12: Collaboration Is All Well and Good, But Is It Right for You?

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Collaboration Is All Well and Good, but Is It Right for Me?

National League of Cities
Congressional Cities Conference
March 8, 2015
What comes to mind when you hear “collaboration” or “collaborative service delivery?”
What do our experiences tell us about Collaboration?

1. **Reflection** (5 minutes)
   - Think personally about your understandings and experiences with collaboration/collaborative service delivery.
   - What do you see as the benefits and challenges associated with collaboration?
   - Generally speaking, is it a good idea to consider for your local government?

2. **Discussion** (10 minutes)
   - Briefly share your reflections with others in your discussion group sharing stories/examples.

3. **Action** (5 minutes)
   - Identify your tables’ key discussion points.
   - Let’s share!
Today, let’s think about the possibilities!

If you want to go fast... go alone.

If you want to go far... go with others.

African Proverb
And, have a little fun!

WE SPENT $500K ON SHAREPOINT AND PEOPLE STILL AREN’T COLLABORATING

I COLLABORATED FIVE TIMES THIS WEEK, TWICE BEFORE COMING TO THIS MEETING

WHAT ARE THE ODDS THAT HE EVEN UNDERSTANDS WHAT COLLABORATION MEANS? ROUGHLY EQUAL TO THE POSSIBILITY YOU KNOW WHAT SHAREPOINT IS...

Write your own at http://dilbert.com
Today’s Goals

1. Discuss the concept of collaboration.

2. Discuss a “Roadmap” for any collaborative effort.

3. Remind ourselves of the importance of the “softer skills.”

4. Discuss the resources/tools developed to assist local governments in “talking through” and planning a collaboration journey.
What is Collaborative Service Delivery?

Sharing costs and benefits when working “...across boundaries with two or more organizations to solve problems that cannot be solved or easily solved by single organizations”*

Arvada, CO: Worked with multiple community partners to enhance economic development

*Source: (O’Leary & Gerrard, 2013)
Types of Collaboration
What are the expected benefits?

- Monetary **savings**
- **Economies of scale**
- Strengthen collaborative **relationships**
- Promote **regional service integration**
- Access **technical expertise** not available in your jurisdiction
What are the challenges?

- Turf
- Political culture
- Getting Buy-In
- Trust
- Measuring results
- Success
- Coordination
- Clarity of goals
What are the challenges?

- Loss of community control
- Lack of (good) partners
- Employee morale/culture
- Leadership costs
- Accountability across all partners
- Redefines management and leadership
- Enormous complexity in managing multiple organizational networks
COLLABORATION
A Friend Is Just A Stranger You Haven’t Alienated Yet
It doesn’t have to be like that!

But, you have to do it right!

And, it takes a little more work than you may think!
Prerequisites for Success

• Clarity of Objectives
• Balanced Approach
• Trust

Center for Sharing Public Health Services, www.phsharing.org
Facilitating Factors

• Success in Prior Collaborations

• Sense of Regional Identity

• Positive Interpersonal Relationships
Project Characteristics

- Senior-level support
- Strong project management skills
- Strong change management plans
- Effective communications
PHASE ONE
EXPLORE
Is CJS a feasible approach to address the issue you are facing?
Who should be involved?

PHASE TWO
PREPARE AND PLAN
How exactly would it work?

PHASE THREE
IMPLEMENT AND IMPROVE
Let’s do it!
Issues to be Considered During Phase 1: Explore

• Is collaboration a feasible approach to address the issue you are facing?

• What are the goals?

• What issues should and should not be considered for the project?

• Who should be involved?

• What is the history of their relationships?

• What are the guiding principles that the effort would have? Do all partners share these principles?
Issues to be Considered During Phase Two: Prepare and Plan

• **How exactly would it work?**
  – Context and History
  – Governance Options
  – Fiscal and service implications
  – Legal agreements
  – Logistical issues
  – Communications
  – Change management
  – Timeline
  – Implementation monitoring and evaluation
Issues to be Considered During Phase Three: Implement and Improve

- Is the work being implemented as planned?

