

# Success In Collaboration

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ICMA Conference Presenter





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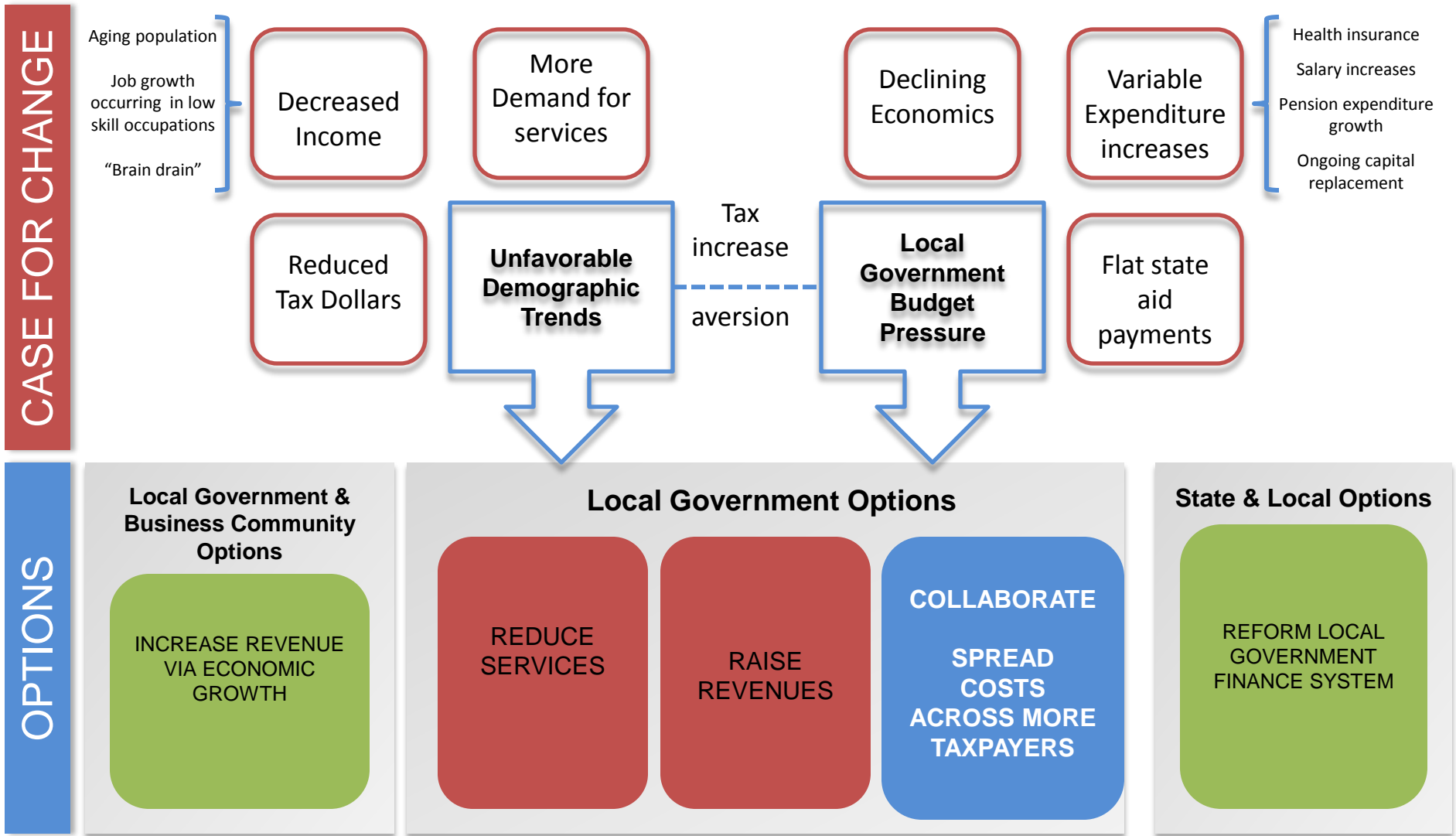
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***Key - is defining "what success looks like and facilitating the journey to get there"***



- > 15 years in consulting, 25 in public sector
- > working with clients from CA to NY to NC
- > key focus on using resources effectively towards responsive service delivery
- > collaborated across teams, firms, clients



