



ALLIANCE *for*  
REGIONAL  
STEWARDSHIP

Regional Stewardship  
&  
Collaborative  
Governance

Implementation That  
Produces Results

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# FOREWORD

Complex regional issues require innovative solutions. Many of the challenges facing the St. Louis region cannot be addressed by one individual, one organization or even one sector alone.

In St. Louis, we realize that a coordinated effort among government, business and civic leaders is required if our region is to compete and thrive in the 21st century. With this understanding, representatives from the boards of FOCUS St. Louis, East-West Gateway Council of Governments and the Regional Chamber and Growth Association came together to set the foundation for a sustained collaboration among the three sectors.

In 2003, we formed The Metropolitan Forum, bringing together 45 leaders from the public, private and civic sectors to cooperate in addressing challenges facing our bi-state St. Louis region. Three major themes emerged as priorities: sluggish job growth, racial and economic disparity, and the uneven quality of public services, brought about in part by local tax policy and structure.

Other regions are experimenting with new forms of multi-sector collaborative governance. This practitioner's guide was prepared to provide some guiding principles and best practices for regional stewards who are trying to address complex regional issues through collaborative approaches. While "one size does not fit all", we can clearly learn from each other as we test new approaches.

Christine Chadwick  
Executive Director of FOCUS St. Louis  
Past Chair, Alliance for Regional Stewardship

## WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS WHEN FACED WITH A COMPLEX PUBLIC PROBLEM?

What are the options for leaders faced with a complex, pressing public problem? How can leaders choose an approach that is the “best match” for the scope of the problem they face? Beyond “doing nothing,” leaders have four options for deciding on how to frame and address public problems (see Figure below):

- They can segment the problem into one or more issues that fit local government’s existing agency structure.
- They can go further, and define the problem as a multi-jurisdictional challenge, but one that still implies a government solution, in this case one that involves the cooperation of local governments.
- Alternatively, they can frame the problem as one with multiple dimensions, requiring collaboration among government agencies and others such as the private and civic sectors, but only at the local level.
- Or, they can frame the problem as a regional challenge with multiple dimensions, requiring not only collaboration among local governments, but among private and civic sectors across the region as well.

## MATCHING PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

GOVERNANCE	SINGLE JURISDICTION MULTI-SECTOR	MULTI-JURISDICTION MULTI-SECTOR
	Local collaborative governance (public, private and civic sectors working together in one jurisdiction)	Regional collaborative governance (public, private and civic sectors working together across multiple jurisdictions)
GOVERNMENT	SINGLE JURISDICTION SINGLE SECTOR	MULTI-JURISDICTION SINGLE SECTOR
	Local government policies and programs	Regional cooperation among local governments
	LOCAL	REGIONAL

The last option of regional collaborative governance is an approach that, while difficult, is arguably the only one that is a match for the complexity of many pressing public problems today. The remainder of this monograph answers the following practical questions:

- What is regional collaborative governance?
- Why is it necessary?
- How is it different from other approaches?
- How can you pursue this option?

## WHAT IS REGIONAL COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE?

Regional collaborative governance is a web of expectations, interactions, and ultimately responsibilities that provide the only realistic hope for meeting the complex economic, social, and environmental challenges facing regions today. In short, it is about how regional stewards find practical ways to solve problems by transcending traditional jurisdictions, sectors, and issues, and creating a new framework for collaborative action.

Regional collaborative governance can be viewed as combining two concepts:

1. Regional Collaboration: To co-labor, to cooperate to achieve common goals working across boundaries through multi-sector, multi-jurisdictional alliances
2. Governance: To steer, the process of shaping private, public, and non-profit sector decisions and actions towards a common end

The Weil Program on Collaborative Governance at the Harvard's Kennedy School of Government describes it as "a new level of social/political engagement between and among the several sectors of society that constitutes a more effective way to address many of modern societies' needs beyond anything that the several sectors have heretofore been able to achieve on their own." (Donahue, 2004).

Regional collaborative governance is not shorthand for regional government. At the same time, governance is inclusive of government, along with the private and non-profit sectors. As John Gardner has observed:

Today's society obviously wants less bureaucratic, less intrusive, and less dictating government. More than ever, reforms thought up, initiated, and pushed by communities and non-profits and civic forces are essential. Yet in one form or another, each civic effort requires government as an active, smart partner. In the final analysis, there's no other way. (*Adams and Parr, 1998*).

There are several ways to characterize the relationship between governance and government. Mark Moore of Harvard's Kennedy School of Government outlines several alternative concepts:

1. Governance as innovative, collaborative, and flexible means for accomplishing the purposes of government.
2. Governance as organizing to "cope with public problems"
3. Governance as the use of government authority to set the rules for interaction among private individuals and organizations
4. Governance as the processes that set the purposes of government and decide which purposes will be embraced as public problems that government will try to solve (governance as politics)
5. Governance as the sum of all the other more particular ideas of governance

The last concept is key: "governance is the whole set of things that society and government do together to construct the conditions of individual and social life." (Moore, 2002). As such, governance also encompasses the leadership, institutions, and residents of a region. It is about "steering" the collective capacities of a region to solve problems, capitalize on opportunities, or advance towards a shared vision of the future.

Collaborative governance has also been defined as “steering through continuous waves of change, under conditions of complexity”. (Bennington, 2003) Success in complex environments requires adaptability based on continuous learning. Collaborative governance avoids the false choice between top-down directives and bottom-up initiative by offering an adaptive system that can produce innovative solutions—a set of inter-connected commitments to produce a agreed-upon outcome.

Finally, John Gardner reminds us of a concept at the core of regional collaborative governance: individual responsibility. “We have learned through hard experience that without commitments, freedom is not possible. Something has to hold society together. If that something is not dictatorial rule, it must be a commitment to the constitutional framework and the web of custom in an open society.” It is this web of custom, of individual responsibility at all levels that is at the heart of regional collaborative governance. “We believe that ideas, initiative, and creativity should flow both ways between the center and periphery . . . that individuals throughout the system should have a keen sense of responsibility—not just for their own behavior, but for the larger good.” (Gardner, 1990).

The process of governance is often difficult to describe, as it is the sum of thousands of individual and organizational actions that drive the direction of regional change. Yet, it is possible and, indeed, essential to build webs of regional responsibility—to be purposeful about forging commitments for change among jurisdictions and sectors. Visible, major commitments by the public, private, and non-profit sectors can establish the right environment, incentives, and expectations that, in turn, can shape thousands of other decisions and actions across the region. In fact, a growing number of regions are having success with this kind of catalytic governance process.

