decision-making in the hands of the public
 - Public has the deciding authority rather than advisory influence
 - Typical inclusions: binding ballots/referenda, delegated decision panels, participatory budgeting, community-led governance decisions.

Stakeholders vary in their interest and influence throughout the project, depending on factors like decision-making power, ability to impact the program, and effectiveness of outcomes. Identifying their specific interests and needs helps tailor the engagement process, and engagement levels may need to be reassessed as the program evolves.

Step 5 – Select engagement activities, determine timelines and communication messages

When selecting engagement activities, choose methods that best meet stakeholder needs and remove participation barriers (e.g., transport, language, literacy). Options may include group or individual engagement, surveys, or digital tools, with customisation as needed (e.g., suitable times, venues, or on-site meetings).

Table: Engagement resources and tools examples

Tool	Audience	Purpose
Web page	All stakeholders	Central source of information for the overarching Road Safety Program or project-specific campaigns.
Case studies	All stakeholders	Demonstrate success stories and the impact of similar projects.
Fact sheets and Myth Busting	All stakeholders	Provide an overview of trauma and/or FSI/DSI stats. Provide geographical and demographic information. Provide fallacies and myth busting resources that to address common misconceptions about Vision Zero.
Infographics	All stakeholders	Present evidence-based narrative and data in a simplified and visually structured way.
Interactive tools	Community/groups	Undertake location-specific engagement or provide location-specific info about ongoing or future projects
Letters	Remote communities and groups, community, educational institutions, businesses	Useful to promote project-specific campaigns and for engaging with hard-to-reach stakeholders or those with no access to online information.
Phone/In Person	Key stakeholders	Involve specific stakeholders.
Presentations/Webinars	Road safety partners, internal teams, key stakeholders	Inform, educate, and provide updates to key stakeholders.
Presentations	Road safety partners, internal teams, key stakeholders	Inform, educate, and provide updates to key stakeholders.
Reports	All stakeholders	Provide a summary of the program or engagement results to stakeholders.
Social media	Community	Promote Road Safety programs or project-specific campaigns. Used as a short-form teaser with links to a survey, web page or further information.
Surveys	All stakeholders	Understand attitudes and seek feedback from stakeholders

Step 6 – Identify potential risks, mitigations and actions

Identify potential risks that could hinder achieving engagement objectives, then assess their priority based on likelihood and impact. A risk register can help outline risks, impacts, and mitigation strategies for stakeholder engagement.

Step 7 – Review and evaluate stakeholder engagement results and celebrate success

Engagement activities will occur at various stages of the program cycle. Planning should include milestones to track progress, review and update the engagement plan, celebrate successes, and address any issues as needed.

Feedback is a critical element of an engagement process. Providing feedback to those who have participated in an engagement process allows them to see whether their views have been accurately represented when decisions are being made. Celebrating success is a way to show appreciation for support of the process, maintain momentum, and keep stakeholders invested in the project.

Table: Stakeholder Engagement Template – Example: Safe Speeds Program

Program Objectives	Engagement Objectives (Step 1)	Stakeholders (Step 2)	Level of Engagement (Step 3)	Proposed Activities (Step 4)	Communication Messages (Step 5)	Review and Evaluate (Step 6)	Feedback and Follow Up (Step 7)
<p>To lower speed limits in X and X area by X km/h</p> <p>To set speed limits that better acknowledge the local conditions and the surrounding environment</p>	Work with stakeholders to establish the scope of the program and agree on program scope and timelines	State/Central Government/Road Safety Partners	Collaborate ¹	<p>Face-to-face meetings</p> <p>Steering Committees</p> <p>Road Safety Advisory Working groups</p>	We are collaborating with our key partners to implement zero pathways and eliminate road death and serious injury	<p>Process review</p> <p>Willingness to become involved in further programs and engagement</p>	<p>Scope and timelines finalised and provided to stakeholders</p> <p>Community and elected member outcomes shared with stakeholders</p>
To make our communities and roads safer	Work with stakeholders to identify affected communities and how best to engage and involve the community in the program	Local Government	Collaborate, Involve	<p>Face to face meetings</p> <p>Road Safety Advisory Working groups</p> <p>Collaboration on speed campaigns</p>	<p>We are committed to working with local government, to reduce FSIs/DSIs and implement zero pathways</p> <p>We are committed to working with local governments to raise awareness in communities</p>	<p>Process review</p> <p>Willingness to become involved in further programs and engagement</p>	<p>Scope and timelines finalised and provided to stakeholders</p> <p>Community and elected member outcomes shared with stakeholders</p>

¹ For some speed limit changes, where the proposal meets the relevant technical, policy and legislative requirements, the appropriate engagement approach may be primarily Inform rather than Consult, Involve or Collaborate with the broader public. In these cases, public engagement is focused on clearly communicating the change, its rationale, timing and expected safety benefits, rather than seeking public approval. Jurisdictions should apply the level of engagement that aligns with their legislative framework, policy settings and decision-making processes.

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To engage the affected communities to increase their awareness of the impacts of speeds on roads and the benefits of reduced speeds	Community and Indigenous Groups	Inform, involve	Dedicated web page and resources for Safe Speeds Campaign Town hall meetings/public drop ins Social media and news articles	Dedicated web page and resources for the Safe Speeds Program Information sessions / public drop-ins where appropriate Social media and news articles	“Safer speeds help reduce the likelihood and severity of crashes.” “Lower speeds can help make our roads and communities safer for everyone.” “You can find information about the proposed changes, their rationale, and expected safety benefits through the Safe Speeds Program resources.”	Before and after data, Anecdotal feedback on program, Willingness to become involved in further programs and engagement	Close the engagement loop by playing back feedback and providing next steps