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PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

URBAN/SUBURBAN... WHAT ABOUT EXURBAN PLANNING?

INSIDE

- 2 ETHICAL BLIND SPOTS
- 5 KEEPING OUT OF TROUBLE
- 26 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FRIDAY
- 27 TRANSPORTATION LANDSCAPE



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features



6 COEXISTING AT THE EDGES, MEET THE NEW EXURBAN

How sustainability can thrive in the zone between urban and rural.

Randall Reid, Gainesville, Florida, and Evangeline Linkous, Tampa, Florida



10 CAPTIVES OF CITY HALL

How managers in the Netherlands navigate between administrative and political realities.

Erik-Jan Van Dorp, Utrecht, Netherlands



14 LEVERAGING FEDERAL RESOURCES

Techniques to help fund economic development growth.

Lindsay Lucas, Washington, D.C.



18 HIGHWAY CONUNDRUM

How four Texas communities found a noise-abatement solution for a federal roadway.

Kristin Dispenza, Detroit, Michigan



22

A Path Forward on Policing Effectively

departments

2 Ethics Matter!

Ethical Blind Spots

5 On Point

What Really Helps Keep You Out of Trouble with Elected Officials?

22 Commentary

A Path Forward on Policing Effectively

26 Management Minute

- Community Engagement Friday
- The Uncertain Transportation Landscape
- Workplace Wellness Works

31 Professional Services Directory

icma.org/pm

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The old cliché “what you don’t know won’t hurt you” is contradicted on a daily basis in life, including in local government, and it is particularly erroneous when it comes to ethics.

In the book *Blind Spots*, authors Max Bazerman and Ann Tenbrunsel make a convincing case based on their behavioral research on how both individuals and organizations suffer ethical lapses. This can be due to their inability to recognize when they are dealing with an ethical question or to fully comprehend the ramifications of the ethical decisions they are making.

Here are points the authors deduce from their research with individuals:

- There is a frequent struggle in each of us between what we “want” to do versus what we “should” do. We are often biased toward what we want to do.
- We often don’t reflect carefully enough on our choices, which often leads to overlooking the ethical challenges that are often part of these decisions.
- It is easy for us to underestimate how much we can “fool ourselves” through rationalization.
- Individuals generally overestimate the degree to which they are ethical: We often fail to appreciate that “good people” can make “bad ethical choices.”

Their observations about organizations include:

- Informal values (and accepted behavior) can overwhelm stated values and formal ethics programs.
- Lacking a leader who consistently models ethical decision making, an or-

ganization is not likely to be consistently ethical.

- Unethical conduct needs to be labeled and confronted consistently.
- Organizational success with ethical conduct will be determined by what kind of conduct or behavior is or is not supported and rewarded.
- Time pressure and a short “horizon” into the future will increase the odds of unethical conduct.
- Members of an organization will be tempted to engage in unethical behavior to fulfill obligations to authority.

Acknowledge Susceptibility

Overconfidence and complacency, both personal and organizational, are among our greatest challenges to conducting ourselves in an ethical manner. The struggle between what we would like to do in a particular circumstance—because it is easier, safer, or more likely to achieve a desired outcome—versus what we are ethically obligated to do, also can put us at risk of not fully identifying our blind spots regarding a particular issue or decision.

Bazerman and Tenbrunsel believe that the first step toward personal and organizational success with ethical conduct is convincing yourself that you and your organization are susceptible to ethical blind spots.

In local government, we are just as susceptible to ethical blind spots as any other institution. Sometimes organizational blind spots are the result

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of structural or cultural issues within an organization. Problems can result from a lack of sufficient checks and balances and other organizational oversight.

At other times, an organizational culture can develop over time that ignores, or even encourages, cutting corners and ignoring ethical misconduct.

Are you certain that your staff could not be swayed into making bad choices because of:

- A failure to identify and understand the ethical consequences of their decisions and actions?
- A desire to accomplish an organizational goal or achieve a certain outcome?
- A desire to avoid conflict with a fellow employee, supervisor, elected official, or member of the public?
- A desire to avoid admitting that a mistake or poor decision has been made?
- The appeal of being perceived favorably by management and coworkers?
- A belief that their position of authority in the organization gives them a certain leeway to behave in a way that would not otherwise be viewed as acceptable?

Can you be assured that you and your staff can't be fooled into such bad choices as:

- Using a government credit card for a purchase that an objective party would reasonably conclude was primarily for personal benefit?
- Failing to completely disclose all the downsides of a staff recommendation in order to help achieve what you or your staff view as a needed outcome?
- Avoiding full, clear, and timely disclosure of an organizational misstep for fear of public embarrassment or other consequences?
- Convincing oneself that risking the loss of a job, organizational standing, or friendships outweighs the obligation to report ethical misconduct?
- Believing that you don't need to take action by convincing yourself that it

is "someone else's job" to deal with the issue?

Positive Strategies

Unfortunately, there are no strategies for dealing with personal or organizational blind spots that are guaranteed to be successful. Here are some suggestions to help increase the odds of success:

- Recognize that you and your organization most likely have an overly optimistic view of ethical health.
- Avoid complacency and recognize that a lack of a recent ethical failure is not a guarantee for the future.
- Take preventative actions including training and the use of case studies to increase awareness of the potential ethical implications of decisions and actions.
- Work to counter your ethical blind spots by seriously reflecting on decisions you are making and by thoughtfully considering what ethical choices may be at play.
- Seek the opinion of others whose judgment you respect (and who have nothing to lose or gain from a decision) regarding possible courses of action. Encourage your employees to do the same.
- Recognize when you might be doing the wrong thing to accomplish an otherwise admirable goal.

The more you and your organization recognize the susceptibility we all have to ethical blind spots, the more likely you can minimize their impact and the likelihood of an ethical crisis.

While it may be impossible to completely negate the effect of ethical blind spots, the best way to begin to minimize their impact is to recognize that we do, indeed, have them. **PM**



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WHAT REALLY HELPS KEEP YOU OUT OF TROUBLE WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS?



LAWRENCE WERNER

County Manager
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During my 40+ years as a local government manager, what I have found most successful in staying on the good side of elected officials is maintaining open communications, being totally truthful no matter what the situation, and not placing officials in embarrassing situations.

It is essential to keep officials informed on a timely basis, sharing as much information as reasonably possible.

While there may be moments of intense discussion, I have found it best to not give the sense of arguing when in public. At times, this becomes fairly dicey, particularly in a public setting where it needs to be made clear that an elected official's position on a topic under discussion is not based on correct information.



LORIE TINFOW

City Manager
Benicia, California
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In my experience, the most important thing is regularly scheduled, two-way, face-to-face conversations.

I meet with the mayor every week and with each councilmember at least every other week. We go over what's coming up on council meeting agendas as well as status updates on projects and programs. I use e-mail and telephone calls too, but there is no substitute for talking face-to-face.

In addition, it's easy to focus on telling councilmembers what I think they need to know, but it's at least as important to be a good, empathetic listener. Demonstrating that I understand their point of view helps build the kind of strong relationships that can weather challenges, misunderstandings, and delivering difficult news.



JEFF MOLINARI

City Manager
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The key is to develop trust with each member of the council, and it all starts with communication.

Whenever any councilmember asks me for information, asks me to look into a matter, or asks me to take care of a specific matter, I make sure that I complete the request and follow-up with that person in a timely manner. All requests are treated equally so as not to give the perception of playing favorites.

One of the challenges of managing a smaller city is that word travels fast, especially in the age of social media. I never want a member of the council to be surprised or blindsided by something they have heard or read.

Technology has been a great asset in this regard. I can send a text message to each councilmember at any time and provide information anytime something happens in the city that councilmembers need to know about. **PM**



COEXISTING AT THE EDGES, MEET THE **NEW EXURBAN**

By Randall Reid and Evangeline Linkous

How politics, economics, and land use are changing at the urban/rural interface

Driving today from San Francisco to Sacramento, California, or from Washington, D.C., to Charlottesville, Virginia, motorists can observe urban sprawl drastically altering the expanding edges of our urban metropolitan areas where cities and counties interface.

Although subdivisions and other suburban big-box commercial developments

are widespread, the landscapes at the farthest fringes of metropolitan regions are home to equestrian centers, vineyards, and family-friendly agritourism attractions like corn mazes and pony rides.

Just as coffee shops and micro-breweries are the telltale signs of downtown renewal, these consumer-oriented rural amenities are indicators of economic, land use, and sociodemo-

graphic change in areas once dominated by farms and forests.

Local governments, particularly county governments, have long faced challenges related to managing or exercising sustainable stewardship over the urban and rural fringe. These regional challenges include curbing sprawl, protecting open space and farmland, and finding common ground between political interests in a city and its hinterlands.

While these issues remain critical, emerging research points to new land use dynamics and development pat-

terns at the far reaches of metropolitan areas, which will further drive growth into distant suburbs and beyond into “exurbia”—the nearly rural areas at the far edge of cities.