## WHY IS REGIONAL COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE NECESSARY?

Regional collaborative governance has emerged because it had to. It is a practical response to the new complexity of the regional problem-solving environment. As such, it represents the latest phase in the evolution of regional problem-solving in America:

- The first phase focused on government consolidation—creating unitary governments from several jurisdictions. While this process started in the 1800s, there was a flurry of mergers in the 1960s and 1970s; examples included Indianapolis-Marion County and Nashville-Davidson County. Today, government consolidation takes place more often in delivery of specific kinds of services (e.g., public safety), instead of full-scale mergers (Louisville-Jefferson County, Kentucky being a notable exception).
- A second phase starting in the late 1950s focused on regional planning and coordination of local government activities. This phase was stimulated by federal government requirements in the housing, transportation and other development arenas. It also included the creation of regional agencies such as the Metropolitan Council in the Twin Cities of Minnesota.
- The third phase starting in the 1980s has involved regional public-private cooperation involving a variety of partnerships and alliances among business, government and community groups. This third phase is often called civic regionalism to distinguish it from prior efforts focused primarily on efforts to create regional government.

David Young Miller of the University of Pittsburgh has described forms of regionalism ranging from civic (multi-sector coalitions working together to advance an agenda in spite of existing governance structure) to coordinating (regional councils overseeing local government compliance with a regional plan) to administrative (special districts with taxing authority) to structural (consolidation). In this public administration framework, a clear distinction is made between ad hoc, voluntary arrangements, advisory and supervisory approaches and authority based approaches.

The shift from a focus on government to governance is in response to growing challenges:

- *Scale:* As regions grow, they continue to expand beyond traditional political jurisdictions. Many regions now encompass many several cities, towns and counties. How to deal with this political fragmentation in the face of growing economic regions is a challenge to most regions.
- *Speed:* The innovative economy is based on speed. Government institutions are having trouble keeping up with the pace of change. Few institutions have learned how to operate on “Internet time,” but they are being asked to respond more quickly to economic changes.
- *Participation:* The challenges of scale and speed combine with a lack of trust in ineffective institutions, which discourages participation in community and regional affairs. However, without civic engagement, regional governance will not be responsive to citizen needs. According to Robert Dahl, a leading thinker on democracy, “Scale, complexity and greater quantities of information impose ever-stronger demands on citizen’s capacities. As a result, one of the imperative needs of democracy is to improve citizen’s capacities to engage intelligently in political life.”(Dahl, 1999).
- *Effectiveness:* In the end, what matters is how well regional institutions respond to the changing needs of the region. Fragmentation of responsibility and the increasing pace of change have made it difficult for institutions to meet those needs. Worse, a lack of effective regional governance leads to conflict and competition among jurisdictions and between the public and private sectors, which leads to gridlock.

The problems of regions and the aspirations of residents are exceeding the capacity of existing institutions to meet those rising needs and desires. Traditional government structures designed for an earlier era are not adequate for the complex challenges of our modern economy and society. Earlier approaches based on “command and control” were more appropriate for an industrial age. In the information age, new approaches are required to deal with rapid change and complexity. These alternatives are needed for several reasons:

- Information is now more directly accessible, challenging the role of experts. Top down approaches are not as effective, as residents demand more inclusion
- Change requires new kinds of approaches which allow for greater responsiveness and rapid learning. Residents want more control over their own lives in an increasingly fast paced world
- Community has taken on new and important meaning as residents recognize the importance of a sense of place and networks of common interest in increasingly fragmented times. Community, however, takes on different meaning as boundaries shift and no longer match up with traditional political jurisdictions. Residents are searching for new ways to recreate community by working together.

Something fundamental appears to be changing in response to a changing environment. As Robert Axelrod and Michael Cohen point out:

Recently, there has been an increasing dissatisfaction with the cost of the industrial mode of thinking and action. Its impersonality and rigidity are frustrating. Its slowness and inability to adjust to changing circumstances and local conditions have become obvious.

With the advent of the information age, bottom up styles of thinking associated with complex adaptive systems may well become a greater part of people’s understanding of how economic, social and political processes actually function and change. (*Harnessing Complexity, 2000*)

The need for regional collaborative governance is emerging as the legitimacy associated with traditional and bureaucratic authority is weakening and as the inherent value of hierarchy is being questioned. The ideas of adaptation, experimentation, and decentralization are gaining favor.

As Scott Fosler of the University of Maryland has observed: “The challenge to governance today, in short, is not just a matter of coping with change. The human race has been inventing and adopting new ways to deal with new circumstances for thousands of years. Today’s challenge has several new dimensions:

- Change is accelerating. Governance institutions need to build the capacity for continual innovation.
- Increasing interdependencies are escalating complexity. In the process, old boundaries that were once clear and distinct have begun to blur and become more ambiguous, fuzzy and porous.
- Today’s context for change is more thickly layered with existing institutions than was true in the past. Today the challenge is not just to create new institutions, but also to cause existing institutions to become innovative and entrepreneurial.
- There is greater uncertainty over which new policies and institutional forms are preferable. Which are workable; how do we test, develop, and deploy them; and what kind of impact will they have?
- Democracy itself poses a challenge to democratically accountable innovation and governance institutions to prepare organizations with the capacity for agility, adaptability, and renewal.

The sum of these challenges to democratic governance cannot be resolved simply by abandoning old institutional forms and embracing new ones, but rather requires determining which to abandon, which to preserve and protect, which to repair, which to reform, and which to transform.” (*Fosler, 2004*)

In fact, Thomas Homer-Dixon (*The Ingenuity Gap, 2000*) asks the fundamental question whether our world is simply becoming too complex and fast paced to effectively manage change. He argues that because challenges facing society are often beyond our understanding a critical “ingenuity gap” is growing between the need for practical and innovative ideas to solve our complex problems and our actual supply of those ideas.

There appears to be an ingenuity gap in the current thinking and practice of addressing the critical challenges of managing growth, preserving quality of life and promoting economic vitality. These challenges spill over city and county boundaries. Communities working alone can not effectively address critical issues such as sprawl, job training, housing, traffic, air quality and water supply. These problems do not respect local political boundaries. Moreover, their resolution is not limited to government action, but must involve business and nonprofit organizations. They require a “regional community” collaborating on a cross-sector, cross-jurisdictional basis. The need for new regional approaches stands in sharp contrast to current realities of government fragmentation.

What is needed is a complex adaptive system that continuously selects among a variety of strategies to achieve outcomes as a result of trial-and-error learning through the interaction of individuals and organizations. Regional collaborative governance is such a system based on the continuous interaction of many individuals and organizations in agenda setting, decision-making, and implementation.

