



Western Washington University
Western CEDAR

Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference

2016 Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference
(Vancouver, BC)

Jan 1st, 12:00 AM - 12:00 AM

From the Ivory Tower Through the Black Box: Engaging Effectively with Government to Turn Ideas into Action

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Engaging Effectively with Local Government

TURNING IDEAS INTO ACTION

Gabriel Mastico

SENIOR ECONOMIST

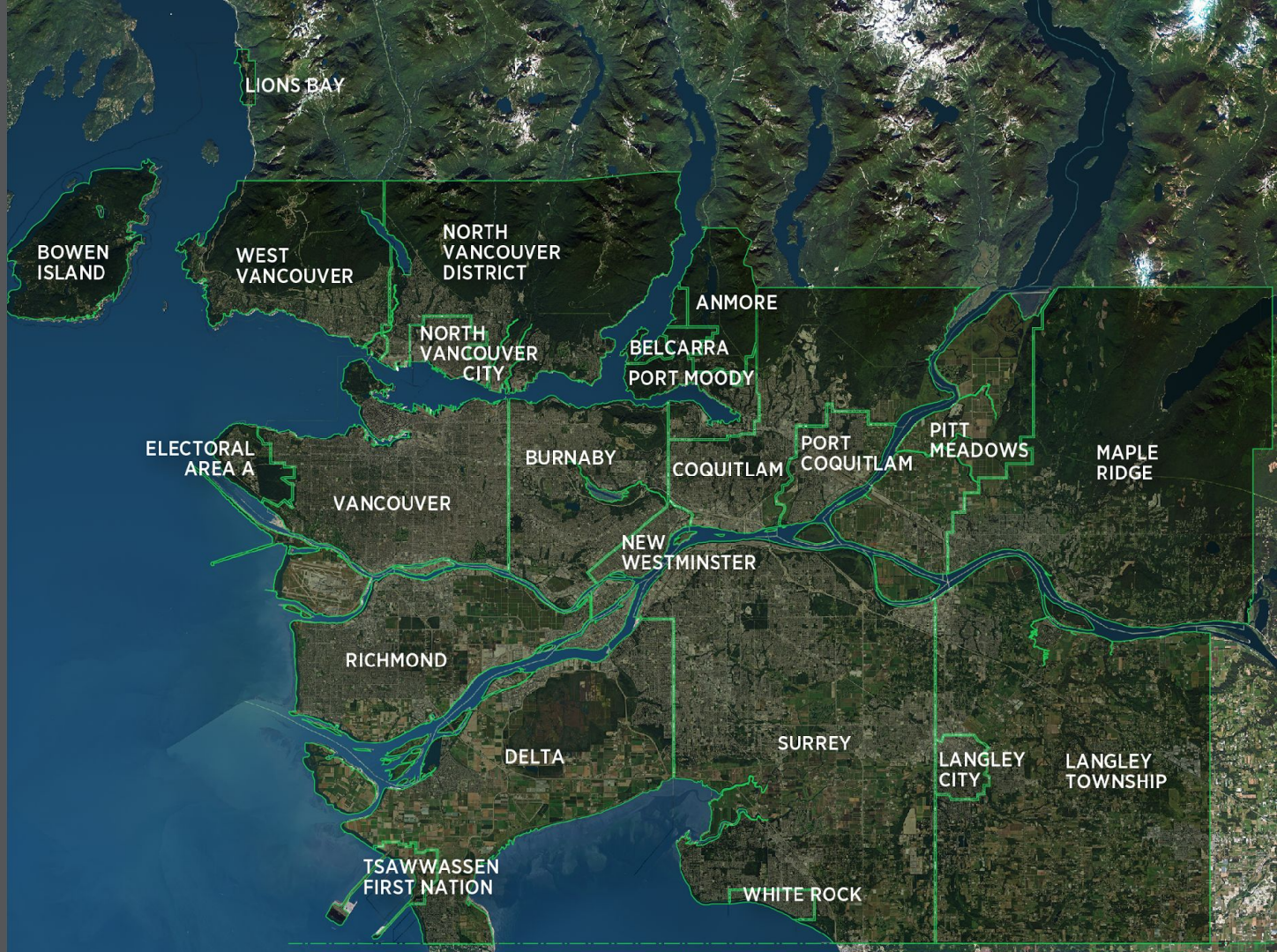
2016 Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference (Thursday April 14th, 2016)