According to the Brookings Institution, “exurban” areas are growing at twice the rate of metropolitan areas overall (<https://www.brookings.edu/research/finding-exurbia-americas-fast-growing-communities-at-the-metropolitan-fringe>). This article explores the trends driving change at the fringe and reviews the strategies that can enhance and preserve the community values and human and natural ecosystems in these unique edge areas.

Seeking the Good Life: Urbanization and “Agrihoods”

A confluence of trends points to new roles for the metropolitan fringe. These changes are one manifestation of global economic restructuring, as developed nations shift from an industrial manufacturing-based economy to a service-based economy.

Globalization is also prompting major shifts in the ways industries are organized—economically and spatially—as firms locate different job functions in different locations depending on worker skills and wages. These global shifts lead to localized impacts, many of which play out in the exurbs and rural areas, which were traditionally home to production economies such as forestry, mining, and agriculture.

In many places, these production economy employers are downsizing or shuttering, as land prices rise due to urban sprawl, jobs are relocated internationally, or technology transforms agricultural and business practices. Over the past several decades, for example, food production has largely shifted from small and midsize family farms to large acreage agribusiness, with dramatic resultant changes in the rural landscape.

Similarly, vertical integration and corporate consolidation in the forestry and mining sectors mean a decline in small-scale rural landholdings in favor

of ownership by real estate investment trusts and corporate management organizations (<https://www.fs.fed.us/open-space/fote/index.html>). Under pressure to deliver returns to shareholders and improve corporate fiscal performance, forestry and mining operations are increasingly turning to development.

Although traditional industries are divesting from exurbia, affluent homebuyers are flocking to it in search of rural amenities—forging a shift in exurbia from a landscape of production to a landscape of consumption. These “amenity migrants” are the mobile elite of the service economy, some of whom are electing to locate in culturally rich downtowns, while others choose to live in exurbia, close to nature (<https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=93709452>).

Developers are targeting these amenity buyers with new forms of subdivisions featuring recreational trails, natural areas, and other opportunities to enjoy aspects of a rural lifestyle. These “rural by design” prototype communities—to invoke landscape planner and author Randall Arendt—promote healthy lifestyles, environmental conservation, and a connection to agriculture and community-oriented values—together with smart technology and urban design.

Legacy Ranch in Lubbock, Texas, for example, is a horse-friendly community offering one- to five-acre tracts where large animals are permitted (<http://www.legacyranchliving.com/index.html>).

“Agrihoods” are now attracting young professionals, young families, and active retirees. These developments are built around a community-based farm and often offer food- and wellness-based events.

In Palm Springs, California, developers are converting an abandoned golf course into a master-planned community built around an olive tree grove with interspersed hiking trails and community gardens (<http://www.businessinsider.com/agrihoods-golf-communities-millennial-homebuyers-2017-10>).

The decision to live in exurbia may

not always reflect preference. In many areas, homebuyers are “driving till they qualify” for affordable housing at the fringe. Increasingly, commuting times are characterized by race and income disparities.

Although cities have worked to make their urban cores attractive to young adults, new evidence indicates that this demographic is settling in the perimeter of sprawling metropolitan areas. Whether this means they are priced out of urban housing markets or simply want the same natural and recreational amenities attracting homebuyers in general is an open question (<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/15/sunday-review/future-suburb-millennials.html?mcubz=1&r=0>; <https://www.forbes.com/sites/joelkotkin/2014/08/04/millennial-boomtowns-where-the-generation-is-clustering-its-not-downtown/#5f61d76258f1>).

The exurbs are attracting more than just new residents. New business technologies and opportunities make them an attractive location for emerging business models.

Business trend analysts indicate that new technologies in driverless cars, 3-D printing, robotics, and logistics are creating a declining cost of distance, freeing individuals from the need to live and work near cities and enabling greater availability of goods and services in the exurbs (<http://www.bain.com/publications/articles/spatial-economics->



the-declining-cost-of-distance.aspx).

The job opportunities fostered by distribution centers and the like are changing the ways communities pursue economic development. Even traditional rural businesses are changing.

Although farms aimed at wholesale markets are on the decline in many areas, small farms with such local and value-added offerings as community-supported agriculture or agritourism are on the rise and thriving. These farms are likely to locate at the fringe, where they can be close to the urban households, farmers markets, and restaurants that represent their customer base.

The shifting economy in rural exurbia can create challenging cultural dynamics. The decline of the traditional rural sector and its impacts on the white working class are reflected in *Hillbilly Elegy*, *The New York Times* best-seller described as one of six books to understand President Trump's election (<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/10/books/6-books-to-help-understand-trumps-win.html>).

Although the old and new economy may be in conflict in exurbia, there may also be powerful new political alliances. Rural amenity migrants may join with forestry operations or farmers to conserve rural landscapes; urban chefs and farmers markets reach out to rural garden farms for fresh produce enhancing local economies.

Strategies for Urban/Rural Coexistence

County or regional officials have a suite of policy prescriptions to grapple with the processes of change at the metropolitan fringe. One planning solution is to draw a hard line between urban and rural uses; for example, with an urban growth boundary, urban service area provisions, or a greenbelt.

Portland, Oregon, is the poster child for this approach. As mandated under Oregon state law, Portland established a boundary beyond which urban growth may not occur, to protect the area's valued farm and forest lands from sprawl. Every six years, it reviews growth projec-

tions and future land use designations to ensure an appropriate land supply.

Proponents say this approach directs growth to localities, which can yield enhanced urban amenities and efficient

use of public facilities and services. At the same time, the growth boundary can support a stable farm economy and protected open space in rural areas, especially when complemented by other rural planning provisions such as large-acreage agricultural zoning.

Portland residents and visitors have access to an abundance of fresh, local foods and can travel from the thriving urban core to pastoral farm country or natural recreational areas with relative ease. Some argue, however, that the growth boundary increases housing prices, pushes sprawl into neighboring communities, fails to provide effective planning solutions for small towns and rural communities, and is too restrictive for agricultural landowners.

A more flexible option is the managed-growth strategy, which supports a mix of land conservation and smart development in fringe areas. In this approach, relatively dense development is often located adjacent to protected natural areas or farmland.

Managed growth supports consumer demand for rural amenities, maximizes the economic potential of land adjacent to open space, and allows for innovative new forms of development. Managed-growth tools include clustering, zoning for agricultural preserves, transferring development rights, supporting transit-oriented development nodes, and providing financial incentives to support or protect farm operations.

Compared to a strict urban-rural divide, managed-growth solutions can more readily accommodate environmental amenity subdivisions and small farms that directly serve urban consumers.

It will not be planning tools alone but a culture that values the transitional fringe that will create more sustainable development patterns worldwide.

Managed-growth plans, however, can also generate land use conflicts, inefficient infrastructure investments, and fragmented open space that is vulnerable to development pressure.

Communities crafting managed-growth solutions might borrow from two landmark metro area plans that foster a degree of permeability between urban development and open space at the fringe. Copenhagen, Denmark's "Finger Plan" dates to 1947 and allows for urban "fingers" of transit-served development interspersed with rural uses and ecological services.

Montgomery County, Maryland's "Wedges and Corridors" plan has stood the test of time. Continuously updated since its 1964 adoption, the plan accommodates protected farmland alongside urban development directed to transportation corridors (<http://journals.sagepub.com.ezproxy.lib.usf.edu/doi/full/10.1177/0885412217726772>).

Perhaps one of the most important things local governments can do to foster a sustainable and thriving urban-rural fringe is to proactively plan for social and economic strength of communities and businesses outside of the urban core.

Although smart-growth policies offer an array of strategies for urban areas, the prescriptions for rural and exurban areas have been limited, for the most part, to land preservation and protection of the natural environment. While these are important, these policies also impose

regulations, property rights restrictions, and other burdens on rural landowners and businesses.

Often, too little attention is paid to such issues related to the community as education, health, and social services or to the economic base, including broadband, workforce development, and appropriate land use regulations that preserve rural integrity.

Would local farmers, for example, benefit from policies that encourage on-site sales? Would improved transit in rural areas support the health and safety of farmworkers while serving the workforce needs of area farms?

Collaborative planning between cities and counties is essential to address the ways rural areas shoulder the burden of providing rural amenities and new housing for the region without reciprocal interest in the challenges these areas face.

Fringe Politics and Urban Perceptions

Strengthening the communities on the exurban fringe cannot be done without consideration of local politics, which are often fueled by the economic development pressures that accompany and influence exurban land use decisions.

These pressures increase in areas, hungry for economic stimulus, that did not benefit from the recent economic recovery. Public administrators with oversight of exurban areas who enforce restrictive land use regulations that disrupt market forces or advocate increased resident engagement related to land use decisions can produce resistance from the vested economic interests seeking to develop exurban lands.

