Cooperative Efforts in Public Service Delivery

Debra Bloom
City Engineer
City of Roseville
Hard Questions

- Should we modify our service delivery systems?
- Should we cut services?
- Can we be more responsive to our citizens?
- Can we reduce the cost of government?
Should we consider service collaboration to improve efficiency?
Service Collaboration

- Over 50% of Metro & 40% of outstate
  - Public Safety
  - Parks and Recreation
  - Street Maintenance
  - Economic Development
  - Sanitation and
  - General Government

-2003 LMC survey
Types of Collaboration

- Consolidated services
- Service contract
- Mutual aid
Why do we do it?

- Mutual benefit
- Reduction in overhead
- More efficient customer service
- Even out peaks and valleys
History of Shared Services

- 1995 - sand recycling
- 1998 - Partnership with Mounds View to purchase Microsoft Office Exchange for email
- Success fosters other avenues for cost sharing
Description

- Joint Powers Agreement between Roseville and 23 other agencies, in 3 Counties
- Extends use of staff, equipment, and services for mutual benefit
Consolidated IT Network

- 1137 supported computers on the network
- 1460 network accounts
- 40 terra bytes of storage
Shared IT staff

- 10.5 FTE
- Cost = $27.10/month/computer
- Total cost share based on network devices, computers, accounts, number of servers, and storage
Increase Level of Technology

- “Hi-Tech” services (IP Telephony, Wi-Fi) typically not affordable for small and medium size cities.
- Affording advanced technologies requires increasing the economies of scale regardless of the size of the organization.
- Provides small partner cities with same level of technology as the larger cities.
Increase Level of Technology (cont.)

City of Falcon Heights
- 2.24 square miles
- 5,321 residents
- 8 FTE Employees
  - Cisco IP Telephony, Exchange Email, Campus Wi-Fi, 1GB Internet Access
  - Cost = $20,612 per year based on distributed share of resources.
Public Works

- Resource sharing
- Street light maintenance
- Signal maintenance
- Engineering
How did we get here?

- Identified unmet needs
  - Added reporting
  - Additional oversight
  - Aging infrastructure
  - Increased customer expectations

- Not enough to justify an FTE
Engineering Services

- Arden Hills & Falcon Heights had similar unmet needs
- Worked on the details in 2005
- Hired a new employee in 2006
GIS Services

- North St. Paul needed GIS assistance
- Anticipated reductions in revenue and permit applications meant GIS specialist had additional time
- Providing 8 hrs a week
Engineering Services 2.0

- Utility Engineer needed
- Not the right time to hire additional staff
- Looking for a solution
- Worked with Maplewood to share engineering services in 2011
Benefits

- Cost savings
- Consistency & Predictability
- Understanding & Trust
- Better service delivery
Lessons Learned

- Communication is key
- Workload Management
- Continue to use experts
- Be flexible- staff and needs change over time
Will it work for your City?

- Inventory existing practices
- Take a look at resources
  - Money
  - Staff
  - Time
- Is there an unmet need?
- Are you anticipating cuts?
Feasibility Study

- Identify potential partners
- Conducting background research
- Work the numbers
- Develop a proposal
Develop an Agreement

- Critical to establish mutual benefit
- Open, honest, and fair discussions
- Clearly define terms
- Flexibility and patience
- Consultation of legal and financial experts
Thank you!

Debra Bloom
City Engineer
City of Roseville

deb.bloom@ci.roseville.mn.us
651-792-7042