Today's Presentation

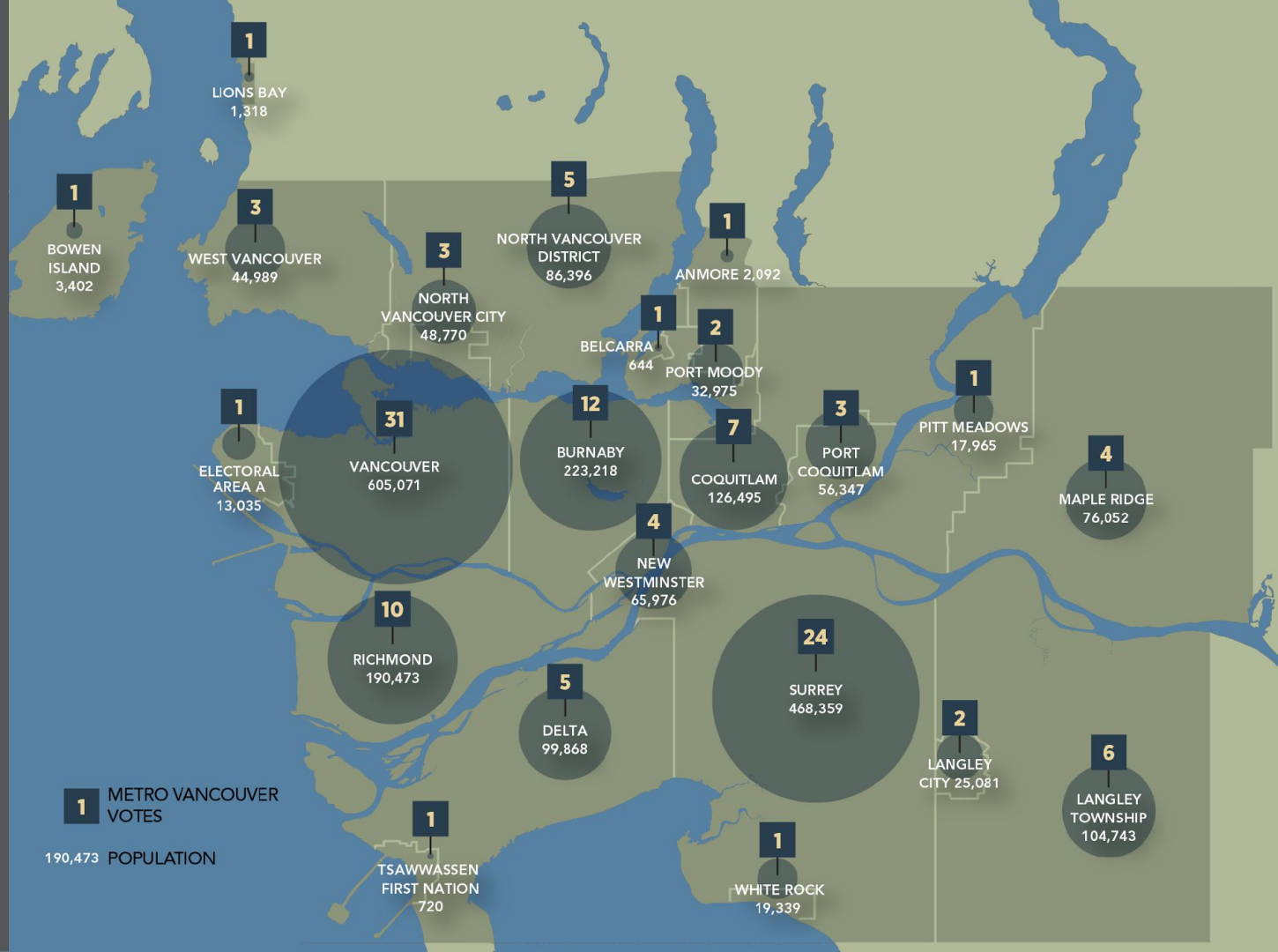
1. Context
2. Inside the black box
3. Information overload
4. Linking outputs to outcomes
5. Addressing risk and uncertainty
6. Final thoughts

Metro Vancouver

21 municipalities,
one Electoral Area
and one Treaty First
Nation working
together for
a livable region



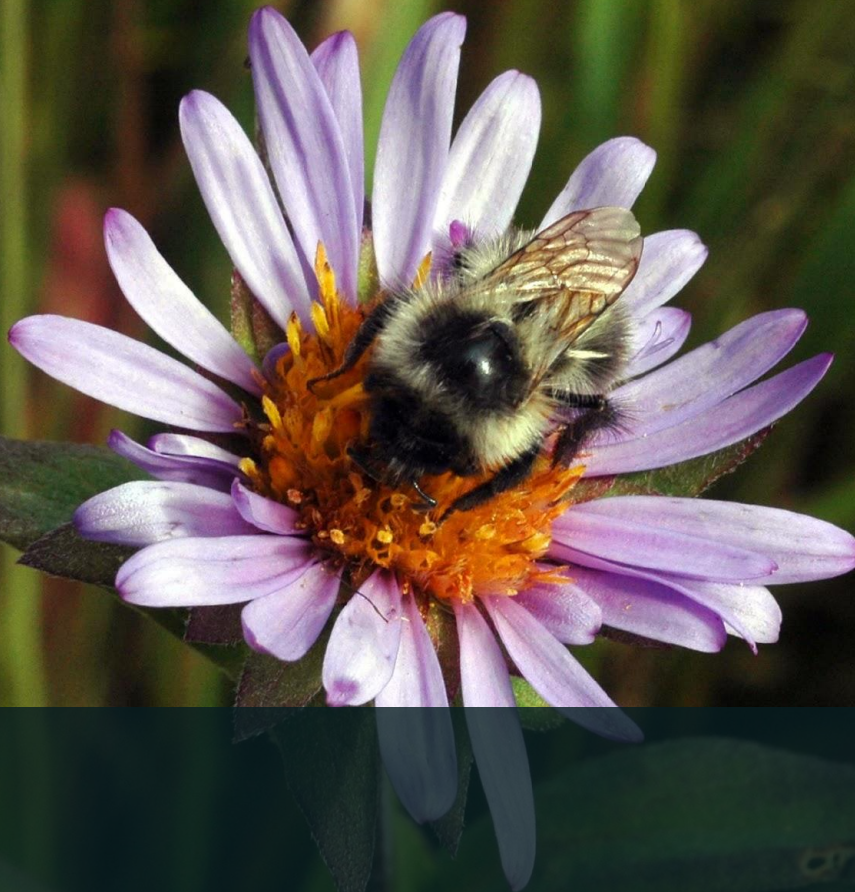
Metro Vancouver population and voting strength



Key Takeaway:

Significant differences in:

- Values
- Priorities
- Analytical capacity
- Project delivery capacity
- Risk tolerance
- Etcetera...