State legislators have also preempted local zoning restrictions with Right-to-Farm legislation in all 50 states to ensure rural residents have protection from nuisance lawsuits and a voice in urban land use impacts on traditional livelihoods (<http://www.wsh-law.com/files/pdf/florida-right-to-farm-act-pp.pdf>).

There is often a subtle or implicit bias that exists among managers and elected officials who perceive exurban

development within their region only through the lens of their own municipal jurisdictional perspectives that are driven by tax-based enhancement.

City managers can mistakenly view adjacent farmland as vacant land that has little value. County administrators may have a broader perspective on exurban issues because they politically represent areas where families have long-standing connections to land or where agriculture and other natural industries are an important part of the economic base.

This dichotomy of perspectives within our own profession leads to city and county conflicts over infrastructure, annexation, and development approvals.

Recognizing the Intrinsic Value of Exurbia

As former local government and county extension officials, we wish to foster awareness of the inherent value of the fringe. Just as estuaries are a critical environmental transition zone, exurbia is often home to fragile natural systems, unique cultural resources, and critical economic systems that are key to preserving the local heritage and authenticity of flourishing metropolitan area. What would Lexington, Kentucky, be without horse farms or Fredericksburg, Texas, without the Hill Country landscape?

There is a rich variety to the resource base that may be present in exurbia. Around the world and in the United States, UNESCO World Heritage sites and the sacred lands of indigenous people are under threat from development (<http://sacredland.org/mississippi-mounds-united-states>).

According to the NatureServe database, of the more than 4,000 imperiled biological species in the continental U.S., 60 percent live within metropolitan areas and half of those in the 35 fastest growing metropolitan areas with more than one million people (http://www.nbcnews.com/id/6814251/ns/us_news-environment/t/groups-urban-sprawl-threatens-species/#.WkuhITdG2M8).

The Civil War Trust lists 25 battlefields that are threatened in the U.S., including

hallowed grounds in such exurban places as Gettysburg in Pennsylvania, Chancellorsville in Virginia, and Spring Hill in Tennessee (<http://shfwire.com/civil-war-battlefields-threatened-sprawl>).

Public administrators would do well to ensure that there is an inventory of assets in rural fringe areas that may be threatened and should be preserved or enhanced. A critical next step is to understand the changing dynamics in rural and exurban areas.

What types of businesses are growing or declining? Where is land being potentially subdivided or sold and can conservation or scenic easements forestall sprawl? Does a managed-growth solution make sense, or are there places where a hard line preventing growth in rural areas must be implemented?

Nilofer Merchant once wrote in *Harvard Business Review*, “Culture trumps strategy every time.” We believe this is true as well for the management of exurban spaces.

It will not be planning tools alone but a culture that values the transitional fringe that will create more sustainable development patterns worldwide. Increased interest in transformative movements like local foods hold promise for a more thoughtful relationship to the unique landscape at the metropolitan edge.

The “city limits” are a political boundary and increasingly less a cultural demarcation. The fringe can be seen not as a dividing line but a key transitional zone to integrate the region—building linkages between the people, businesses, and places that collectively create vital, diverse, and sustainable metro areas. **PM**



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CAPTIVES OF CITY HALL

Reflections on the
craft of Dutch city
managers

By Erik-Jan van Dorp

In the Netherlands, city managers (CMs) are the pivots connecting a city's executive politicians and its public services. As public sector chief executive officers, they navigate between political and administrative realities, serving and leading, advising and deciding, and managing boundary-spanning activities.

How do they operate in a role for which no script exists, in a strategic environment that is unfailingly political, ambiguous, and fluid?

Public management and leadership scholars often distinguish between

three directions of management: up, down, and out (see Figure 1). When CMs manage “up,” they interact with politicians and other democratically elected office holders.

When managing “down,” they interact with coworkers in the community’s administration. Finally, when managing “out,” they interact with such partners outside the city’s administration as community leaders, business owners, and state or federal government.

Canadian academic and author Henry Mintzberg once asked: What do managers do?¹ Inspired by Mintzberg, I have studied three managers of middle-sized cities (up to 180,000 residents) in depth. They are the CEOs of municipal organizations ranging from 700 to 1,700 staff members.

Based on an analysis of their electronic Outlook agendas during 2015 and 2016, fly-on-the-wall observations (182 hours of them), and 33 interviews, in this article I present an analysis of the manager’s craft and suggest questions for reflection.

Setting the Scene

In Dutch government, the city manager is a nonpartisan civil servant. A crown-appointed mayor presides over the executive board, which is accountable to a directly elected city council.

The CM is appointed and fired by the board, attends the board’s weekly meetings, and, along with the mayor, signs the decision papers of the board. Unlike the other board members, the CM does not have voting powers. The position traditionally also represents the civil servant-in-chief and chief executive officer of the municipal organization.

The aggregate agendas of three managers—listed in this article as CM1, CM2, and CM3—show practices that establish a weekly rhythm.² CMs generally arrived in the office at 8:45 a.m. and remained until 6 p.m. Mondays were dominated by bilateral meetings, beginning with the mayor and direct reports.

The weekly meeting of the board of mayor and aldermen and possible

follow-ups or joint site visits are regular fixtures on Tuesdays. This board meeting sets the pace of the municipal organization. It was perceived by civil servants as the pivotal locus of political decision making affecting the organization. This is where policy proposals submitted by the administration survive or get killed.

Wednesdays began with the city’s management team meeting of all top public servants, another key reference point in the week. The remainder of Wednesday is often spent on visits to city agencies or in regional networks.

Thursdays are mostly devoted to

FIGURE 1. Managing Up, Down, and Out.

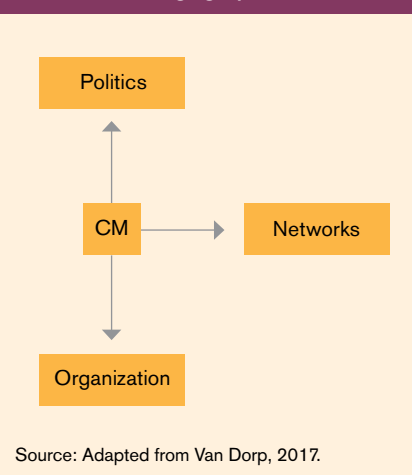
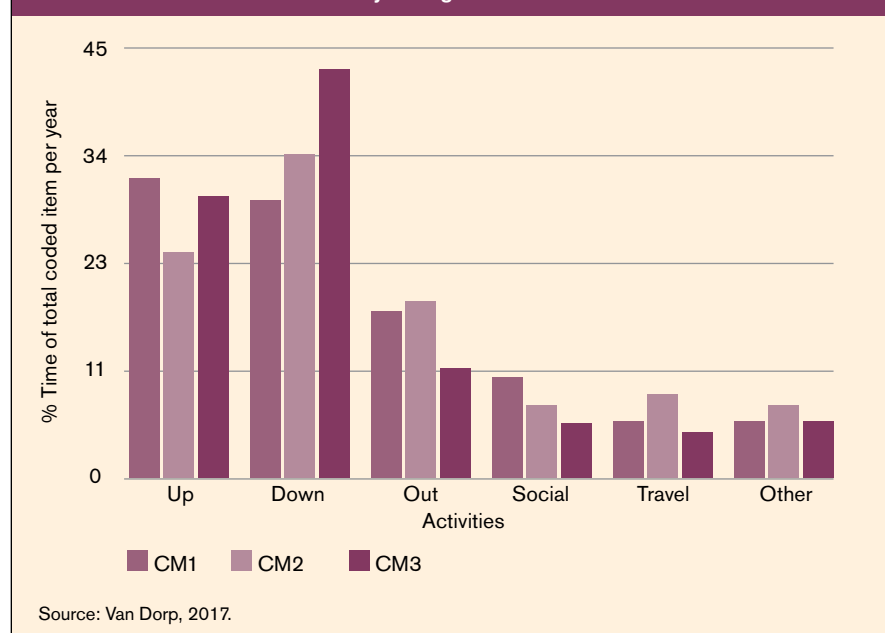


FIGURE 2. Allocation of Time in City Managers’ Diaries.



managerial work inside the organization, often with time reserved for the works council, bilateral meetings with staff and internal socials, often followed by a meeting of the city council or a council committee.

Fridays are for contemplation and various activities. They are often cut short until no later than 2:30 p.m., after which the weekend comes with ample readings that feed into yet another week.

Managing Up: Adviser-in-Chief

As Figure 2 suggests, three managers

prioritized their role as adviser-in-chief by their attendance in settings with political office holders (POHs). The majority of this time was passed in collective settings, with multiple POHs present, including the weekly executive board meeting.

These hours were largely represented by meetings that take a long time—the executive board meetings and the city council meetings. The remainder of the week was spent apart from POHs.

The CM is adviser-in-chief to the mayor and aldermen. This position, however, is not a given and must be

FIGURE 3. Craft of Dutch City Managers.