## HOW IS REGIONAL COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE DIFFERENT THAN OTHER APPROACHES?

Regional collaborative governance is fundamentally different than other problem-solving approaches such as top-down government, grassroots initiative, or issue-by-issue advocacy. The key differences are the:

- role of government
- focus of leadership
- framework for collaboration
- vehicles for action

## THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IS DIFFERENT: From Command and Control to Contribute and Collaborate

Regions are crucibles of complexity: fragmented local government structures with multiple jurisdictional boundaries, dynamic businesses riding endless waves of “creative destruction,” and ever changing patterns of civic leadership driven in part by the new demographics of age and ethnicity. It is clear that new ways are needed to govern this complexity as regions try to manage for growth and promote community well being, while sustaining economic prosperity and ensuring that everyone participates in economic and social opportunities.

While it is clear that established government jurisdictions and approaches are not up to the task of “governing” in these complex environments, the alternative is not clear:

- The alternative of regional government addresses the jurisdictional complexity, but remains ill-equipped to manage the complex, inter-related economic, social, and environmental challenges facing regions today.
- The alternative of regional collaborative governance offers the opportunity to address the full complexity of jurisdictional, economic, social, and environmental challenges, but requires a very different approach to problem definition, role identification, and implementation responsibilities among many governance partners.

The role of government changes with regional collaborative governance. Government does not provide complete solutions to public problems; it contributes what it does best to the regional solutions and needs other sectors, institutions, and the public to play their roles, contribute their unique capacities to the endeavor. In this sense, government does not control how problems get addressed, nor is it solely responsible or accountable for their solution.

The question that arises, naturally, is who is accountable for results? When government is in charge, it is accountable. Government has well-established accountability mechanisms (i.e., balance of powers among branches, elections), but governance does not. New accountability mechanisms like regional compacts are attempts to meet this need.

## THE FOCUS OF LEADERSHIP IS DIFFERENT:

### Governance Partners Are Regional Stewards

Regional stewards are integrators who cross boundaries of jurisdiction, sector and discipline to address complex regional issues such as sprawl, equity, education and economic development. They see the connections between economic, environmental and social concerns and know how to “connect the dots” to improve their regions. This has been called “ad hoc regionalism” or “pragmatic regionalism.”

Many regions are experimenting with new multi-sector approaches that are a form of networked governance, seeking a middle way between traditional top-down hierarchy and private market solutions. The focus of leadership is different in these circumstances — encompassing multiple issues, sectors and jurisdictions. Above all, the difference is that leadership is focused on commitment to place rather than an idea, cause or other agenda.

As governance partners, regional stewards apply the same entrepreneurial spirit and persistence to solving regional challenges that business entrepreneurs apply in building a business; they are civic entrepreneurs. They see the need for more connected regional approaches to addressing economic, environmental and social issues; they are integrators. They build support from leaders, citizens, interest groups and policy professionals toward a shared regional vision; they are coalition builders. Regional stewards hold themselves and each other accountable to achieve tangible results and sustained outcomes.

TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP	REGIONAL STEWARDSHIP
One jurisdiction, one organization	Multiple jurisdictions and organizations
Specific problem or goal	Integrated vision for the region
Single network	Diverse collaborative networks
Commitment to an idea/cause	Commitment to place

Regional stewards include local elected or appointed officials, university or college leaders, executives of local businesses, foundation executives, non-profit leaders and community activists. What they all have in common is the realization that to accomplish their goals they need to work collaboratively with people in other jurisdictions and sectors.

## THE FRAMEWORK FOR COLLABORATION IS DIFFERENT:

### New Purposes, Participants, and Processes

Allan Wallis, of the University of Colorado in Denver, has described the dilemma faced by most metropolitan regions: “Expanding the power of the metropolitan region runs counter to the cultural preference for keeping government as small as possible with power exercised close to the people affected. The inherent conflicts between ends and means have made achieving effective regional government or governance extremely difficult” (Rebirth of City States and the Birth of the Global Economy” *National Civic Review*, 1996).

Resolving this dilemma requires creative thinking about governance and how to manage the inherent complexity of regions. Fortunately across America, there is a series of experiments involving networks of regional stewards working in their metropolitan or rural areas, influencing regional direction through ad hoc approaches, rather than new formal government structures.

In short, regional collaborative governance has a different purpose, participants, process, and products than other approaches to regional problem-solving:

- Problems are framed differently, with a broader scope. Problems are not framed as single issues or specific needs for government reform, but rather as complex and inter-related challenges and aspirations for regional quality of life and vitality. Thus, the purposes of governance are different and typically broader.
- The complexity of the problem-solving environment is taken into account, as is the readiness of participants for problem-solving. This is in contrast to traditional sources of problem-solving input as public hearings, expert studies of government programs, or interest group advocacy.
- Desired outcomes get defined differently. Broader measures of economic, social, and environmental well-being are of greater concern than institutional efficiency or resolution of individual issues.
- Because of the broader framing of the problem and definition of the desired outcome, there is more need and effort to tap the strengths of many partners to get results. This is in contrast to narrowly-defined problems that suggest the need for a government-only response.
- With contributions from many partners, implementation requires and produces innovative approaches, specific actions and agreements, and new structures that support multi-party problem-solving.

## THE VEHICLES FOR ACTION ARE DIFFERENT:

### Regional Collaboratives in the Form of Multi-Sector Compacts, Forums, and Organizations

The Alliance for Regional Stewardship promotes and advocates working together in new ways by forging regional collaboration across existing geographic and political boundaries and institutional barriers. This new model of civic stewardship is called a “regional collaborative”: multi-sector, multi-jurisdictional efforts that work on interdependent public policy issues ranging from neighborhood revitalization to educational improvement and smart growth. They are composed of volunteers — stewards — including activists, corporate CEOs, college and university presidents, social service providers and more.

Regional Collaboratives bring together a diverse group of constituents and leaders — grassroots and grassstops. They are run by practitioner-professionals who are skilled in the art of effectively blending government, business and nonprofit resources. They create goals for the region, and then design strategies that implement collective, effective, measurable results.

Regional Collaboratives build a strong foundation of credibility and trust because they are built on the principles of stewardship and social inclusion, and because they play an honest broker role in their regions. Their viability and effectiveness depend upon these essential attributes and values.

A full range of stakeholder perspectives is critical for discussion and resolution of important issues in objective forums. The rich diversity of backgrounds, expertise and opinions of participants inevitably produces spirited dialogue and highly motivating challenges. The one common denominator in these dialogues—the quality that ultimately wins the day—is participants’ shared concern for their communities. Their sense of pride and ownership leads them to make ongoing investments of time and resources to protect the quality of life where they live.