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SERVICES AND SOLUTIONS FOR A LIVABLE REGION

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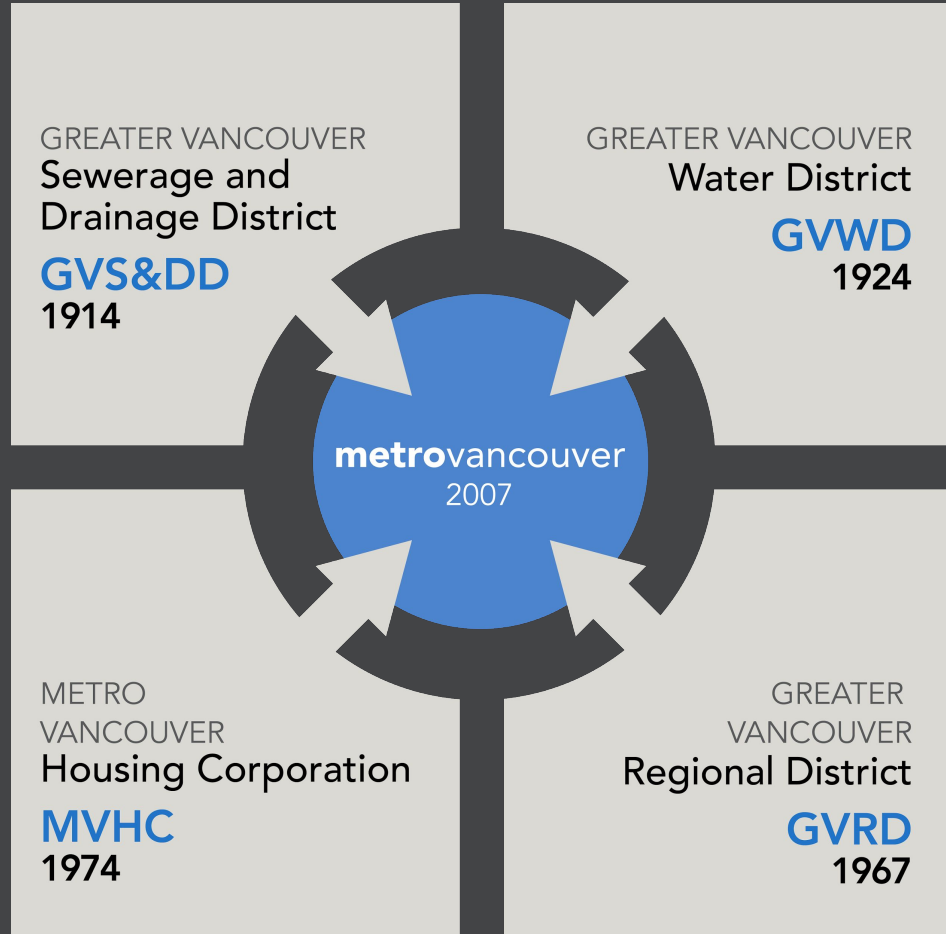
SERVICES AND SOLUTIONS FOR A LIVABLE REGION

The more of these factors you can prepare your government counterparts to address, the more receptive audiences you will find

Regional Management Plans



Metro Vancouver Services



Inside the Black Box...

Pet
Project

...

Your Idea /
Approach

Other
Research

Stakeholder
Request

Inside the Black Box...

Pet
Project

...