DIRECTIONS	CORE OF CRAFT	INFLUENCES	ALLIES	COMPETENCES
Up	• Adviser-in-chief	• Experience • Standing	• Executive board advisers	• Political antennae • Political astuteness • Empathy
Down	• Organizational stewardship	• Position	• Directors • Entourage	• Analytical skills • Public performance • Discipline
Out	• Boundary spanning	• Membership • Social capital	• Colleague city managers	• Diplomacy • Orchestration

Source: Van Dorp, 2017.

earned. One mayor observed: “It is not the case that when a city manager gives her opinion, all board members will take a bow. It is a position that needs to be earned and to some extent, needs to be fought for.”

CMs need to acquire standing among POHs to fulfill this role, in a setting also populated by political advisers who compete for their position.

Managing Down: Organizational Stewardship

Figure 2 shows that the observed CMs spent most time on the management of their organizations. The majority of this time was spent attending to direct reports, other managers, and staff.

All CMs spent the most time with direct reports, reflected in less time spent with other people in the organization. The absence of desk work in a diary is confirmed by the observations. It has little place in the diary or in everyday life. Two CMs did not even have a desk.

CMs actively reform their organizations. They do not intend to leave the organization as they found it. All three CMs were involved in some form of a program aiming to improve the organization and reshape its behavior.

It is part of their job perception to monitor and steward the organization’s current performance, as well as (re) imagine its future in light of evolving public and political demands that in-

clude financial, technological, and other contextual changes. This reflects an attitude of stewardship vis-à-vis POHs. One CM says, “I think it is very important that there is the will to do better in the organization.”

The most important lever to create organizational capacity for CMs is the board of directors, which is the management team of the city administration. CM2 spoke for all three when she observed that, “The quality of the organization starts with the quality of the board of directors.” CMs were keen on having the right people as part of this

CITY MANAGERS ACTIVELY REFORM THEIR ORGANIZATIONS. THEY DO NOT INTEND TO LEAVE THE ORGANIZATION AS THEY FOUND IT.

board. One of them let go of two directors and hired a new director in her first month in office.

The management team monitors the state of the organization based on a dashboard of parameters. “Hard” parameters include absenteeism; annual employees’ appreciation survey; exhaustion of budgets; external hiring; and full-time employee formation. “Soft” indicators are gossip and hearsay on how

well pivotal actors or units perform.

This information reaches the CM through informal conversations with civil servants, POHs, and members of the CM’s entourage. When certain units underperform may declare them top priority and place them under her or his direct supervision.

Managing Out: Boundary Spanning

“Out”—activities in networks—tended to come third in the attention hierarchy. CM1 and CM2 spent 17.3 percent and 18.6 percent of their time, respectively, in networking activities.

CM1 divided her time across local, regional, and national networks, while CM2 focused on regional and national networks. CM3 spent little time on external management (11.5 percent). Networking activities were less prominent in her diary and fairly isolated rather than habitual.

CMs connect and lobby with colleagues in neighboring cities and governance levels in regional cooperation. None of them work in splendid isolation—beautifully expressed by the prominence of the meeting table in their offices. They are, of course, by and large preoccupied with the POH–organization nexus. Given their pivotal position in

the organization and role as secretary of the board of mayor and aldermen, this is hardly surprising. Still, boundary spanning in networks is part of their craft.

All CMs agree that collaborative governance is important, but the demands of managing up and down can and often do take over. The rules of the game in government seem to favor internal over external activities.

CM1 started her position by actively

investing in regional involvement but paused some of these efforts when her vertical managerial tasks seemed more pressing. CM3 also started in her current position and prioritized vertical managerial work over horizontal networking activities.

In contrast, CM2, who had been in office since 2004, made ample time for regional and national networks. This may hint at a lifetime cyclical effect, suggesting that upon taking office, CMs first attend to internal matters and try to get their organizations in shape before they get involved in external networks.

Capturing the Craft

Ultimately, the Figure 3 typology is not about a set of tasks, roles, and competencies. The point is that CMs deploy a repertoire of skills, tricks of the trade, and rules of thumb. Mastering the craft means that CMs exercise judgment in applying the right mix of skills and interpretations at a given moment in a local context.

My fieldwork, however, suggests that the central tension that Dutch CMs experience in doing so is between a “greedy” vertical axis of managing up and down and a strategically important, but always somewhat less pressing, horizontal axis of managing out.

The analysis suggests that the craft of Dutch CMs consists of three core aspects: being adviser-in-chief, managing organizational stewardship, and managing boundary spanning. There are tensions between these aspects that managers need to balance to execute their role effectively.

The findings show that these Dutch CMs consistently allocate most of their time to management of their organizations (down) and advising political office holders (up). Taking part in networks (out) is believed to be important, but the diary analysis shows that less time is spent on networking activities than is spent on the former levers.

The bulk of their work takes place within the hierarchy. I do not argue that networking does not happen but rather that the observed CMs them-

selves engaged much less in boundary-spanning work than would be expected in a 21st century networked society.

To date, their craft continues to be mainly organized along the vertical up-down axis, emphasizing traditional elements of the bureaucracy.

Call for Reflection

City managers will need to reflect on their roles and the context in which they work. Those who end up as captives of city hall are not an exception. This raises the question of who gives strategic direction to networks and collaborative governance—if not the CEO of the municipal organization?

CMs in effect were largely missing-in-action when it came to managing out. They realized its strategic importance and paid lip service to it, but in their day-to-day routines they are largely trapped in the demands of the hierarchy.

I end this article with three questions for public managers to ask themselves:

- How do you allocate your attention and physical attendance? Are you in control of your agenda?
- How can city managers foster personal resilience to face tensions in government that is complex, ambiguous, fluid, and greedy? How do you cope with pressing demands?
- How are you visible and relevant in your organization, without risking being invisible and irrelevant to network partners and residents in your community? **PM**

ENDNOTES AND REFERENCES

- 1 Mintzberg, H. (1973). *The Nature of Managerial Work*. Harper & Row Publishers: New York.
- 2 See Van Dorp, G.H. (2017). “Trapped in The Hierarchy: The Craft of Dutch City Managers.” *Public Management Review*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2017.1383783> for the full paper, including methods and results.



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Cultivating
support for
economic
development
projects

By Lindsay Lucas

LEVERAGING FEDERAL RESOURCES

According to ICMA's 2014 *Economic Development Survey of Local Government*,¹ more than two-thirds of local governments in the United States have the primary responsibility for economic development. In 2018, I suspect this amount has not changed.

While such other groups as chambers of commerce, regional organizations, citizen advisory boards, and public/private consortia support economic development and contribute to development strategies, it is often a local government that has the primary

responsibility of implementation.

According to the ICMA survey, nearly 90 percent of a community's local economic development activities were funded by local revenues and the local government's general fund. With many federal agencies offering programs to

support economic growth, it is a little surprising that less than one in three responding communities reported federal aid as a primary source of funding.

With local governments playing a crucial role in economic development, it is important for local government managers to understand how to leverage various programs and where to find federal financial and technical assistance.

Recognizing this need, ICMA joined a consortium with New York University's Wagner Graduate School of Public Policy (wagner.nyu.edu) and Jobs for the Future (www.jff.org) to work with the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA; www.eda.gov).

The consortium supported EDA's economic development integration function, which provides insight and guidance on ways to align and integrate federal economic development programs and criteria.

With each new administration and budget cycles, communities have learned that they cannot solely depend on one federal agency to meet all the financial and technical assistance needed for development.

It doesn't help that priorities are continually shifting and impacting funding allocations to federal agencies. This, however, shouldn't discourage local governments from seeking federal support; it just requires practitioners to reach out to a variety of agencies and to leverage resources from multiple sources.

ICMA has learned from past experiences working with numerous federal agencies, including EDA, and supporting communities with their implementation of regional economic development plans. This article examines key traits of successfully implemented projects that have leveraged funding and resources from multiple federal agencies to meet local priorities.

Where Are Your Resources?

One of the most important aspects and at times the most undervalued, when looking at leveraging federal resources for economic development projects, is

the role stakeholder groups with a vested interest can play in garnering financial support from federal agencies.

While stakeholders can have a key role in establishing relationships with agencies and helping with the implementation of projects, it is not always easy getting them to the table. It is important that managers reach out to partner organizations to better understand regional opportunities and challenges. This also helps clarify overlapping and competing priorities among stakeholders and identify opportunities to build new or strengthen existing regional partnerships.

Convening a diverse group of stakeholders ensures that the development of a comprehensive regional strategy is reflective of the needs of the region.

When multiple stakeholders are brought to the table to discuss their needs and goals, whether they are businesses, nonprofits, schools, or community groups, managers will be able to fully understand and assess a region's existing capacity before applying for federal funds.

