

TH1

# Collaboration for Shared Public Services

## Wisconsin Rural Partner Summit

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*Bringing Local Governments Together to Serve*

## Local Government Institute

- ▶ Wisconsin Towns Association
- ▶ Wisconsin Counties Association
- ▶ League of Wisconsin Municipalities
- ▶ Urban Alliance



## Slide 1

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**TH1** Tim Hanna, 7/6/2020

# Local Government Institute

## Purpose:

Collaborate with others to find solutions for the efficient delivery and funding of local government services consistent with the needs of our citizens.



						Trust
Compete	Co-exist	Communicate	Cooperate	Coordinate	Collaborate	Integrate
Competition for clients, resources, partners, public attention	No systematic connection between agencies	Inter-agency information sharing (e.g., networking)	As needed, often informal interaction on discrete activities or projects	Groups and organizations systematically adjust and align work with each other for greater outcomes	Longer team interaction based on shared mission, goals; also shared decision-making and resources	Fully integrated programs, planning, and funding
Turf						

## LGI Report: *A Roadmap for Government Transformation*

- ▶ First local government reform effort initiated by all local units of government working together
- ▶ Findings and recommendations fully supported by the associations representing all local units of government
- ▶ Study prepared by Baker Tilly under contract to LGI

## Collaboration in Practice

### LGI Findings:

- ▶ Collaboration is “in the genes” of local government - long history
- ▶ Collaborations must be voluntary and organic - not mandated. One size does not fit all.
- ▶ Focus on the way services are delivered, not the number of local government units.

## Lessons Learned - General Collaboration

- ▶ Collaboration can result in significant efficiencies over long-term, but not in short-term - not a quick fix
- ▶ Not all services are suitable for collaboration. Factors include:
  - ▶ Association with community identity
  - ▶ Geography: Scope and Limitations
  - ▶ Operating & Capital Costs
  - ▶ Ratio of Line Staff to Customers
  - ▶ Mandates

## Roadmap For Government Transformation

### Suitability Factors Vary Across Services

Factor	Suitability
Association with Community Identity	Lower visibility eases consolidation
Geographic Scope of Delivery	Service works better on multijurisdictional level
Operating Costs	Service involves significant operating costs
Capital Costs	Service involves significant capital costs
Ratio of Line Staff to Customers	Service quality is not degraded by increased number of customers per staff
Geographic Limitations	Service is not limited by geographic factors
Service Delivery Requirement	Service is required by statute

## Lessons Learned - General Collaboration

Obstacles to collaboration include:

- ▶ Turf
- ▶ Competition for Revenue/Growth
- ▶ Perceived Differences
- ▶ Perceived Loss of Identity, Access, Reduced Control and Accountability, Threat to Employees

## Lessons Learned - General Collaboration

Many obstacles can be overcome, but it takes nearly all of the following:

- ▶ Demonstrate improved service
- ▶ Clear fiscal benefit
- ▶ Shared perception of need
- ▶ Community support
- ▶ Trust
- ▶ Collaborative Leadership

## Demonstrate Improved Service -

- Cooperation allows communities to critically examine service delivery needs
- Consolidated operations create greater capacity for service delivery through increased resource levels
- Service gaps and distortions can be addressed through a cooperative approach

## Clear Fiscal Benefit -

- ▶ While short term costs may be required to invest in a new cooperative venture, long term benefits can be significant
- ▶ Fiscal benefits can be greatest where there are significant capital expenditures because of the opportunity to spread these costs over a larger base of residents
- ▶ While some counter examples exist, few case studies suggest that service expenditures will fall in absolute terms. Benefits largely involve avoided costs

## Shared Perception of Need -

- ▶ A shared acknowledgement that the partners are in a shared moment of crisis or opportunity creates impetus for partners to come together
- ▶ While some opportunities and crisis events are unique to each circumstance, others are driven by new service delivery requirements or mandates
- ▶ A desire by all partners to achieve a comparable level of services under a new cooperative effort is critical

## Community Support -

- ▶ Involvement of business community and economic development entities can be a powerful method of increasing community support. Reducing the marginal cost of doing business benefits the entire community
- ▶ Some services are “under the radar” and don’t result in significant public concern that local control will be lost
- ▶ Knowing the facts, staying on message, and responding to the concerns of opponents are all vital to building community support

## Trust -

- ▶ Positive working relationships between officials make discussions about new cooperative efforts easier
- ▶ Trust between officials, particularly between Towns and larger Cities, is often complicated by border conflicts
- ▶ Shared perception of equal partnership is vital. Careful attention must be given to the details of accountability, governance, and decision making to ensure that local control is respected

## Collaborative Leadership -

- ▶ Leadership involves taking the first step and beginning the discussion with partners
- ▶ Leadership also means being able to move beyond “turf” and job protection issues
- ▶ Full commitment of officials to objectively explore a new cooperative effort is vital

## Potential opportunities for shared services

### Public Safety:

- policing
- fire protection
- EMS

### Public Works:

- garbage collection
- landfill
- recycling
- snow plowing
- road maintenance
- stormwater management
- street sweeping
- traffic control
- shared equipment and maintenance

### Administration:

- Human Resources administration
- finance
- IT
- legal
- assessing
- grant writing and administration
- joint purchasing

### Parks & Recreation:

- Park maintenance
- joint recreation programming

### Capital projects

## Potential partners in collaboration:

- ▶ Neighboring municipalities
- ▶ Counties
- ▶ Non-profits
- ▶ Businesses
- ▶ School Districts
- ▶ Tech. Colleges

Remember: Relationships matter!

## Opportunities??

How do you plan to use your ARPA funds? Are there opportunities to leverage these funds with other recipients to have a greater impact on the community? Possibly through joint road projects or bundled road projects. Or a broadband project that serves a wider area.

Have you thought about the potential use of funds from the Bi-partisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)? Opportunities may exist to work with other municipalities on important infrastructure projects for your community.

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