Your Idea /
Approach

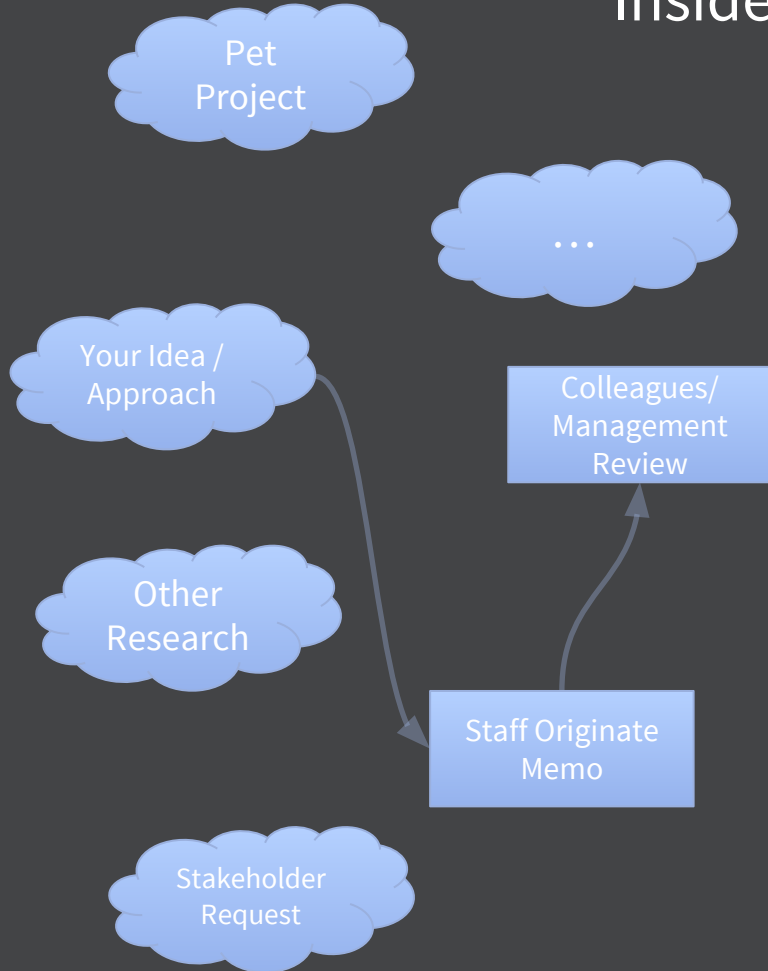
Other
Research

Stakeholder
Request

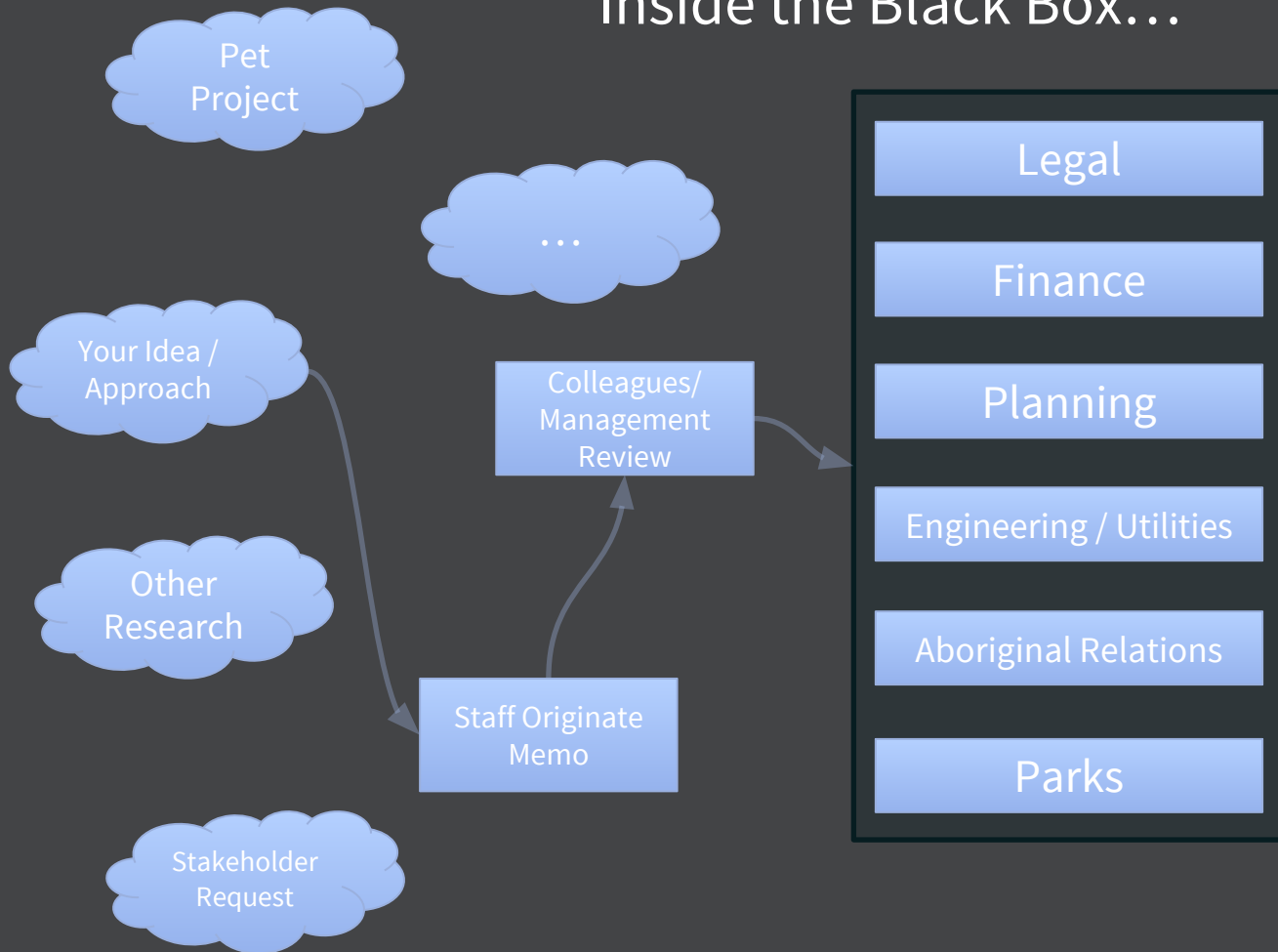
Staff Originate
Memo

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graph TD; PP((Pet Project)); YIA((Your Idea / Approach)); OR((Other Research)); SR((Stakeholder Request)); SSM[Staff Originate Memo]; YIA --> SSM; PP -.- Ellipsis((...));
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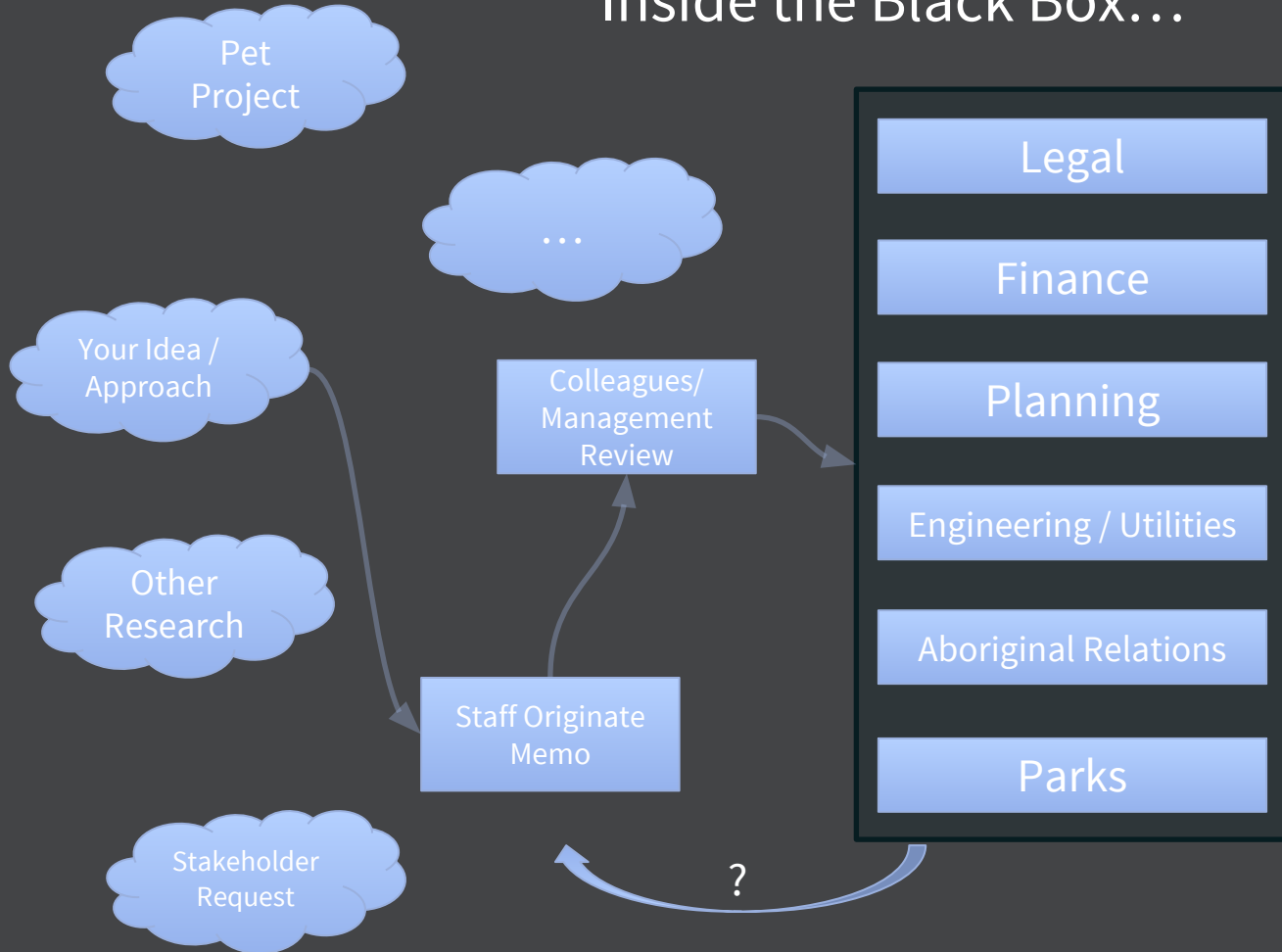

Inside the Black Box...