A local college or business, for example, could already have an existing relationship with a federal agency and could be the conduit needed to receive funding. Working with anchor institutions also may help alleviate some of the burden on local governments with implementing projects and meeting the reporting requirements.

Some grants even require the inclusion of colleges or other anchor institutions, and with an established relationship with these institutions, the lift to apply for grants is not so heavy.

One of the best ways to make sure the appropriate stakeholders are included—and no one is accidentally omitted—is by conducting a needs assessment to better understand the mission and goals of community institutions. Through this assessment, you can gain a better understanding of the limitations, the strengths, and the relationships the industries have that can be leveraged.

The difficult part of such an effort is in the nuances: identifying the right partners, succeeding in engaging them

and keeping them engaged, coalescing partners around agreed-upon community goals, getting their commitment to a plan of action, and assessing and tweaking the plan if necessary.

While working with stakeholders is extremely beneficial, managers also need to make sure they are not overextending or underusing any one group. More stakeholders will request a seat at the table and provide feedback when monthly meetings are held and a two-way communication stream is established.

Navigating Obstacles

When integrating multiple federal funding streams to support a single economic development strategy, conflicts can arise in regard to the reporting and monitoring requirements that each award requires.

Each agency has its own set of monitoring and reporting requirements that are usually laid out in the contract. Perhaps not all agencies' requirements will be aligned with each other, causing the awards recipients to submit several different reports on a monthly or quarterly basis.

A way to navigate this potential challenge is to identify the various requirements during the planning process and discuss a plan with the agencies. Local governments will be able to report the information agencies need without submitting different forms to each one. Most agencies have partnered on other projects and if asked, can provide an easy solution to this predicament.

It is important that the capacities and priorities of partner organizations are clearly articulated during the planning process. Smaller community-based organizations and small businesses do not have the time nor the financial or human resources necessary to both implement programing and tackle administrative tasks.

One way to avoid this conflict is by making sure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities for implementing the project. Issues are bound to occur, as Murphy's law states, so it is better to be prepared.

Hold weekly or monthly meetings depending on the phase of the project, and make sure there is a contingency plan for delays. Having a plan in place may not prevent delays or additional costs, but it most likely will help prevent misunderstandings and delays on submitting reports.

During the planning process, it is a good strategy to map out a crosswalk of each federal agency's criteria to identify overlap and disparities. Understanding the requirements that are attached to each funding source and where there are duplications can help streamline the application, monitoring, and reporting processes in the future, which will, no doubt, accelerate the process.

Relationship Building

It almost seems like a no-brainer that local governments would want to establish a relationship with federal program officers if they were seeking federal funding. Sometimes, however, the value of establishing these relationships can be understated.

Federal program officers serve as a project's single liaison between the region and the federal agency funding programing. As such, establishing contact with program officers early and often can offer immense benefits to the region.

Program officers can serve as an information and referral source for upcoming federal funding opportunities and a sounding board for grant applications, as well as a resource for clarifying program requirements.

It can be difficult to identify federal funding announcements that are applicable to a region's economic development strategy, and it can be even more challenging putting together a proposal that meets the requirements.

This is a significant challenge for smaller communities that have limited resources and do not have a dedicated staff member focused on economic development. This is where federal program officers have a lot to offer in the way of meeting this challenge.

Federal program officers are familiar with the strategic goals and activities of specific regions and can make recommendations on which new funding opportunities a region may want to pursue. In Snohomish, Washington, a strong relationship between the local economic development districts and Seattle's regional EDA office was pivotal to identifying additional federal funding sources

THE SUPPORT THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION AND OTHER AGENCIES OFFER IS NOT LIMITED TO MONEY, AS THEY CAN ALSO PROVIDE GUIDANCE ON ESTABLISHING OR REDEFINING AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY.

to support the state's Oso mudslide disaster recovery efforts.

The Seattle regional office served as a trusted adviser for identifying which federal programs would be available to assist in economic planning and growth after the rescue and recovery phase of the project.

For small and rural communities, it can be difficult to attract employers and sustain economic growth. If relationships are established with federal agencies, they can provide additional support, help identify assets that become economic development opportunities, and make funding more accessible.

Communities might not have the resources to fund a staff person dedicated to research and who can make connections with federal agencies. A manager will be the one to reach out to places directly, gauge what the need is, and provide guidance on where resources can be located.

The support EDA and other agencies offer is not limited to money as they can also provide guidance on establishing or redefining an economic development strategy.²

Federal Support Is Available

The process of developing a regional

strategy must be, at all points, intentional and strategic; especially at the outset. Integrating all of the components necessary to implement a regional economic development strategy, however, can be a challenge for most.

If managers apply for a grant but are not successful, they should not walk away. To strengthen the next proposal, request additional information from the funder on why it was denied. The

feedback received can be instrumental in gaining financial support from other federal agencies.

Also, request technical assistance from the agencies to help establish a relationship that can lead to securing financial support in the future.

EDA has resources for communities looking to revamp or create an economic development strategy, and it can offer additional insight that can help improve the planning process for economic development and increase the chances of receiving federal funding. Managers can also reach out directly to regional offices for potential opportunities related to their area.³ **PM**

ENDNOTES

- 1 <https://icma.org/node/66416>
- 2 <https://www.eda.gov/ceds>
- 3 <https://www.cfda.gov>

RESOURCES

<https://www.grants.gov>
<https://www.eda.gov/edi>
<https://www.eda.gov/contact>



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HIGHWAY CO



How four Texas communities found a noise-abatement solution for a federal roadway

By Kristin Dispenza

Ever wonder what it would take for four local governments whose villages abut the world's widest freeway to solve noise-abatement problems? Here is that story.

Four Texas villages straddle the portion of Interstate 10 known as Katy Freeway, which has 26 lanes in some spots. They are Hunters Creek Village (population 4,400, Tom Fullen, city administrator); Hedwig Village (population 2,500, Kelly Johnson, city administrator); Spring Valley Village (population 4,013,

Julie Robinson, city administrator); and Hilshire Village (population 746, Susan Blevins, city administrator).

Katy Freeway runs from the downtown Houston area westward for approximately 23 miles to the suburb of Katy. It is a major thoroughfare that connects Florida to California. Near Hunters Creek Village, it is currently 16 lanes wide, including service roads.

When originally constructed in the 1960s, the highway was comparatively narrow, but as the local population grew and a greater number of people used the road for interstate travel, congestion became a problem. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) reconstructed the freeway between 2003 and 2009, widening the road and redesigning its on-off ramps to improve flow.

Nine major construction contracts were awarded and every contract stipulated a maximum number of hours that a lane of traffic could be closed during peak travel periods each day.

Noise Problems Emerge

Congestion may have been an issue on the pre-2009 roadway, but at least noise was not. When the new lanes opened, however, less congestion meant that 60- to 70-miles-per-hour highway speeds were possible, and the faster moving vehicles generated significant tire-pavement interface noise.

Transverse tining, in which a textured surface is installed with a set of randomly spaced spring steel tines in a direction perpendicular to the centerline of pavement, was the preferred surface texture at the time of construction, long considered a safe and durable means of providing traction.

Transverse tining, unfortunately, is also one of the loudest surface textures available. With the increase in traffic and speed, the surrounding neighborhoods were overwhelmed with the incessant drone of tire-pavement noise.

This meant that a significant length of the reconstructed highway sud-

NUNDRUM



denly had a noise problem. Many of the properties adjacent to that stretch were commercial or retail and were not particularly sensitive to noise.

The four- to five-mile section that is flanked by residential villages, including Hunters Creek to the immediate south, however, were hard hit. Residents of the villages expressed that they had never heard road noise levels so high, and the noise wasn't just bad at certain times of the day, it was nearly constant.

Environments with excessive noise aren't merely annoying. They're considered a health hazard, with documented effects on individuals that include sleep disruption, impaired function, and reduced productivity. Residents took their concerns to elected and appointed officials, who took it upon themselves to address the matter.

Quantifying the Problem

Officials representing the affected villages approached TxDOT hoping

to have noise abatement procedures implemented. They were told that TxDOT had closed out the project and had no additional funds to address noise, as funding is typically allocated years in advance of a project.

The department also had conducted modeling during the design phase that indicated the road was in compliance with federal noise standards.

One point that Hunters Creek Village representatives noted was that the original highway design parameters for the widening of Katy Freeway did not reflect the as-built road because of the number of change orders, design modifications due to failed land acquisitions, easements, and so on.

These challenges are particularly numerous in densely populated areas, and they cause noise modeling conducted prior to the start of construction to inadequately forecast finished conditions.

Two of the communities commissioned their own noise tests, hiring the

same contractor and using the same software that TxDOT had used when conducting its research in order to compare test results. The same instruments and the same placements also were used, and tests were conducted at the same time of the year.

The new tests conducted with live traffic showed the road to be considerably out of compliance with federal noise standards. The new noise tests—totaling two tests in two different locations—were conducted in October 2010.