Typically, Regional Collaboratives are alliances of leading government and nongovernment organizations, which provide direct access to and through the regions’ civic and community resources. The alliances are not a “one size fits all” proposition; they take a variety of forms — locally; as a single organization; together with other collaboratives in issue-based clusters; or as part of a coordinated statewide network, e.g. California Center for Regional Leadership. Flexibility is essential to success because programs, issues and initiatives vary greatly from region to region, and require a sense of appropriate scope and scale. Importantly, the collaboratives can initiate communication and dialogue at all levels of governance — state, regional, county, municipal, and neighborhood levels.

To cope with complexity and address the challenges of fragmentation, regions are experimenting with a range of approaches. Many regions have experimented with multi-sector processes that lead to government-based agreements or compacts (e.g., the Denver region’s Mile High Compact, the Boston region’s New Mayflower Compact). While these kind of processes are multi-sector, they are intended to inform government action and, as such, do not specifically define ongoing implementation roles and actions for other sectors. The examples below focus on the development of multi-sector models that include multi-sector implementation responsibilities.

Thus far, three kinds of multi-sector models (or regional collaboratives) have emerged to provide “vehicles for action” for new governance arrangements:

- In some regions, the platform has been a multi-sector agreement among existing governance partners — a tangible, inter-dependent set of actions in the form of a written compact, plan, or campaign.
- In other cases, partners create an ongoing multi-sector forum or network for developing governance solutions.
- In still other cases, a multi-sector organization is created as a new governance mechanism, a separate entity that acts as a broker of multi-sector agreements among governance partners.

What these different kind of platforms share is that they provide a practical, voluntary, and non-partisan public “space” to work on governance problems and solutions.

## **MULTI-SECTOR COMPACTS**

Regional, multi-sector compacts are not a replacement for government. Essential roles remain for local, state, and federal governments — as partners in funding infrastructure, delivering services, and providing legal and regulatory frameworks to ensure fair and effective markets. In fact, for a new form of governance to take root, it is critical that governments create a supportive environment for and participate in regional solutions, rather than pursue policies that reinforce local fragmentation or impose top-down mandates. What this means is that every region needs a careful delineation of complementary roles and responsibilities among local, state, and federal partners, and mutual accountability agreements such as compacts to seal the deal.

What makes compacts work are networks of responsibility based on trust and accountability created by an authentic civic engagement process. This new wave of regional compacts — ranging from formal in structure to ad hoc in nature — can transform the basic relationships within systems of governance. The compacts are setting the parameters for a new kind of civic system — not regional government per

se, but a set of practical, mutual obligations tailored to each regional situation. This renewal of a traditional American accountability mechanism is emerging as one of the most important forces for building trust in regional problem-solving processes.

These networked approaches need to be based on an understanding of the power of bargaining and social interaction as an alternative to traditional government hierarchies and markets. New regional compacts based on simple rules are using shared information to create the foundation of trust required for networked governance. Compacts that build trust require “face-to-face” interaction in decentralized environments where information can be shared through personal interaction within networks.

A major impact of the compact approach based on civic engagement has been a switch from debate and discord over who controls the decision making process and abstract arguments about the positive and negative impacts of growth. This unproductive use of human energy is replaced by focused, problem-solving oriented dialogue that leads to clear problem definition, delineation of roles and responsibilities and concrete implementation plans.

Three examples illustrate the diversity of multi-sector compacts: Oregon Solutions, the Capital Region’s Emergency Coordination Plan, and the Detroit region’s MOSES transportation campaign. These efforts range from specific projects to overarching plans to focused campaigns.

### **OREGON SOLUTIONS: Introducing a New Governance “System”**

Oregon Solutions is a replicable process that has promoted a new style of community governance, one based on the principles of collaboration, integration, and sustainability. The outcome of the process is a written agreement among parties from multiple sectors focused on solving a specific public problem.

Oregon Solutions grew out of the State of Oregon’s Sustainability Act of 2001. Initially based in the executive branch of state government, since January of 2002 it has been a program of the National Policy Consensus Center (NPCC) at Portland State University. The aim of the program is to build solutions through the collaborative efforts of businesses, government, and non-profit organizations. To date, Oregon Solutions has launched 20 collaborative projects that have addressed a variety of environmental, social and economic issues. Many of those projects are still underway, striving to achieve some combination of the state’s Sustainable Community Objectives.

Oregon Solutions projects are implemented using a “Community Governance System.” Each project must be a collaborative effort among government, businesses, and non-profit organizations, and must support at least one of several statewide sustain-

able community objectives established by the program. The process for initiating an Oregon Solutions project involves five steps (see box).

#### THE OREGON SOLUTIONS COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE SYSTEM

1. Identification of a problem or opportunity defined by the community
2. Identification of a neutral community convener from the local community, appointed by the Governor, to lead a “Solutions Team” to address the challenge
3. Creation of an Oregon Solutions Team of federal, state, local, and other government entities, businesses, non-profits, and citizens who can contribute to a solution
4. Development of a draft integrated solution that leverages the resources of the Solution Team to meet the challenges at hand and sustainability objectives, and,
5. Creation of a “Declaration of Cooperation” signed by Team members which commits their resources and time for an integrated action plan.

The projects Oregon Solutions have organized range from creating a fund to purchase transportation related carbon offsets, to the creation of a technology center to connect low-income residents to high tech jobs, to a final segment of the Lewis and Clark trail. Partners to the agreements and participants in implementation have ranged from government agencies, to environmental groups and corporations, such as Intel and Weyerhaeuser.

#### **CAPITAL REGION:** Regional Emergency Coordination Plan

With the September 11, 2001 attack on the Pentagon, regional collaboration became a life-and-death issue for the Capital region. A lack of coordinated decision-making between Federal and local officials and across sectoral boundaries had hindered emergency response during and after the terrorist attack. The public and private sectors both took action and then joined forces in a unique regional partnership that may be a model for the nation in preparedness and homeland security.

“September 11 produced an extraordinary amount of new boundary crossing. A crisis gives existing regional efforts a little rocket fuel. It raises public expectations that officials are going to work together and generates more political will. We had to come together to design effective response systems to prepare for other crises.”

— George Vradenburg, Chair, Potomac Conference

The Potomac Conference Regional Preparedness and Recovery Task Force was created to prepare for regional emergencies and economic recovery in a model public/private partnership. The Potomac Conference private-sector group consisted of four work groups: emergency preparedness, business and nonprofit continuity, economic recovery, and communications. The region’s council of governments (COG) and the Potomac Conference integrated their efforts and, over the course of a year, jointly developed a Regional Emergency Coordination Plan (RECP) to foster regional coordination and communications in regional emergency situations.