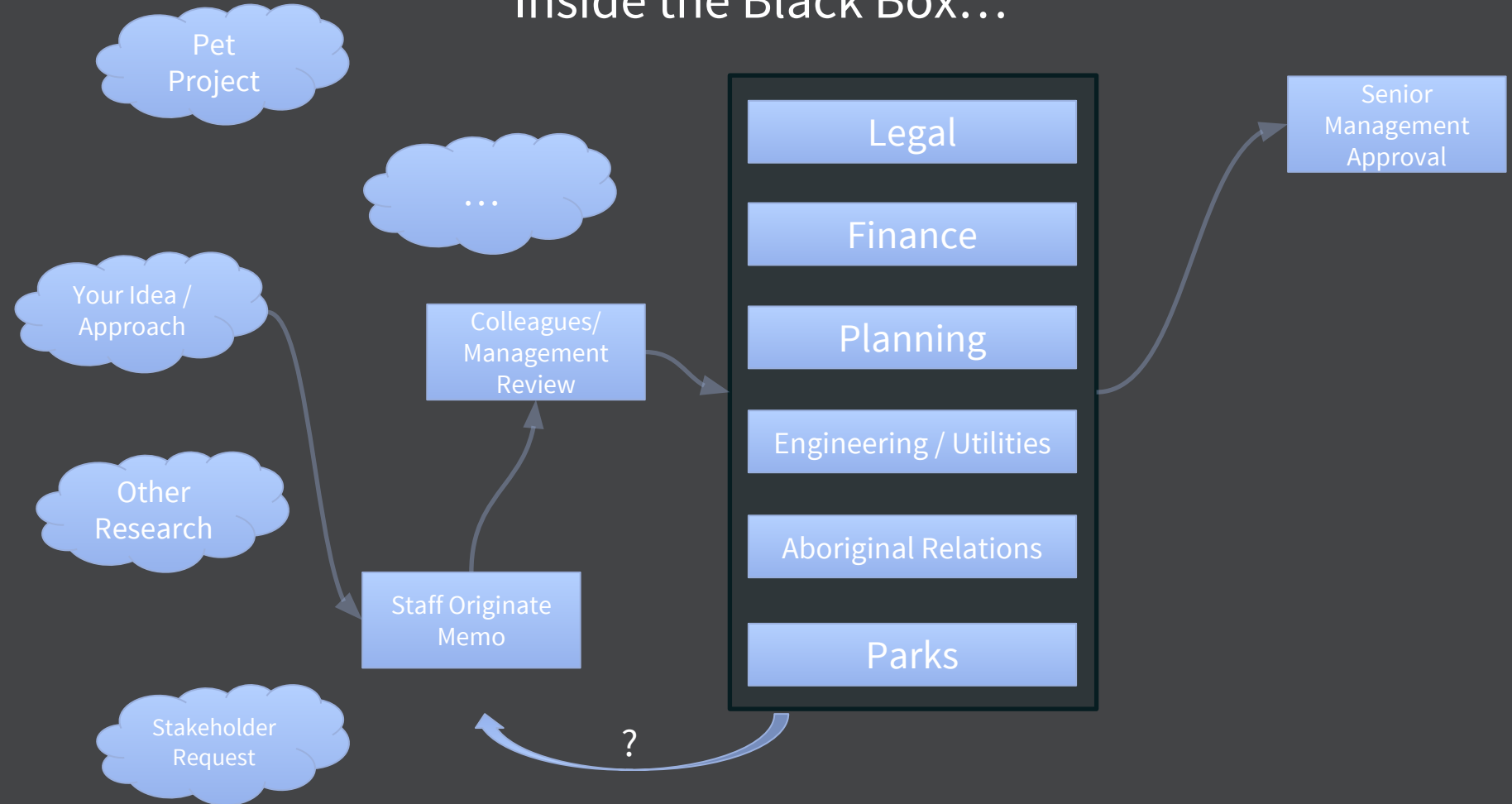
Inside the Black Box...



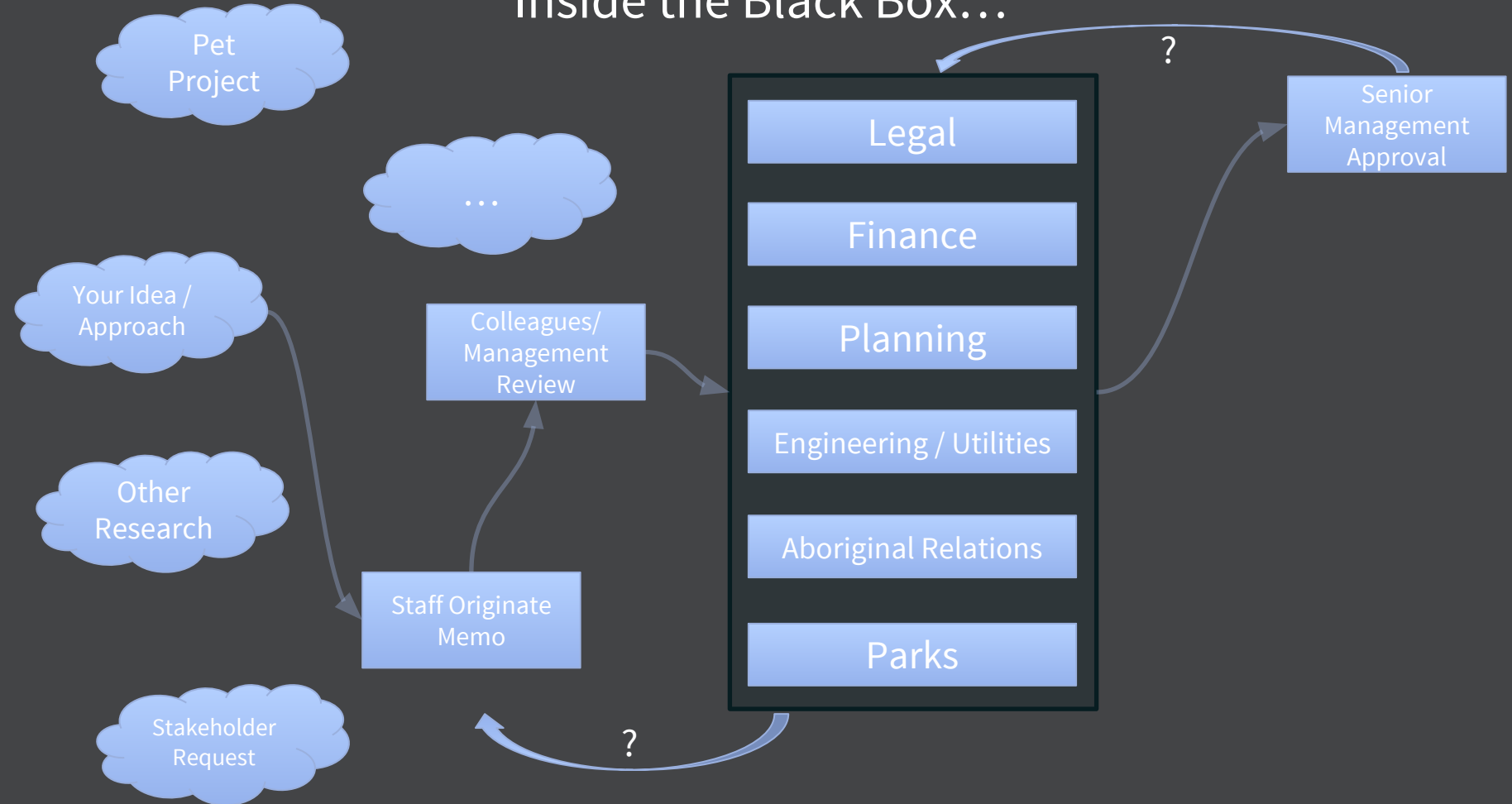
Inside the Black Box...