Armed with the results, officials of the residential villages spent the next several years pursuing a solution to their communities' noise problem.

Seeking a Solution

The communities' first resource was their local congressman who was responsible for getting the Katy Freeway expansion completed without any earmarks at the federal level. Attempts to have the project reopened and the noise

levels corrected with this channel proved extremely challenging.

Next, the state representative was contacted, who followed up by meeting with residents from either side of the freeway. That representative then put the villages in contact with TxDOT's director of transportation.

The villages expressed interest in rubberized asphalt, which was considered one way of addressing road noise. TxDOT experts pointed out that this type of asphalt is not only expensive, but because of its porous nature and air-void content, it tends to compress and consolidate, losing its noise dampening qualities with time and traffic.

To avoid this deterioration, the rubberized asphalt would have required maintenance every several years, defeating the purpose of using long-life concrete pavement in the first place. Such a maintenance-intensive solution was off the table from the start.

TxDOT had an alternative proposal, suggesting a project that involved first removing transverse grooves from the roadway, then replacing them with a diamond saw-cut concrete surface texture known as the Next Generation Concrete Surface (NGCS).

At this point, the International Grooving & Grinding Association (IGGA; www.igga.net) was brought in to discuss the proposal with TxDOT. After inspecting the freeway and viewing the data, IGGA was certain that NGCS would significantly reduce the tire-pavement noise issue without the need for reoccurring maintenance, while also providing a safe, smooth driving surface.

Developed by IGGA and the American Concrete Pavement Association at Purdue University between 2006 and 2008, the NGCS surface can be installed using conventional diamond grinding equipment, with the first step being to flush-grind the concrete and then to cut longitudinal grooves for a smoother and flatter surface.

Finding the Money

The cost of this project was approximately \$12.5 million, including traffic control.

USING TXDOT'S FUNDING MODEL, A QUIET CONCRETE SURFACE KNOWN AS NEXT GENERATION CONCRETE SURFACE WAS INSTALLED.

Because about half of the affected roadway was within village jurisdictions and half was within the city of Houston, TxDOT proposed that Houston and the four affected villages contribute approximately \$2 million of that total cost. Each village was asked to make five installment payments to TxDOT over a five-year period with no interest charged.

The communities agreed to TxDOT's terms, but raising the funds took another two years. The four villages were able to get the money into their annual budgets, but Houston was slowed by two concerns.

The first centered on how to proportionally allocate funds across its entire road network, a common consideration for road owners. The second concern dealt with a newer type of challenge: the legalities of a city contributing local funds to a federal road. Houston's city councilman and city attorney examined this matter for some time.

Factoring into their decision was a precedent in Harris County where homes backing the freeway had successfully argued down their tax values on an annual basis, based on the fact that an excess of noise was reducing their prop-

erty value. The homes in Hunters Creek Village—which represent a majority of all building types in the village—were valued in excess of \$2 billion. The local governments realized they faced a reduction in a property tax basis as property values fell.

Fast forward: Funding from TxDOT, Houston, and four villages was eventually secured and in 2016, the project was let for bid. Transverse tining was removed and NGCS installed, with construction completed by fall 2017.

Residents were quick to express their contentment with the new surface. The noise abatement was significant.

The Future

According to Hunters Creek Village officials, another consideration that local government officials need to address early on is the possible insufficiency of sound walls. In the 2009 reconstruction of I-10, for example, the presence of biosystems and waterways parallel to the freeway were points of interference that caused gaps to be left in the wall layout.

Acoustic engineers hired by the affected villages during their noise analysis process discovered that these gaps actually amplified and intensified road noise. The impracticality of positioning walls in the precise locations necessary to interrupt sound waves was also suspected of compromising the functionality of the wall system. In addition to issues with their effectiveness, the installation and maintenance of sound walls is expensive.

Experts anticipate that the amount of money required for road building and maintenance will continue to dramatically outstrip federal revenue that is raised to conduct the work. Local officials will likely find themselves responding to residents' inquiries and will have to develop mechanisms for the future funding of roads of all types, even those that have traditionally been paid for by federal sources. **PM**



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AND
SOCIAL
EQUITY**

BY DARYL WEBSTER

A PATH FORWARD ON POLICING EFFECTIVELY

Why now is the time for a difficult conversation



Job security.” Every law enforcement officer has said it, pointing to a repeat offender in a holding cell. This also describes why many criminal justice professionals choose their line of work despite its hazards: The peace of mind of knowing that the world will always need cops.

Then came the recession of 2007 to 2009, when the slow rebound of state and local governments around the country shook the world beneath their feet. In many cases, hiring freezes and layoffs became multiyear problems in their own right.

From Washington, D.C., to Dallas and Chicago to Tulsa, budgets have been tight and departments understaffed. The pressure has been palpable. Perhaps most unsettling of all is the creeping suspicion, even among the most optimistic, that this may be the new norm.

As a public administrator, how should you respond to maintain a healthy law enforcement capacity in your community?

Even in the best of times, law enforcement agencies approach annual

budget preparation as a “grow or die” exercise. Whether in pursuit of a slippery officer-per-1,000-population standard or in response to increased crime or population growth, many agency heads have traditionally operated under and encouraged the assumption that more means better.

More officers, more funds, and more equipment, all presumably translate into more active operations, more enforcement, more community involvement, and less crime. None of which is the unqualified truth.

The Manpower Factor

We assume intuitively that adding more cops reduces crime and makes communities more secure, but just how accurate is that assumption? There is no doubt that eliminating law enforcement would lead to widespread lawlessness, just as adding an officer to every street corner would certainly suppress it.

At what point does an incremental manpower reduction or increase become significant? One percent? Five percent? Ten?

Studies of the relationship between the size of law enforcement agencies and crime rates have shown only a tenuous correlation. Massive infusions of personnel would likely generate deterrent, preventative, or incapacitating effects on crime but even then, with diminishing returns.

There is reason to believe that adding officers, at least in the quantities most jurisdictions can afford and tolerate, has little if any effect on crime.¹

That said, reducing manpower clearly disrupts the work of criminal justice agencies, yet many agencies are finding that growing their workforce just isn’t in the cards right now.

If this describes the reality where you live, there is a path forward but it may require changing how you and your law enforcement professionals think about the size of your workforce, the energy you would like to derive from a larger workforce, and how to better project the energy your workforce currently possesses.

This is a difficult but necessary conversation to have with law enforcement leaders in your community.

A Path Forward

Focus on achievable future states.

Your local law enforcement agency may be smaller than it once was or not as large as its leaders would like it to be, and if you are persuaded that growth is essential, don’t abandon that goal. Just don’t let it become the agency’s defining theme, because a persistent message of staffing inadequacy won’t be lost on the workforce.

Tell officers emphatically enough that their department is unprepared to get the job done and eventually they will come to believe it. Instead, encourage department heads to set ambitious but achievable goals to help their officers feel the positivity of working, winning, and making progress as a team.

Encourage agency leaders to gather and unleash their organizations’ kinetic energy. Kinetic energy is the

energy of an object in motion, defined as $KE = 1/2mv^2$, where m = the mass of an object and v = the object's speed. Invisible but potent, kinetic energy influences whatever it touches and its potential grows along with the size and speed of its host.

A law enforcement agency is an energy generator. The option of gathering energy through growth may be foreclosed by lack of funds or by political considerations, but it can still be built with forward motion. Begin by looking ahead.

Take the first step. Energy cannot be gathered and translated into outstanding achievement until inertia is overcome. That can be difficult when the weight of adversity causes an agency to settle into soft soil. There are no shortcuts to getting this heavy ball rolling beyond the exercise of stubborn resolve.

Follow General Theodore Roosevelt Jr.'s playbook. On D-Day, when he found himself mired in chaos on Utah Beach, some two kilometers off course, he wasted no energy on retreating, complaining, or obsessing over what should have been. He famously declared, "We'll start the war from right here!"

In your community, wherever law enforcement leaders are right now, encourage them to start right there.

Hit the Reset Button

Of all the innovations of the modern era, not one of humanity's great leaps carried us forward from a state of contentment and plenty. All were actuated by need, scarcity, threat, or a human urge to progress that was constrained by a failure of imagination or lack of proper implements.

Agencies struggling with inadequate manpower or funding may be too preoccupied responding to crises to fully appreciate the presence of creative necessity. They will need your encouragement to hit the reset button and rethink how they organize and project their energy.

Review how the agency organizes its energy. Have standard operating

procedures created long-standing practices or assumptions that are no longer questioned in spite of their inefficiencies?

Start to question them. Not long ago, a midwestern police department found itself spending premium pay every shift to hire off-duty officers to meet minimum staffing levels in one or another of its three patrol divisions.

Shift after shift, understaffed squads could not be economically filled by temporarily shuffling personnel from adjacent overstaffed squads because the two were separated by a divisional map line.