- Are the results of the work satisfactory?

- What is the level of stakeholder satisfaction?

- Is the knowledge acquired being shared with the project team and stakeholders?
All of this requires a focus on the softer side of things. . .
What makes collaboration work?

• **Willingness** to cooperate
• **Need** to improve service delivery/sense of urgency
• **Mutual advantage**
• **Leadership**
A new type of leadership...

- Not always what people see as “leadership”

- Being:
  - Open-minded
  - Unselfish
  - Patient
  - Trustworthy
  - Self-confident
  - Risk-oriented
  - Flexible
  - Honest
  - Persistent/diligent
  - Goal-oriented
  - Empathetic
  - Respectful
  - Diplomatic
  - Decisive
  - Self-aware
  - Friendly
  - Sense of humor
In addition to the softer skills, these essentials are also needed.

• Facilitation
• Collaborative problem solving/interest-based approach
• Conflict management
• Negotiation
• Individual attributes of:
  • Effective communication
  • Listening
  • Interpersonal skills
  • Strategic leadership skills
  • Group process skills
What do our experiences tell us about Collaboration?

1. **Reflection** (5 minutes)
   - If you have pursued collaboration, did you follow a process like the “roadmap?” If not, can you see where these steps would have helped the effort?
   - Do you have the leadership and management, as well as soft skills, to pursue collaboration in your organization?

2. **Discussion** (10 minutes)
   - Briefly share your reflections with others in your discussion group sharing stories/examples.

3. **Action** (5 minutes)
   - Identify your tables’ key discussion points.
   - Let’s share!
All of this sounds complicated. . . . how do I pull all of this together to effectively pursue collaboration??
A tool to inform the discussion... a collaborative effort of ICMA, ASU, AFI and CH2M HILL...
The Need for a Framework

- Develop a tool to **frame an informed dialogue** on collaboration
- Frame the decision as a **soft cost-benefit** question
- **Not require** extensive time, money, and data collection resources
- Help all parties **understand** the potential benefits and costs
- Provide an indicator of the **likelihood** of success
- Provide suggestions on the **best form** of collaborative arrangement

Columbus, GA: Natatorium managed by private firm
Should you engage in Collaboration?
Consider two primary factors...
Factor 1: Know Thy Service

- Importance of specificity
- Asset specificity
- Labor intensity
- Capital intensity
- Benefits targeted or diffuse
- Management competencies
- Stability in administrative team

Monterey, CA: Preserved the Defense Language Institute at the Presidio
Factor 2: Community Context

- Council orientation/Political environment
- Possible public partners
- Possible private partners
- Possible nonprofit partners
- Fiscal/economic health
- Unions
- Citizen approval
So, we have two factors... 

- Type of service 
- Community context 

Now what??
Using the Diagnostic, Part 1

- The score sheet (available at icma.org/strategies)
- A framework for working through the question of collaboration
  - Honest appraisal of how likely a collaborative service delivery arrangement will generate benefits that exceed costs
- Qualitative discussion on each factor
- Assign a score to each aspect
- Total the scores
Start with specifying the type of service under consideration. . .
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Type of Service to be Delivered</strong></th>
<th><strong>Score</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Asset Specificity</strong> — This represents the degree to which the service requires investment in special infrastructure or technical expertise, which may mean a lack of competitiveness in supplier markets and the level of the community’s internal expertise or technical capacity. High asset specificity means that the investments cannot be easily adapted to produce another service. (High=1, Medium=2, Low=3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contract Specification and Monitoring</strong> — Services that are harder to specify in a contract or to monitor, or that require a higher level of performance management expertise on the part of government. (Hard=1, Medium=2, Easy=3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Labor Intensity</strong> — Some services are more labor intensive than others. Generally, services that are more labor intensive in their delivery are better candidates for collaborative alternatives arrangements. (Low=1, Medium=2, High=3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capital Intensity</strong> — Some services are more capital intensive than others. How diffused the benefits are from the capital investment determines the effect on the likelihood of successful collaborations. Generally, services that are more capital intensive with diffuse benefits are more amenable to collaborative approaches. (Low=1, Medium=2, High with focused benefits=2, High with diffuse benefits=3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Type of Service to be Delivered