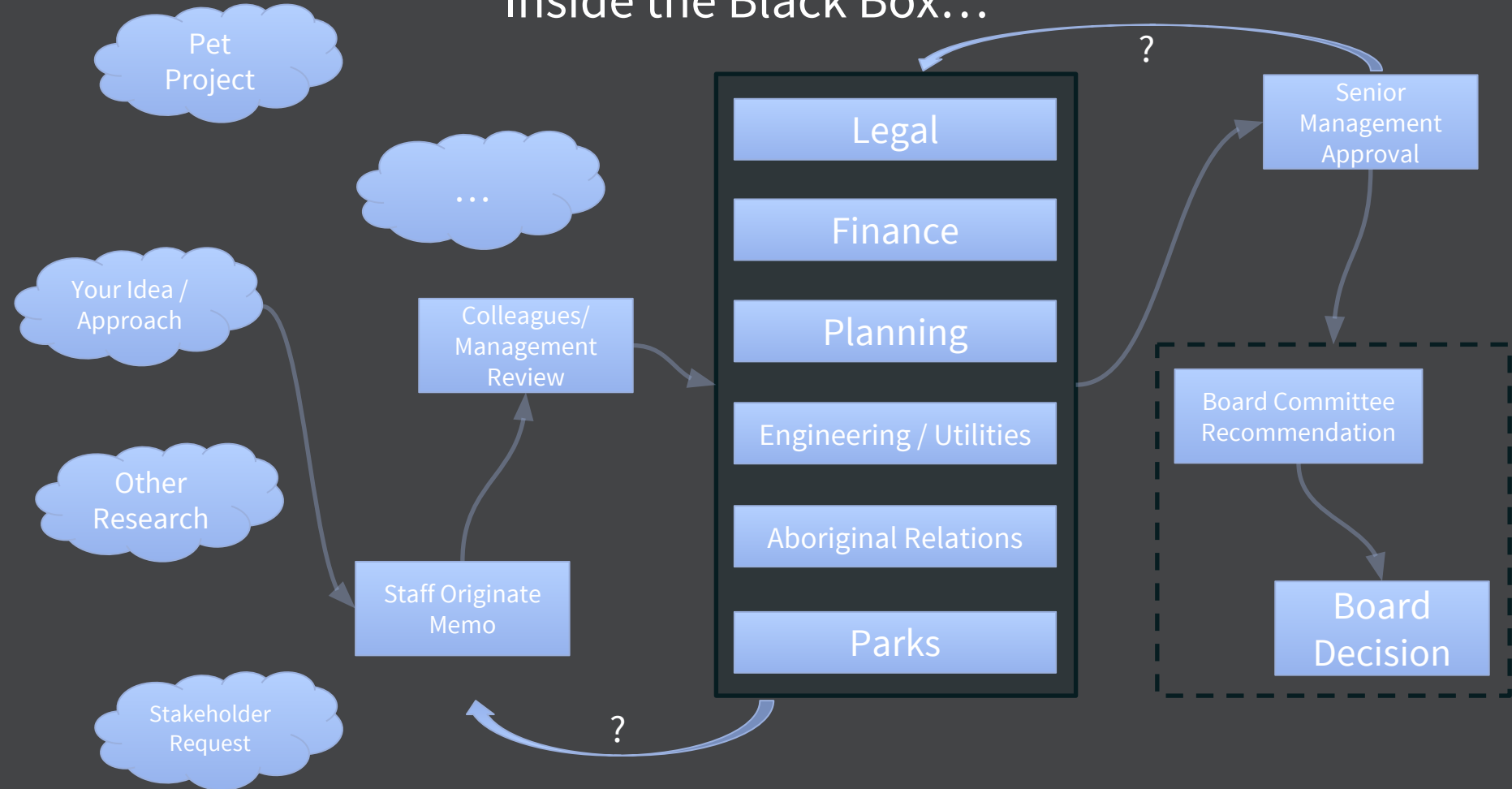
Inside the Black Box...