The centerpiece of the RECP was a Regional Incident Communications and Coordination System (RICCS), hosted by the District of Columbia and managed by COG, to facilitate real-time emergency communications and coordination among Federal and local public officials and critical private sector service providers. On August 6, 2002, the Governors of Virginia and Maryland and the Mayor of the District of Columbia signed a historic eight-point regional compact that pledges the governments and the private sector to work together to coordinate decisions, public statements, and emergency procedures in case of a region-wide disaster.

The RECP defines roles and relationships of member organizations in the context of fifteen specific emergency support functions—ranging from transportation to communications to energy to donations and volunteer management. For example, specific roles are defined for regional business organizations (such as the Greater Washington Board of Trade), key corporations in areas such as communications, energy, and transportation, and private sector aid organizations such as the American Red Cross, DC Cares, private food service providers, and hospitals across the region. In addition, The Greater Washington Board of Trade is focusing on “business continuity”—providing access to best practices and specific tools for companies to use in preparing for and recovering from disasters, as well as working with the media on their coverage of future regional “incidents.”

## DETROIT REGION: The MOSES Transportation Campaign

To win support for a regional transportation equity campaign, MOSES (Metropolitan Organizing Strategies Enabling Strength), a faith-based network affiliated with the Gamaliel Foundation, mobilized an uncommon coalition of urban and suburban interests to improve public transportation options in the Detroit region. With its strong ties to the city, MOSES had historically taken on urban issues like drug enforcement and access to public facilities.

“MOSES decided to take up the issue of regional transportation because it is a unifying issue that brings both city and suburban congregations together. Better regional public transit benefits people across geographical boundaries. It cuts across age, race, and income by improving access to jobs, health care, and education”

— Victoria Kovari, MOSES

To bridge the deep divisions between Detroit’s urban population (which is 85% African American) and suburban population (which is 80-90% Caucasian), MOSES reached out to congregations outside of Detroit City. They held thousands of “one-on-one’s” and gave group presentations in suburban cities. The goal was to understand the views of their counterparts and to find common, or at least compatible, interests for changes in the prevailing transportation system in metropolitan Detroit. As a result, MOSES was able to create a network of multiple interests, whose membership was one-third suburban.

MOSES created a multi-sector campaign mechanism that built in roles for the business community, including the Detroit Metro Chamber of Commerce and the Big Three automakers, as well as mayors, labor unions, and legislators. For example, The Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce became part of the coalition because of employer concerns about giving workers more and better ways to reach jobs. The big three automakers endorsed the effort, and contributed \$50,000 each to the effort. A regional group called Transportation Riders United joined the campaign, including younger and older residents in need of public transportation options, along with 1,000 Friends of Metropolitan Detroit, an environmental group.

Through a series of public meetings organized by MOSES and other regional actors, momentum began to build for a regional transportation agenda.

- In November 1999, MOSES brought leaders to the first-ever regional meeting on transportation, attended by 800 citizens, all three county executives, and other local elected politicians.
- In 2000, it successfully lobbied to pass an appropriations bill that increased public transit funds by \$50 million.

- Two years later, MOSES rallied 5,000 people—a cross section of urban and suburban residents, business leaders, faith leaders, young and old—to meet with gubernatorial and congressional candidates to express their support for a regional transportation plan. This public support was instrumental to the passage of a state bill to create a Detroit Area Regional Transportation Authority (DARTA).
- Although the original DARTA plan was vetoed by the outgoing governor in December 2002, an agreement was reached by four counties to create a Detroit Area Regional Transportation Authority Board. The coalition continues to grow, as the dispersed interests of faith communities, environmentalists, labor, and business unite across urban-suburban lines to work towards an improved regional transportation system.

From these and similar efforts, there are lessons being learned through the process of developing and implementing compacts:

- The effort needs to be based on a vision of the future for the community (or a vision of the solution to a problem, such as regional emergency preparedness).
- This vision must be developed bottoms-up, not top-down, so there is ownership. This is accomplished by including multi-sector leadership in all levels and steps of process.
- While broad public participation helps build a broader coalition for change, the coalition will not work without leaders because they will be the ones that have to inform, explain, defend and implement.
- The leadership must be diverse and inclusive, not just elected officials, but also business, neighborhood and environmental leaders. They must work to educate each other and to keep each other honest.
- Work on compacts must be supported by valid research and data.
- Implementation must be action-oriented, but incremental. It is important to pick the items around which there is consensus, implement the solutions and build on these successes
- No “one-size-fits-all” model exists for regional compacts. Every region needs to go through the process of determining the most feasible approach for itself. Key choices to consider are:

- Voluntary and mandatory elements: How far should a regional compact go from voluntary to mandatory, and who enforces these agreements once signed?
- Process and structure: How much structure is needed for an effective process to reach a regional compact?
- Trust and incentives: What is the right balance between building regional trust from the bottom up and creating incentives for cooperation from the top down?

## **MULTI-SECTOR FORUMS OR NETWORKS**

Recently new kinds of multi sector forums, where business, civic and government organizations are coming together in new partnerships have emerged or networks to address common challenges. These forums are neither formal organizations, nor are they regional compacts per se. They are joint efforts by existing public, private, and civic sectors to create a neutral place, a forum to provide a focal point for discussions and actions that require a multi-sector approach. Typically, organizations from each sector contribute funding and/or in-kind resources (such as staff) to enable the forum model to be sustained over time. Three examples illustrate the diversity of the multi-sector forum model: Birmingham's Regional Growth Alliance, St. Louis' Metropolitan Forum, and Fresno's Regional Jobs Initiative.

## **BIRMINGHAM:** Regional Growth Alliance

Birmingham had just completed a regional vision effort that by all accounts was a success. The next question became how to begin the hard work of accomplishing that vision. In order to make significant progress on their goals, the region would have to change the way it approached issues. New relationships would need to be formed and nurtured, mindsets would have to be changed and traditional boundaries would have to be crossed.

Three strong organizations emerged as regional stewards driving change in Central Alabama: Region 2020, representing citizens; The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham, representing elected officials and the Birmingham Regional Chamber of Commerce, representing the business community. Recognizing the need for a more institutionalized approach, the three organizations created the Regional Growth Alliance in 2001, with a Memorandum of Agreement executed with the approval of the three Executive Committees. The stated objectives are to provide a forum for citizens, business and government leaders to address emerging issues of regional significance, to provide an improved mechanism for coordination of current and proposed regional initiatives and to mobilize citizen, business and government leaders to address key regional issues.

“Why have a chamber committee, a Region 2020 Committee and a committee of elected officials all working independently on some regional issue when you can get far more accomplished if the various parties come to the same table and try to hammer out solutions? Elected officials will always have certain decision-making responsibilities for public dollars, but business people are the ones who decide where investments will be made in the community. And obviously, citizens are the ultimate stakeholders for all of these decisions. The Growth Alliance represents a way for our region to make decisions for years to come.”