The rationale for this madness was that temporarily reassigning personnel to different divisions violated their long-standing right to use their seniority to bid to the division of their choice.

Kudos to any agency willing to accommodate its workforce for the sake of morale, but shame on the agency that does so with manpower it doesn't have, with taxpayer funds it can't replenish, and at the expense of a public that deserves better.

If the business processes put in place when times were fat begin to crush you

IF THE BUSINESS PROCESSES PUT IN PLACE WHEN TIMES WERE FAT BEGIN TO CRUSH YOU WHEN TIMES ARE LEAN, IT IS TIME TO REALIGN THOSE PROCESSES WITH THE REAL WORLD.

when times are lean, it is time to realign those processes with the real world.

Change the way energy is projected.

When was the last time a police beat survey was commissioned? Are officers still responding to unverified (and usually false) intrusion alarms or formally investigating non-injury automobile collisions?

Time, talent, and impact are wasted when deployments don't match needs or if officers must address problems they can't influence. Much of this waste may be attributable to a persistent reliance on traditional concepts that have outlived

their usefulness, like beat organization and the deterrent value of random patrol.

The 1974 Kansas City Preventive Patrol Experiment was the first to seriously challenge the deterrent value of random police patrol, by demonstrating that increasing the frequency of patrol would not necessarily reduce crime or increase citizens' sense of security.² Subsequent studies have questioned the methodology of the Kansas City study; however, the old orthodoxy that more randomly-circulating manpower was the obvious answer to crime and disorder could no longer be blindly accepted.

Spurred on by the impact of the Kansas City experiment, researchers began to explore alternative deployment strategies, focusing on whether a smaller number of officers who were able to concentrate on a narrow locus of crime and disorder could make a difference.

Most notable among these early studies was the 1989 Minneapolis Police Department "Hot Spot" study, which demonstrated that when police concentrated on investing time and interaction in crime hot spots as opposed to

randomly patrolling, both reported crime and observed disorder declined significantly, with an investment of no more than 12 minutes per hot-spot visit.³

A more recent review of major strategic deployment studies demonstrates that not only have law enforcement agencies become more open to targeted deployment, seven of nine studies reviewed showed measurable reductions in crime and disorder when Hot Spot style policing was employed.⁴

Hot-spot policing is not offered as the prescription for more effective policing. "Putting cops on dots" is just

(continued on page 24)

one archetypal solution that succeeds by using crime analysis to deploy officers where they are demonstrably needed.

You must still be mindful that there are dots and then there are dots, and a particular dot's significance to the public may have nothing to do with the crime statistics that often drive deployment. Public attention is deeply personal, riveted on the dope house down the block, where come-and-go traffic and nightly gunshots interrupt their sleep.

People tire of having to keep their heads on a swivel when they leave the corner grocery. They want their quality of life back and that is the policing priority that really counts.

If law enforcement agencies habitually default to filling beats or offer random patrol as a crime deterrent and as a justification for increasing manpower, they may be letting tradition trump effectiveness. Remember, a beat is just a box on a map. Random

patrol is an aimless search for undefined crime.

The key to policing effectively with fewer human resources may be to think outside that box and consider organizational methodologies that offer more flexibility in officer deployment. Whether a strategy of hot-spot policing or some trendier iteration is adopted, the name of the game is clear: Attacking hard targets with fewer officers will consistently yield more concrete and cost-effective results than hunting soft targets with more.

As public administrators, it is up to you to challenge every assumption about criminal justice as a growth industry. Encourage openness to alternative measures that can help law enforcement agencies focus on satisfying people, one call and one neighborhood at a time, with the high-quality personnel currently available.

Follow up with an active community

organization, and you may find crime stats responding to you instead of the other way around. **PM**

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- 2 Kelling, G., Pate, A.M., Dieckman, D., Brown, C. (1974). *The Kansas City Preventive Patrol Experiment: Technical Report*. Washington, D.C.: Police Foundation.
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- 4 Braga, Anthony A. (2007). The Effects of Hot Spots Policing on Crime, *Campbell Systematic Reviews* 2007:1.



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A photograph of three women in a professional setting. Two women on the left are looking at a folder held by a woman on the right. The woman on the right is wearing blue scrubs and has a name tag that reads '1 7 6 3 2'. The woman in the middle is wearing a pink top. The woman on the left is partially visible, wearing a white top.

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* Cigna Case Study, March 2015.

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BY LINDA McELROY

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FRIDAY

A meet-and-greet with residents

According to focus groups conducted by an advertising agency in 2015, Rowan County, North Carolina, including the city of Salisbury, suffered from a general “lack of self-esteem.” The agency, hired to complete a branding initiative for Rowan County, shared this information with Salisbury’s local government officials in 2016.

Also in 2016, Salisbury City Manager W. Lane Bailey developed a series of small-group “community conversations” in multiple neighborhoods to receive feedback and information from residents on a number of topics. Several included these strong remarks from residents:

- “I am concerned about our children. What are the plans for our young people?”
- “We need to work on stronger relationships. My advice is that you have to know the populations you serve. All of you here today, get out and get involved in the process. Ask your questions now; don’t wait until later!”
- “I want to know about law enforcement. We need to build trust going forward.”
- “The issue is communication. Information is no good if it doesn’t get out. Why can’t we do a one-page insert in every water bill to communicate to the people?”

The lack of community self-esteem, combined with communication challenges and limited resources to push information to residents, contributed to the false narrative that Salisbury had nothing to offer youth and adults in terms of recreation, workplace assistance, and other economic growth opportunities.



Knocking on Doors

The reality is that residents were often unaware that the city, along with nonprofit organizations, offers a number of activities and programs for young and old residents alike.

Staff concluded that simple “door knocking,” which would involve visiting residents at their homes to provide updates on city programs and events in person, could begin to tackle some of the communication, trust, and relationship-building issues that had been discussed at the community conversation meetings and focus groups. The simple door knocking has since evolved into a larger initiative—Community Engagement Fridays.

In planning the program’s launch, communications staff researched the most convenient participation periods when employees could leave their desks and offices for up to two hours at a time per week. It was decided that Friday afternoon, when employees might feel lethargic from the work week, would be the most appealing.

Bolstered by a large map borrowed from the engineering department showing all 21.7 square miles of the city, staff began planning to cover each neighborhood on foot. On each engagement day, the roadway visited was highlighted on the map, until all residential areas were marked.

Staff members from across the organization are required to participate in numbers greater than two or three employees to make the program effective. The visual alone of city employees walking Salisbury streets in a large group to meet residents makes a silent, but powerful statement.

An additional bonus is that no cost would be associated with the effort aside from the printing of flyers.

Launching the Program

The first Community Engagement Friday was on April 28, 2017, in an area adjacent to the city’s only high school.

The first engagement crew numbered 15, including three firefighters as well

(continued on page 28)

BY SHANE FARTHING

THE UNCERTAIN TRANSPORTATION LANDSCAPE

As roadway capacity dwindles, it's time for smart decisions

Local government managers are facing a multitude of transportation and land-use decisions with seemingly more uncertainty than has existed in decades. Lack of roadway capacity in major urban area is emerging as a major economic/planning constraint.

Everyone is looking for the next magical solution to this dilemma—a solution that avoids public major transportation projects that will only lead to greater gridlock on the highways.

Much attention is now focusing on operational transportation changes that are finding traction: The rise of such driver services as Uber and Lyft, the functional beginnings of autonomous vehicles, the urban growth in biking and walking, and the urban success of bike-sharing, including the dockless option.

In the next 10 years, I believe we'll likely see an even greater magnitude of operational change as autonomous vehicles go from the testing labs to the streets at scale. On-demand delivery, which allows for the true sharing of vehicles, might well replace the owned-vehicle model altogether.

And point-to-point ridesharing will become more widespread. All of which will take place against a backdrop of dwindling funding for transportation generally and transit specifically, and generational changes in preferences for commutes and mobility in general.

Given these emerging trends, how should a responsible local government manager proceed? Here's a basic outline of 10 solutions to making smart transportation and land-use decisions, especially when trying to attract and locate a major organization (i.e., large

traffic-driver) in an uncertain transportation landscape:

Protect the place. Transportation serves economic and community development. It is not an end, but a means. Don't degrade what is good about your community in order to move people around it, or you'll soon lose the people you were trying to move.

Protect the people. All the new companies springing up to provide mobility solutions are doing so on public roads. Many of them seek to externalize costs to the public, from the road maintenance costs, to the labor costs of gig-based contractors compared to employees, to the environmental costs of emissions from increased vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Don't subsidize them by accepting those externalities.

Bet on the simple. People will always walk. Make everything you can work for walkability, then expand outward to other transportation modes based on their spatial capacities. Trails, sidewalks, bike infrastructure, and bikeshare have small raw numbers but high-satisfaction rankings and top-rated cost efficiency.