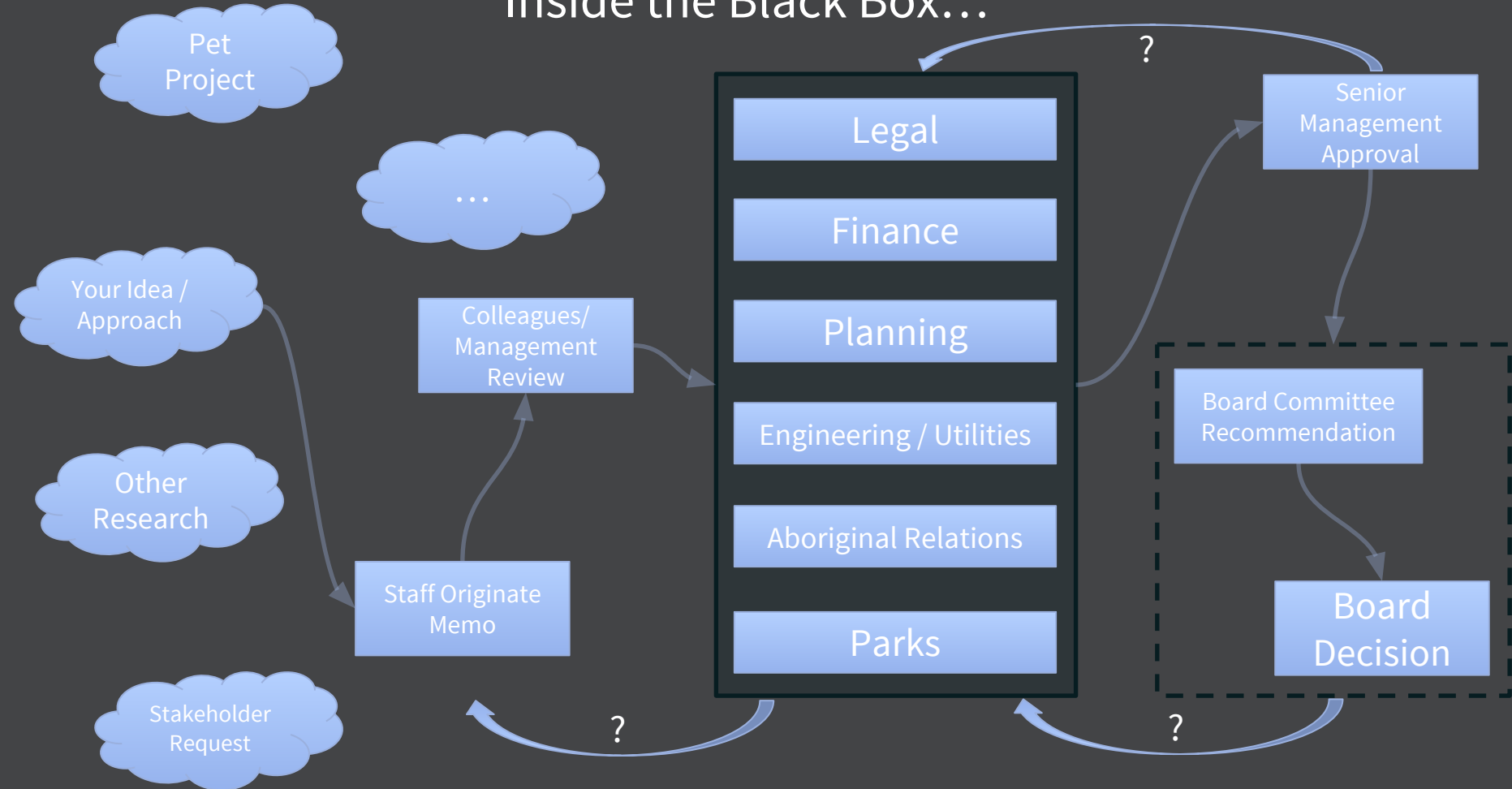
Inside the Black Box...



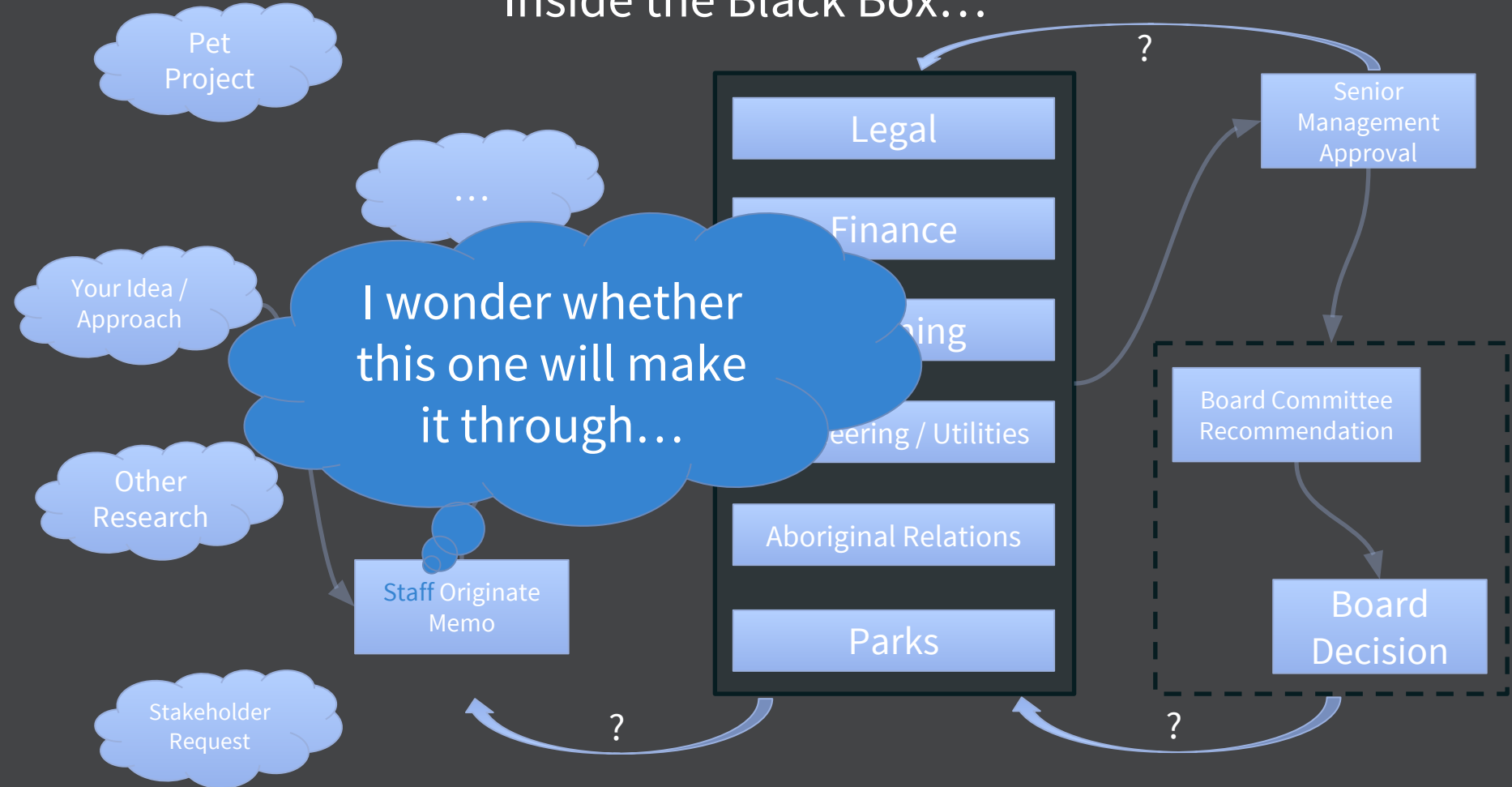
Inside the Black Box...