— Larry Watts, Executive Director,  
Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham

The Growth Alliance Steering Committee meets four times a year to recommend regional taskforces to address regional priorities. Each of the partner organizations is responsible for appointing sector representatives to taskforces that have one-third business, one-third government and one-third citizen participation. While each of the partnering organizations has a different geographic scope, regional, in the case of the Growth Alliance, is defined by issues that are multi-jurisdictional (i.e. they cross the boundaries of more than one city and/or more than one county) and taskforces that reflect the stakeholders who are directly affected. Consequently, the geographic scope of representation on each taskforce is different. Five Growth Alliance taskforces are currently at work in the region.

- The Progress 280 Taskforce is addressing growth and development on U.S. 280, the region's most rapidly developing commercial and residential corridor. The State Department of Transportation has adopted their recommendations for urban interchanges and the committee is now conducting land use studies along the corridor.
- The Alliance for Transportation Alternatives (ATA) was formed to promote the creation of a regional transit authority and to recommend a funding source to match federal funds for regional transportation projects. They are actively engaged in supporting bills currently pending in the legislature.
- The Environmental Services Community Advisory Committee is reviewing plans for a \$3 billion regional sewer rehabilitation and expansion program that will guide growth and development in the county and the region.
- The Upper Cahaba Watershed Community Advisory Committee is focusing on the natural water drainage basin that covers portions of 20 Alabama cities and three Alabama counties. They have provided community forums for public input on responsible growth policies in the watershed.
- The Corridor X Taskforce is working on a plan for economic development along the Corridor X (Interstate 22), expected to be completed in 2006.

### **ST. LOUIS:** St. Louis Metropolitan Forum

The St. Louis Metropolitan Forum is a coalition of the Regional Chamber and Growth Association (RCGA), FOCUS St. Louis (a civic leadership group), and the East-West Gateway Council of Governments. It emerged as a recommendation from the area's Regional Governance Policy Group, which itself was a collaborative effort among these public, private, and civic sector leadership groups. The Group proposed a metropolitan "federation" model as a unique, virtual organization to bring together

the sectors and rally them around a common regional agenda. In 2003, the Charter for the Metropolitan Forum was approved by the three organizations, and it committed the three to:

- acting as joint conveners and agreeing to a formal cost-sharing and staffing arrangement to maintain an ongoing process and forum to address regional concerns and undertake bold initiatives
- following specific guidelines to ensure a multi-sector approach, including equal representation from each sector, decisions made by 2/3 vote overall and within each sector, the ability to create working groups around specific issues or themes, and a dual emphasis on multi-sector process and implementation.
- In lieu of a formal organization, the Metropolitan Forum is held together by a set of Values and Principles agreed to by all its members.

Today, the Metropolitan Forum regularly brings together 45 leaders from the public, private and civic sectors to cooperate in addressing challenges facing the bi-state St. Louis region. Three major themes have thus far emerged as priorities: sluggish job growth, racial and economic disparity, and the uneven quality of public services, brought about in part by local tax policy and structure. Their first action has been to convene several meetings, consultations and deliberations about local tax policy and structure, finalizing and adopting a joint document entitled *More for Our Money* as the framework for their first initiative: the development of a coordinated and regional public spending and investment strategy for the St. Louis metropolitan area.

### **FRESNO:** Regional Jobs Initiative

Launched in 2004, the Fresno Regional Jobs Initiative (RJI) grew out of a multi-sector process whose intent was to fundamentally transform the approach to economic development in California's San Joaquin Valley. More specifically, the RJI set the goal of diversifying the Valley's economy, while retaining its core agricultural base. How would success be measured? The region would grow 30,000 net new non-farm jobs over a five year period (2004-2008).

In implementation, the RJI has become a multi-sector network of organizations, agreeing to work together towards the common goals. RJI is a public-private partnership involving 430 business CEOs, as well as executives from 23 public agencies in the region. Business CEOs lead nine industry cluster groups, while government executives led eight task forces, each addressing one dimension of competitive advantage, aligning the region's resources in support of industry cluster job growth. Between the cluster groups and task forces, 47 specific initiatives are being implemented, such as:

- Specific efforts to improve local government permitting and bidding processes for the benefit of regional companies
- Customized training by community colleges and universities for the information processing, advanced manufacturing, and logistics clusters
- Groundbreaking for a multi-million dollar International Center for Water Technology, positioning the region as a world leader in the field.
- Adoption of health services as priority by the regional Workforce Investment Board, including direction of hundreds of thousands of new dollars for training in health professions.
- In addition, a common assessment tool has been developed, and used to assess 2,000 job applicants thus far.
- The RJI coalition is monitoring job growth and reporting back regularly to the region

Across the specific initiatives, there are specific implementation roles and responsibilities for government, private sector, and non-profit sector partners.

## MULTI-SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS

The third multi-sector implementation model is the formal organization. In some regions, formal non-profit organizations have been created for provide a lasting platform for collaborative governance discussions and actions. Examples of this approach include: Envision Utah, Chicago Metropolis 2020, and the network of Collaborative Regional Initiatives across California.

### **UTAH:** Envision Utah

Envision Utah, a regional public-private partnership founded in January 1997, has achieved large-scale public participation in shaping the future of their community. Through an extensive process, a sense of collective interest for the region emerged through scenario planning, public engagement, and dialogue—and developed a series of implementation steps that has ensured follow-through.

- The partnership has led more than 175 public meetings with more than 6,000 participants, and distributed more than 800,000 questionnaires across the region.
- It has trained over 2,700 Mayors, city council members, developers and realtors in its "Urban Planning Tools for Quality Growth" workbook.
- It has promoted quality growth strategies through demonstration projects with groups of communities, cities, and towns.
- Envision Utah's annual Governors Quality Growth Awards highlight developers and local governments who are emulating smart growth techniques
- Major media campaigns help promote key concepts such as walkable communities, transit-oriented development, and mixed housing.

Tangible results have been achieved. The State Legislature passed the Quality Growth Act in 1999 that created a "critical lands fund" for conservation and appointed a 13-member Quality Growth Commission to advise the legislature on growth issues, administer money for open space projects, and identify quality growth principles for local communities. In 2000, voters in Salt Lake, Davis and Weber Counties approved an extra quarter-cent sales-tax increase to raise approximately \$40 million a year to fund more rail and bus service. Envision Utah's work has resulted in numerous changes to local master plans and private development projects across the region, the result of training individual public, private, and non-profit executives, as well as providing tools and supporting demonstration projects in specific communities.