| Costs— |  
| Overall project costs influence the likelihood of successful collaboration in terms of both driving the need for collaboration as well as limiting the pool of potential partner organizations. (High=1, Medium=2, Low=3)  

| Management Competencies— |  
| Communities must be sensitive to the staff expertise they have for managing a collaboration from planning, structuring and executing a competitive bidding process, to negotiating and bargaining with vendors and employees, to measuring vendor performance or partner evaluation. The greater the managerial expertise on staff related to a service, the more likely a collaborative arrangement can achieve success. (Low=1, Medium=2, High=3)  

| Stability in Administrative Team— |  
| Communities should be aware of the degree of turnover in the administration and the likelihood of additional turnover in the short and long term future. Communities facing turnover in higher level positions will have more difficulty establishing and maintaining the institutional knowledge and oversight necessary for successful collaborations. (High turnover=1, Medium=2, Low=3) |
Next, discuss the community context in which we must operate that may influence the likelihood of a successful collaboration. . .
| **Possible Public Partners**—Communities may have other partners with which they can work municipalities, townships, special districts, or county government. (Few=1, Some=2, Several=3) |
| **Possible Private Partners**—The opportunity for partnering with private sector firms may be limited to the extent that the community or region is home to enough such competent firms to support a competitive marketplace. (Few=1, Some=2, Several=3) |
| **Possible Nonprofit Partners**—As with private partners, the size of the local supply of nonprofits will also be driven by the type of service under consideration as well as the competence of such organizations to serve as potential collaborators. (Few=1, Some=2, Several=3) |
| **Council Orientation/Political Environment**—Different kinds of services may meet different levels of support among local politicians which can raise the costs of pursuing and/or executing a collaborative arrangement. (Highly sensitive=1, Moderately sensitive=2, Non-sensitive=3) |
## Community Context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fiscal/Economic Health</td>
<td>A community’s fiscal condition may be a motivating factor in wanting to pursue collaboration to curb costs. Those in better health are more likely to be successful in collaboration. Those in a weak fiscal position may find it more difficult to locate partners with whom to collaborate. (Poor=1, Moderate=2, Good=3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unions</td>
<td>In many communities, there may be resistance to any collaborative alternatives that could affect public sector employment levels. (Strong=1, Moderate=2, Weak=3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Interest</td>
<td>Some services are more likely to attract the attention of citizens than others. Changes to those services that receive closer scrutiny by citizens are more likely to meet resistance to changes in how the community delivers the services. (High visibility=1, Moderate=2, Low=3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Community Context Score (sum of seven characteristic scores)**
Two Scores...

Service Type

Community Context
Understanding the Possibilities...
So what happens if you go through the process and your team decides that the potential benefits outweigh the potential costs?
The Next Step... 

If your community does want to collaborate on the delivery of a particular service, the next question becomes which form of collaboration maximizes the likelihood of success?
Using the Diagnostic, Part 2

- The second part of the score sheet facilitates the evaluation of various options for collaboration.

- Points the user in the direction of the type of collaboration that will maximize the likelihood of success.
The Options...

- Horizontal public-public partnerships
- Vertical public-public partnerships
- Consolidation/regionalization of services
- Public-private partnerships
- Public-non-profit partnerships
The Public-Public Horizontal Collaboration

Megatown

Smallville
Westlake and Keller, Texas
The Public-Public Vertical Collaboration

Streetlight District  28-H
Landry School District
Rodgers Library District
Warrenton Soil & Water District
Megaville
Green County
Consolidation/Regional Collaboration
Indianapolis, Indiana

JOINIMPD
INDIANAPOLIS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

JOINIMPD.INDY.GOV
Public - Private Collaborations
Centennial, Colorado
Public / Non-profit Collaborations
Washoe County, NV
Regional Animal Services
Your Turn!
Abbreviated Practice Exercises

- Hypothetical cases
- Score sheets already completed
- 20 minutes to review your group’s case
- Consider a collaborative arrangement that you think will meet your hypothetical community’s needs/goals
The Discussion.