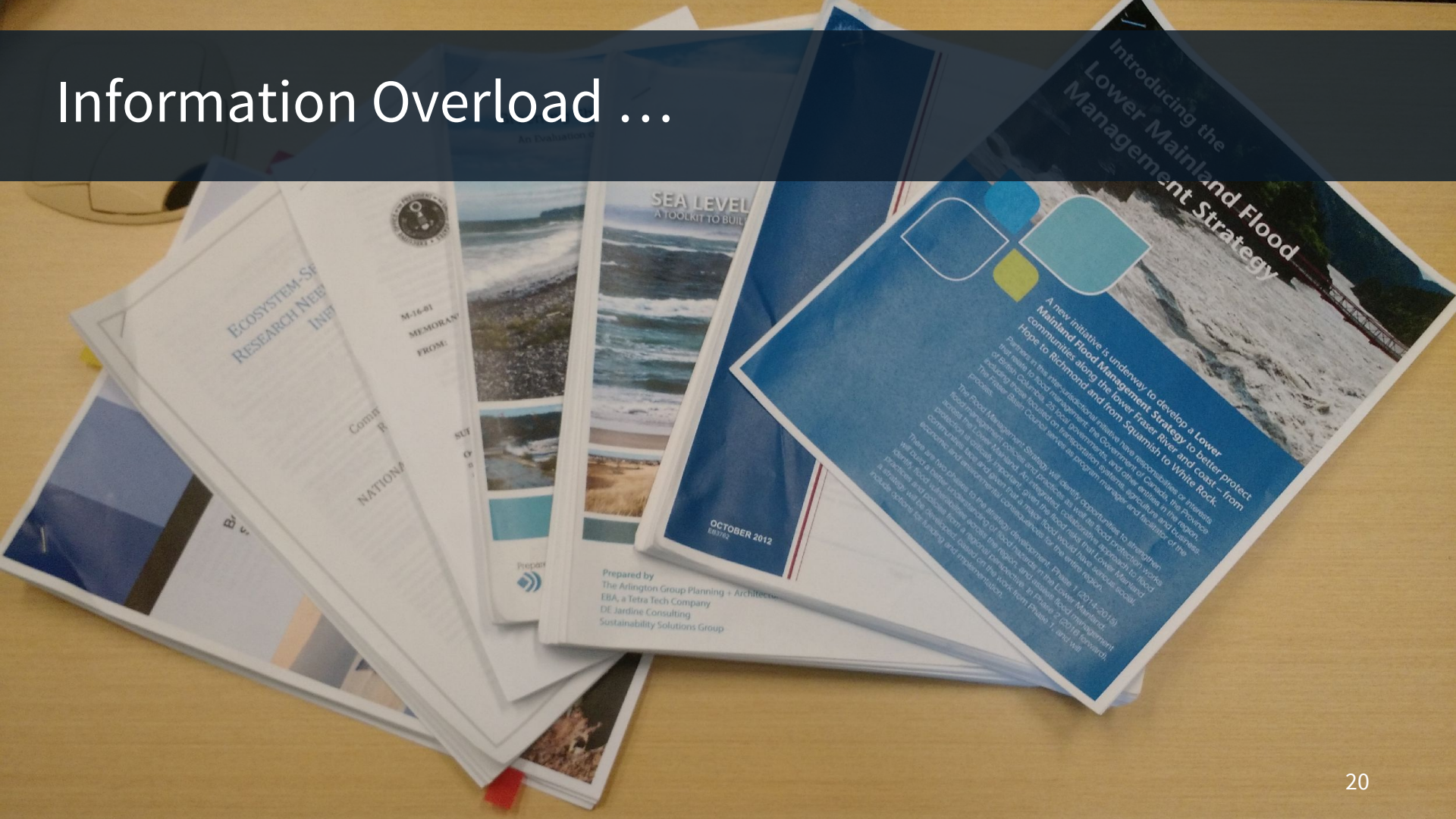
Inside the Black Box...



Inside the Black Box...



Information Overload ...



Information Overload ...

How to stand out in a crowded field

- Draft a “1-pager” explaining your research and when it can be useful
 - Focus on text that local government staff can copy/paste into a memo
- Governments hate surprises; disclose key hidden/underlying assumptions
 - For example, use default weightings or ranges instead of giving fixed values
 - Leave flexibility for the ‘end-user’ (staff) to align potentially inconsistent aspects with their government’s previous positions



Linking Outputs to Outcomes



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Linking Outputs to Outcomes

- Output: Protected area
- Outcome: Clean drinking water, lower treatment cost

Linking Outputs to Outcomes

- Output: Protected area
- Outcome: Clean drinking water, lower treatment cost
- We need to be able to explain what your approach ‘sells’ ...
- ... and why decision-makers would want to ‘buy’ it



Linking Outputs to Outcomes

A word of caution...

It's not always this easy...



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Addressing Risk and Uncertainty

- Historically: “There is a risk that ...”
- Emerging best practice: “X% chance of Y for Z Years”
- Do not ignore it...
 - Default assumption will be that risks are great
 - Even crude estimates are better than nothing

Final Thoughts

- Few governments want to be first...
 - ‘Safer’ to build on what has come before
 - Low-risk pilot?
- High risk / uncertainty can be overcome by tying payments to successful outcomes
 - ‘Pay for success’ approaches are slowly catching on ...
 - ... lower risk of perceived waste
- Innovative approaches can change the incentives facing decision-makers
 - Linking bond (coupon) payments to environmental/social performance/outcomes
 - Think about the groups inside the “black box” and why they might object





Questions?



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