“The key to Envision Utah’s success has been its ability to involve stakeholders throughout the process. This takes extensive time, research and patience. You must identify leaders representing a broad spectrum of interests, spend time raising their awareness of the issues, and facilitate a dialogue that promotes problem solving, rather than philosophizing.”

— Stephen Holbrook, former Executive Director of Envision Utah

Envision Utah provides a formal, ongoing organizational platform, directed by steering committee of top public leaders, corporate, and community leaders. With dedicated staff, it is able to provide direct and multi-faceted support to local public, private, and community leaders as they implement new “quality growth strategies,” as well as engage in broader communications and recognition (i.e., awards) efforts. Moreover, Envision Utah has been able to mobilize its multi-sector coalition to secure passage of state-level legislation as well as local and regional ballot initiatives. In short, this public-private partnership has become a new kind of collaborative governance mechanism, as a catalyst both for sound participatory process as well as specific multi-sector implementation actions.

### **CHICAGO:** Chicago Metropolis 2020

In 1996, The Commercial Club of Chicago - a membership organization of leading area business and civic leaders - undertook the Metropolis Project, an effort to ensure the preeminence of the Chicago Metropolitan Region in the 21st century. The premise of the Metropolis Project was that the issues facing the region are interdependent. There are numerous issues vital to our social and economic well-being, which must be addressed regionally. These issues relate to unlimited, low density sprawl; concentration of poor minorities; the spatial mismatch between jobs, affordable housing and transportation; and disparate degrees of access to quality education.

More than 200 members of The Commercial Club examined those issues in special committees organized around six areas: education, economic development, taxation, governance, transportation and land use and housing. The committees consulted with experts and met with regional community, civic and government representatives. The culmination of their two-year effort was a report which called for the creation of a new organization: Chicago Metropolis 2020. This new organization continues the process started by The Commercial Club and is implementing the ideas contained in the report:

- An Executive Council governs Chicago Metropolis 2020 and includes representatives from business, labor, civic, religious and governmental organizations. Half of the representatives on the Executive Council are members of The Commercial Club of Chicago.
- Chicago Metropolis 2020 also draws on several “Senior Executives,” senior members of the business, civic and educational communities who have agreed to volunteer a substantial portion of their time and energy in support of the regional agenda of Chicago Metropolis 2020.
- Chicago Metropolis 2020 has focused on creating collaborations with other organizations and is developing a new kind of “civic entrepreneurship” in the region. Among its achievements, Chicago Metropolis 2020’s approach has helped produce major increases in transportation funding for the region, a regional planning act coordinating land use and transportation efforts, and a regional multi-sector initiative on universal pre-school that received \$30 million for implementation.

Chicago Metropolis 2020 has multiple initiatives, but the following example illustrates the philosophy that community and business leaders are interconnected and interdependent. King Harris, a member of the Commercial Club, a Senior Executive at Metropolis 2020 and former President and CEO of the Pittway Corporation, quickly got interested in Employer Assisted Housing (EAH) programs after being presented the concept by Chicago’s Metropolitan Planning Council. Harris knew that Pittway’s System Sensor Division, a major manufacturer of commercial-grade smoke detectors, was having difficulty recruiting and keeping quality workers at its manufacturing plant located in Chicago’s western suburbs. He saw an EAH program as a way to improve worker retention by giving System Sensor employees the opportunity to live nearer their workplace, reduce their commuting times and related stress, and own their own homes.

Pittway ended up investing over \$200,000 in the program over a two-year period and helping 35 employees purchase their own homes. A follow up study by the Metropolitan Planning Council showed that Pittway got an excellent return on its investment via reduced turnover and recruiting costs. Eventually, Harris began to work with other business and not-for-profit institutional leaders on expanding EAH programs in the Metropolitan Chicago area.

Harris and his colleagues also developed a unique social and economic compact, the “Metropolis Principles,” which committed a supporter to carefully consider the availability of affordable housing, especially affordable housing near mass transit lines, when making decisions regarding facility construction or expansion. By August of 2001 more than 100 Chicago-area businesses — including Allstate Insurance, United Airlines, and, of course, Pittway — had signed onto the Metropolis Principles.

“One of the goals of Chicago Metropolis 2020 is to promote regional stewardship. The idea is that local leaders should make decisions that benefit the entire region and that we should work together to solve our regional challenges. Public officials at all levels of government need to know that the priorities of businesses are changing. The endorsers of the Metropolis Principles don’t dictate local actions, but they do send a message that location decisions must hinge on much more than tax breaks and highway exits. The quality of life is important, too.”

— George A. Ranney, Jr., President and CEO  
of Chicago Metropolis 2020

## **CALIFORNIA:** Collaborative Regional Initiatives

California’s Collaborative Regional Initiatives (CRIs) include business, government and civic leaders who choose to work together on common problems. Since the mid-1990s, twenty-one collaborative regional initiatives (CRIs) have emerged to address economic, social and environment issues in a more integrated fashion. A few examples include Joint Venture: Silicon Valley Network, Gateway Cities Partnership (Long Beach area), and San Diego Dialogue.

**Joint Venture: Silicon Valley Network:** The first CRI, Joint Venture helped encourage other regions in California and nationwide to create their own multi-sector organizations. For over a decade, Joint Venture has achieved a series of tangible results, working through multi-sector teams in areas ranging from regulatory streamlining, educational improvement, internet connectivity for schools (100% of the region’s K-12 schools), and an annual Index that measures progress towards a 2010 vision for the region (developed through a widely participatory process).

**San Diego Dialogue:** A group of civic leaders asked the University of California-San Diego to set up an independent organization to help put the facts on the table and bring citizens together using a structured dialogue process to identify areas of consensus. Citizen engagement lead to better understanding of common interest around core values which lead to the development of a new public agenda for discussing difficult issues. From this dialogue have come a number of specific breakthroughs including enhancements to border crossing infrastructure, educational reforms, and land use/transportation improvements.

**Gateway Cities Partnership:** In the southwest Los Angeles area, a regional group called the Gateway Cities Partnership has worked on several multi-sector initiatives, including an uncommon alliance with a local school district and the City of Paramount. In this example, the Partnership, composed of business and other regional leaders, was motivated by the fact that the future local workforce would fall well short of what the local economy needed, compromising the future of the region. Despite recent im-

provements—a revitalized commercial sector, growing employment base, new housing, and more attractive neighborhoods—the city realized that its population’s low educational attainment made long-term progress unlikely. The school district, faced with constrained funding and overwhelming challenges, had implemented recent improvements such as class size reduction, but welcomed a partnership and regional resources to help significantly raise educational attainment.

Among these parties, there was agreement that Paramount was destined to remain a low-income community without intervention of some kind. The parties then played complementary roles, assembled a collaborative plan, and are now driving implementation.