- Decision driven by the characteristics from the framework

- For this abbreviated version, focus on:
  - Contract specification and monitoring
  - Labor intensity
  - Capital intensity
  - Possible public partners
  - Possible private partners
  - Possible nonprofit partners
  - Public interest

- Which collaborative form seems most appropriate and why?
## Collaborative Structure Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Characteristic</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Preferred Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(circle your score)</td>
<td>(circle the corresponding structure)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract Specification and Monitoring</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Public-Public (Horizontal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Consolidation/Regionalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor Intensity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Public-Public (Horizontal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Public-Private Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Public-Nonprofit Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Intensity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Consolidation/Regionalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Public-Public (Vertical)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Public-Private Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible Public Partners</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Consolidation/Regionalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Public-Public (Vertical)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Public-Public (Horizontal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible Private Partners</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Public-Public (Vertical)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Public-Public (Horizontal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Public-Private Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible Nonprofit Partners</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Public-Public (Vertical)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Public-Private Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Public-Nonprofit Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Interest</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Public-Private Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Public-Nonprofit Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Public-Public (Vertical)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Tally the Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Delivery Options</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Preferred Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(how many circled)</td>
<td>(check highest score)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public-Public (Horizontal)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>☑️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public-Public (Vertical)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidation/Regionalism</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public-Nonprofit Partnership</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public-Private Partnership</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Now, try the exercises at your tables!

1. **Reflection** (10 minutes)
   - Read the short case assigned to your table.
   - Look through the scoring already assigned to the scenario (based on input from previous participants).

2. **Discussion** (10 minutes)
   - Discuss with your table what type of arrangement appeals to you for the case.

3. **Action** (5 minutes)
   - Execute the final worksheet with your table mates.
   - Select a speaker to report your findings.
Reporting Out . .
Let us hear your thoughts!
**Exercise #1: Water in a Small Town**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Delivery Options</th>
<th>Count (how many circled)</th>
<th>Preferred Structure (check highest score)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public-Public (Horizontal)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public-Public (Vertical)</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consolidation/Regionalism</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Public-Nonprofit Partnership</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public-Private Partnership</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reporting Out . .
Let us hear your thoughts!
## Exercise #2: Permitting Offices

<table>
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<th>Delivery Options</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Preferred Structure</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>(how many circled)</td>
<td>(check highest score)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public-Public (Horizontal)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public-Public (Vertical)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidation/Regionalism</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>[✓]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public-Nonprofit Partnership</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public-Private Partnership</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>[✓]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reporting Out . .
Let us hear your thoughts!
### Exercise #3: Incinerator

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Delivery Options</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Preferred Structure</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(how many circled)</td>
<td>(check highest score)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public-Public (Horizontal)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public-Public (Vertical)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidation/Regionalism</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public-Nonprofit Partnership</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public-Private Partnership</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In Summary...

- A **process to frame a discussion** around whether or not a community should pursue an alternative service delivery arrangement through a collaboration with another jurisdiction, business or non-profit.

- Focuses on **two general characteristics** found to influence the likelihood of success:
  - **Type of service**
  - **Community characteristics**

- The result is a **general indication** of whether a collaborative arrangement should be pursued.
In Summary...

• If your jurisdiction decides to move forward with a collaborative service delivery arrangement, some arrangements are better suited than others.

• The framework can help identify the arrangement that will help maximize the likelihood for success.

• There are no guarantees, but an in-depth conversation can help to more carefully select those opportunities that have the best chance for success!
Additional Resources

- Guidebook
- Exercises
- Case studies
- Research literature
- Professional consultants

www.icma.org/strategies
Questions?
Thank you for joining us!

For more information on the work of the Enhanced Research Partnership of the Alliance, ASU, and ICMA, visit:

www.icma.org/strategies
urbaninnovation.asu.edu
www.transformgov.org