Take proximity seriously. Mixed-use developments allow people to live and work in close proximity. All the possible modes will have different radius limits. The closer things are, the more efficient people and transportation networks become. Each person who walks or bikes to work is generating value in a community, while costing infrastructure far less.



Induce transportation mode shift.

Efficiency is your friend. Take a position on which transportation modes are best for long-term economic and community health. Establish a policy to incentivize what is good for a community and to de-incentivize what is not. Nothing is gained from neutrality or inaction.

Realize that connectivity is key.

People aren't just traveling to travel. They are trying to reach key destinations. Land use controls that cluster origins and destinations together, plus networks of trails, bikeways, and sidewalks that let people move easily without bringing along a vehicle, are the most spatially efficient way to get people where they need to go.

Realize that safety and stress affect behavior.

Today, fewer than 5 percent of people will ride a bike as a primary transportation mode because they fear sharing space with cars. Getting people to bike and walk depends on providing facilities that make them feel safe and

(continued on page 28)



as staff from parks and recreation, communications, human resources, information technology, public services, and Salisbury-Rowan Utilities. From the start of this activity, there has been an attempt to have one Spanish-speaking staff member as part of a group.

Flyers promoting the city's new mass notification system, which is called Nixle, created both in English and Spanish, are distributed as needed, in addition to various other department materials. These printed materials include an annual recycling calendar, a parks and recreation seasonal playbook, and an advertisement for upcoming community action planning meetings, also in English and Spanish.

But even more important than distributing information, is that city staff are able to meet residents "where they are" in order to listen to concerns and receive questions about city services. The group, which sometimes includes City Manager Bailey, documents all concerns and then sends a recap to applicable departments to correct or to answer directly during the following work week.

To date, Community Engagement Friday has reached 25 neighborhoods over multiple Fridays, with a few exceptions. Some were moved to Thursdays due to anticipated weather concerns, and others were cancelled outright due to hurricane preparation and scheduled holidays.

During summer months, the walk is

held in the morning hours due to rising afternoon temperatures to accommodate the comfort of participating employees.

Positive Feedback

While surveys have not yet been conducted on this low-cost, face-to-face community relations effort, the feedback from residents during the visits has been positive. Selfies are taken with a group in front of each neighborhood sign and posted on Facebook and Twitter, using the hashtag #CommunityEngagement, #CommunityEngagementFriday, and #TeamSalisbury.

Facebook posts about this project average a reach of 1,500. Favorable sentiments on social media include the following post: "Big surprise to see all of them on my front porch. Great outreach from the city."

Community Engagement Fridays won an Award of Excellence from the Charlotte Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America in 2017 and has been featured on several local news outlets.

The initiative will continue through late 2018, with the expectation that all neighborhoods will have experienced a visit on Salisbury's Community Engagement Friday. **PM**



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protected, which often requires separation from high-speed traffic.

Public transportation should stay a public good. Residents expect to be able to go about their daily business without having to rely on private transportation companies, which might have unknown data and privacy policies and no direct accountability to them.

There is currently a battlefield brimming with companies competing for market share in both trips and data. Most of these companies won't survive with their current business models intact, so localities should resist the temptation to outsource transportation provision to them. It may work in the short-term but will foreclose options long term.

Prepare for change. Invest in smart, flexible transportation commitments that don't lock a community into any one solution or provider. Presently, outside capital is funding a significant portion of every trip from the app-based, ride-hailing giants.

That subsidy makes each trip a bargain for consumers, but that bargain is an unsustainable one. Eventually, the bill will come due. Policy leaders need to engage in long-term planning to ensure that short-term consumer preference doesn't eliminate more sustainable options, which residents will still need when venture capitalists stop paying the bill.

Bet on equitable mobility for all.

Betting on any one mobility company can be risky. By emphasizing strong land use controls and infrastructure that serves all neighborhoods and people equitably, a manager can provide the underlying public assets that enable a community to benefit most from transportation services, no matter which company ends up providing them. **PM**



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BY EARL MATHERS

WORKPLACE WELLNESS WORKS

And it can be fun



Gaston County, North Carolina's experience reveals a strong business case for investing in workplace wellness initiatives. This article covers the progress of the county's wellness initiatives over the past three years, along with data that suggest these investments have had a highly favorable impact on the budget as well as on employee health and well-being.

Alarm Bells

Until recently, the cost of Gaston County's health plan had been climbing for years at a pace well above the inflation rate. Like many jurisdictions, absorbing these additional costs was simply not sustainable without transferring a significant portion of the cost increase to employees, something we were reluctant to do for various reasons.

Competition for quality employees in the Charlotte metro area is challenging and overall employee compensation, including a robust benefit package, is obvi-

ously an important retention factor. Our plan administrator was also concerned about an increasing number of chronic health problems among the county's 1,600 employees and the percentage of people at risk for such conditions as diabetes and hypertension.

Senior management recognized the need to be intentional and systematic in our approach to mitigating these problems. Options included cutting or modifying benefits, transferring cost increases to our employees, or attempting to improve the health of our employee population.

As managers of a self-insured health plan, it was the responsibility of senior management, with the support of the governing body, to take appropriate steps.

Healthy Changes

Gaston County already had effective working relationships with local health providers, including CaroMont Regional Health and Gaston Family Health Services. As the primary care facility in Gaston County, CaroMont was beginning to make forays into the wellness arena and consultation with members of its management team led to the identification of certain risk factors, including obesity, pre-diabetes, and hypertension, that can be addressed successfully through wellness initiatives.

Most Gaston County employees, perhaps like their counterparts throughout contemporary society, are increasingly sedentary at work. Many spend most of their time in front of a screen. Others like paramedics and police officers are on the go but primarily behind the wheel of a vehicle.

Although we have exceptions, hard physical labor represents a small portion of employee effort collectively. Gaston

County is also experiencing an increasing incidence of obesity despite collaborative communitywide initiatives designed to reverse this trend.

Fortunately for local governments, there is no need to reinvent the wheel when it comes to employee wellness. There are many examples of successful programs. Gaston County followed these basic steps, which we found are consistent with the leading practices of others:

- Implemented health risk assessments to capture baseline data. Conducted a 360 Wellness Roadmap Survey that revealed a 70 percent employee interest in fitness.
- Developed a phased program for review and funding approval by the governing body. Gaston County's initial focus was on fitness and nutrition. Health consultation and coaching was added later.
- Identified champions, including senior managers, to support initiatives and promote the program. Gaining employee acceptance is critical to program success.
- Incentivized employee participation by reducing premium cost for participants and making activities fun. Participation in the health risk assessment on a voluntary basis entitled employees to a \$20 reduction per pay period in insurance premiums.
- Promoted and implemented a phased program that offers new components each year while attempting to eliminate obstacles to participation in wellness initiatives.
- Measured results and provided updates to both employees and elected officials.
- Made informed adjustments based on data as well as employee input.

Enthusiastic Participation

One of the most gratifying aspects of Gaston County's wellness ventures has been the level of acceptance and enthusiasm among employees. Signifi-

(continued on page 32)



Roger L. Kemp MPA, MBA, PhD
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Roger Kemp's background and professional skills are highlighted on his website. Dr. Kemp was a city manager in politically, economically, socially, and ethnically diverse communities.

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cantly, nearly 900 county employees are participating in fitness initiatives sponsored by the county.

Since one of the greatest obstacles to engaging in fitness activities mentioned in the initial wellness survey was a lack of time, supervisors were encouraged to be flexible in allowing employees to participate. In fact, the level of participation in fitness activities increased 17 percent during the first two years of the program.

As people age, unhealthy lifestyle choices can begin to have a cumulative effect. And, after chronic illnesses become evident, they are often difficult to overcome. For this reason, Gaston County wanted to offer health consultation and coaching services for those individuals who are at risk for developing serious conditions as well as for those who are already dealing with chronic diseases like diabetes and hypertension.

During the first two years of the program, Gaston County's employees have managed to reduce the incidence of pre-diabetes by 43 percent. While reductions in the prevalence of cardiovascular disease have been less dramatic, a 6 percent reduction in Stage 1 hypertension indicates progress is being made in this critical indicator, too.

GASTON COUNTY HAS BEEN ABLE TO MAINTAIN HIGH-QUALITY HEALTH COVERAGE FOR ITS EMPLOYEES WITH A MODEST COST INCREASE OF 3 PERCENT.

Gaston County has been able to maintain high-quality health coverage for its employees with modest cost increases. For the 2017 fiscal year, the cost of the plan rose a mere 3 percent. The use of sick leave also has fallen each of the past two years.

Although it is more difficult to quantify, employee morale and continuing interest in health consultation, stress reduction, nutrition, smoking cessation, and fitness remain high. Interestingly, many components of the wellness program, including kick ball, group hiking, walking challenges, and "boot camp," bring people together through fun activities, which improve quality of work life and employee health. **PM**



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