- The Partnership played the role of process facilitator, resource broker, and outcome documenter—helping provide a framework and pathway for a team of parents and educators to develop their own strategies for raising educational attainment.
- The Partnership staff worked with graduate interns from the University of Southern California to recruit community members into the process and facilitate and support their deliberations (including some in Spanish).
- The parents—predominantly poor, with limited education and English language skills—played a crucial role: identifying barriers to helping their children succeed and committing to greater involvement in their children’s education.
- With their knowledge of the system, educators identified ways to put into practice many of the ideas generated.

The results: over 500 participants contributed to a plan that established a vision for raising student achievement, five major areas of focus (motivation, communication, preparation, participation, and resources), and many specific actions for implementation. The Partnership continues to work with the team and outside resource partners and otherwise help drive follow-through in implementation.

“The primary focus was on improvement, not on blame. The participants were frank regarding their own shortcomings and were willing to accept that they have a major role to play in increasing educational attainment. . . . In the end, this strategy seeks to cause a cultural shift with regard to education in our community. It aspires to forge new partnerships among the city, neighborhood organizations, residents, businesses, the school district, and faith-based organizations to create a new sense of community pride and empowerment in education.”

— Richard Hollingsworth, Gateway Cities Partnership

## CREATING YOUR OWN ROADMAP FOR REGIONAL COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE

As a field, the practice of regional collaborative governance is running ahead of theory. There are many different frameworks and competing theories about the basis for collaborative governance. For example, the Collaborative Democracy Network has identified 50 different theory/frameworks underpinning collaborative planning and policy making.

Beyond the realm of theory, the practice of regional collaborative governance is moving forward with a wide variety of experiments underway. A growing number of experiments have tried to tackle problems that are broad in geographic scope (i.e., involving many jurisdictions), complex, and volatile. They have tried to involve multiple interests, sectors, and levels. Many have focused on the front-end of the process—most notably, agenda-setting—although some have tried to bring governance to areas such as policy choices and implementation that have been traditionally government functions.

This monograph has described what regional collaborative governance looks like and how it departs from traditional practice: how efforts such as Envision Utah, Chicago Metropolitan 2020, Oregon Solutions, St. Louis Metropolitan Forum, Birmingham Regional Growth Alliance, and the Capital Region's Regional Emergency Coordination Plan represent a break from traditional approaches to problem-solving in those regions.

Regional collaborative governance is difficult to define and even more difficult to implement. Practitioners are recognizing they have little choice but to embrace it, as the alternatives of top-down government, grassroots initiative, or issue-by-issue advocacy are not working. Some practitioners are experiencing initial success in their efforts, and serve as an example that regional collaborative governance, while difficult, is a viable option. Positive examples are beneficial. But, practical tools that help translate these successes into achievable steps are also needed.

The following roadmap for regional collaborative governance sets out a series of steps that any team of regional stewards can follow in their quest for a better approach to problem-solving. A Regional Collaborative Governance Practitioner's Guide is available from the Alliance for Regional Stewardship, providing detailed steps, advice and models used by regional stewards across the country.

## THE BIGGER PICTURE: Changing the Way America Solves Public Problems

As in the past, many of the ideas for the nation's next social contract may very well come from experimentation happening right now in communities and regions across America. As John Gardner observed: "Periodically, throughout our history, 'the folks out there,' out around America, far from power but close to the good American earth, have shown not only their creativity but their capacity to move the nation. This is such a time. The next America will be forged in America's communities. That's where the fabric of society is being rewoven." (Gardner "A New Spirit Stirring" Stanford Haas Center for Public Service, 2002). In this sense, collaborative governance is a practical process, led by regional stewards, to reinvent how our nation solves its problems, how it reweaves the fabric of American society region-by-region.

### REGIONAL COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE ROADMAP

#### I. RECRUITMENT

In starting a new exploration into the option of regional collaborative governance, it is critical first to recruit a core team:

*People*—the initial core team of regional stewards with both the attributes and willingness to champion an exploration process and potentially a new approach to regional problem-solving.

*Process*—the disciplined, time-limited process for recruiting and working with the core team to explore the possibility of regional collaborative governance as a viable option for regional problem-solving.

*Pursuit*—the pursuit of potential core team members, making "the ask" and gaining agreement to participate in the diagnostic process.

#### II. DIAGNOSIS

In diagnosing the need for regional collaborative governance, it is critical to understand:

*Scope*—the scope of the problem, including variables such as geographic reach, complexity, and volatility

*Setting*—the problem-solving environment, including important variables include multiple interests, sectors, and levels

*Stage*—the stage of problem-solving, including the level of readiness of potential governance partners, overall experience with regional collaboration, and current "starting point" for addressing the defined problem in a new way.

### III. DESIGN

In deciding what to do, it is critical to define:

*Results*—the specific measurable outcomes expected, depending on the scope, setting, and stage of regional problem-solving

*Roles*—the specific roles “governance partners” will play, depending on their unique set of capabilities to achieve the desired regional results

*Relationships*—the specific connections among partners, depending on the level of interdependence required to achieve the desired regional results.

### IV. ACTION

In driving the implementation process, it is critical to consider:

*Agreements*—specific actions that can be taken, often focused projects or initiatives, or mobilizations such as campaigns, and specific multi-party arrangements that establish specific commitments or guidelines for policy and action by governance partners, such as compacts.

*Accountability*—specific and ongoing commitments to hold governance partners (and the entire governance coalition) accountable for results, both follow-through on agreements and overall impact on regional economic, social, and environmental progress.

*Architecture*—an organizational “platform” or “web” that provides the capacity to support, expand, and renew fledgling governance efforts, such as multi-party forums or networks.

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**The Alliance for Regional Stewardship (ARS)** is a national nonprofit that works to help America's regions effectively pursue economic, social, and environmental prosperity. ARS helps leaders in the civic, business, government, nonprofit, and foundation sectors cross organizational lines to work together across geographic and political boundaries.

ARS was founded in May 2000 as a national network of leaders from metropolitan areas around the country. Elected officials, regional business leaders, and nonprofit organizations with regional missions realized they needed a place to learn about best practices and lessons learned from other parts of the country. ARS has attracted leaders from over 150 metropolitan and rural regions, both in the United States and around the world.

ARS has a number of ongoing programs and activities, including:

- John W. Gardner Academies
- National Forums on Regional Stewardship
- Regional Stewardship Awards
- Monograph Series
- Regional Stewardship Visitors Program
- RegionLink.org

For more information on the Alliance for Regional Stewardship, please visit our website at [www.regionalstewardship.org](http://www.regionalstewardship.org)



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