# Perceived Benefits of Collaboration

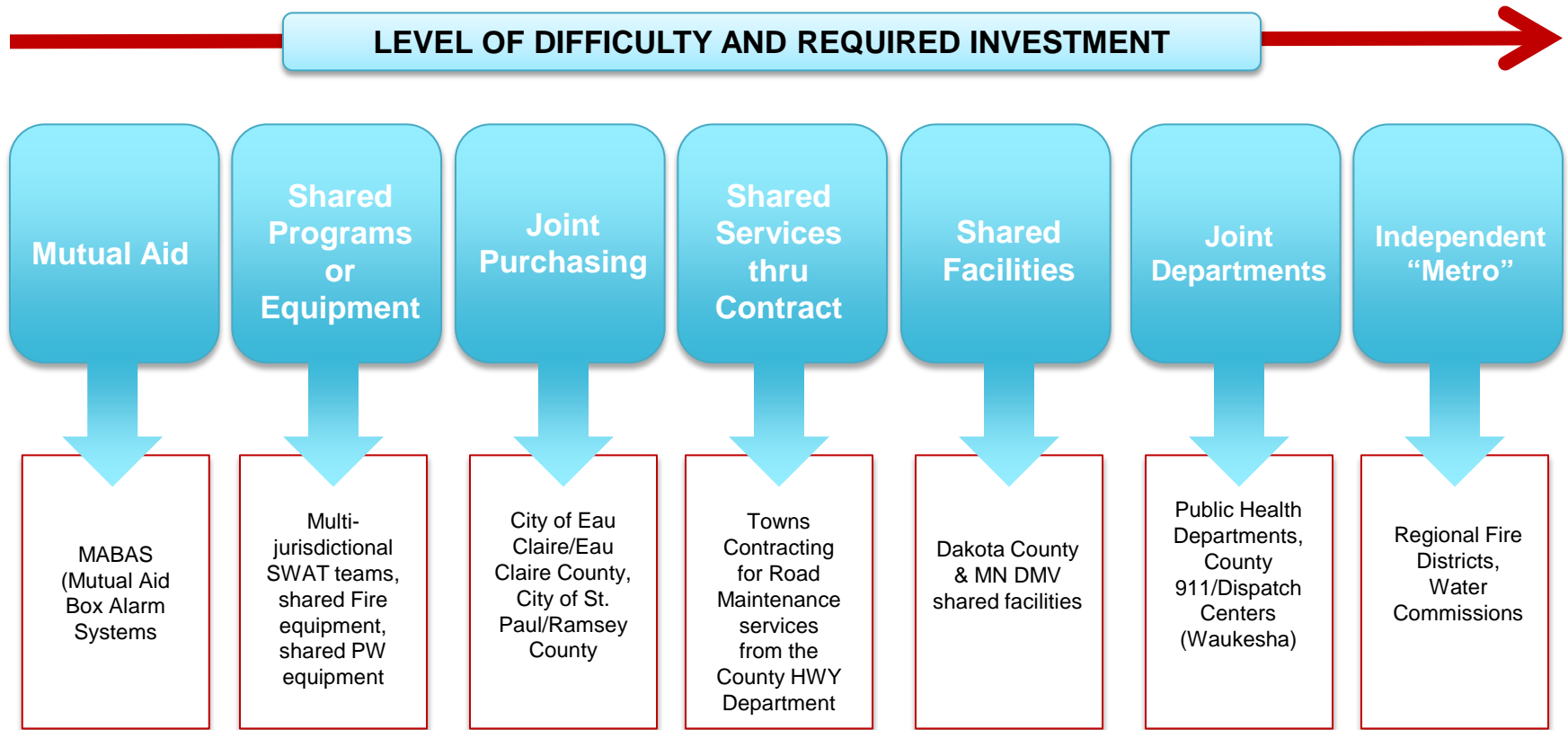
***Vary considerably – Dependent on who you are***

Benefits of Cooperative Effort	County	City	Village	Town
Cost Factors	35.0%	50.9%	41.0%	38.1%
Service Factors	47.5%	42.2%	52.8%	53.1%
Increased efforts for further cooperation	17.5%	6.9%	6.2%	8.7%

*\*Source: Fall 2009 Local Government Institute Intergovernmental Cooperation Study*

“ Local governments should create functional service delivery lines without regard to their political boundaries. ”

*Sheehy Task Force on State and Local Government, 2003*



Adapted from J. Ruggini, "Intergovernmental Service Sharing", Government Finance Officers Association, 2007

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- > Different definitions of successful collaboration
  - > Focus on shared outcomes
  - > New and different partnerships
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- > Differences in level of quality of service or standards
  - > Cost structure
  - > Loss of authority or autonomy
  - > Bad history
  - > Agreement on priorities
  - > Communication and transparency
  - > Services bound to community
  - > Service specific to geography
  - > Politics
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## LGI Wisconsin Study Factors:

Positive Impact on Services

Clear Fiscal Benefit

Trust

Leadership

Community Support

Shared Perception of Need

## Upjohn Institute Michigan Study Factors:

Win-Win Proposition

Common Vision, Common Ground

Trust

Leadership

Not a Core-Service

Commonality of Structures – Cost, Tech, service, etc..



<b>Positive Impact on Services</b>	<b>Clear Fiscal Benefit</b>
Trust	Leadership
Community Support	Shared Perception of Need

## Positive Impact on Services

- > Allows communities to critically examine service delivery approaches
- > Creates greater capacity for service delivery through increased resource levels
- > Addresses service gaps and distortions through a cooperative approach

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“ The access we gained through cooperation literally saved some lives in the first year. ”


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*Case Study Interviewee, LGI Report 2010*

# Collaboration: Success Factors

## Clear Fiscal Benefit

- > Short term investments may be required, long term benefits can be significant
- > Fiscal benefits can be greatest if significant capital assets involved - opportunity to spread these costs over a larger base of residents
- > Few case studies suggest that service expenditures will fall in absolute terms: benefits largely involve avoided costs



“ If we only have a specific amount of dollars, let's make the most of it. ”



*Case Study Interviewee, LGI Report 2010*

## Trust

- > Positive working relationships are critical
- > Trust between officials, particularly between Towns and larger Cities, is often complicated by border conflicts
- > Shared perception of equal partnership is vital. Careful attention must be given to the details of accountability and governance

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“ What are the most important success factors? I think TRUST has to be at the top of the list. ”

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*Focus Group Participant, LGI Report 2010*

## Leadership

- > Involves taking the first step and beginning the discussion with partners
- > Means being willing to move beyond “turf” and job protection issues
- > Requires full commitment of officials

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“ It takes political will and leadership among elected officials. ”

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*Case Study Interviewee, LGI Report 2010*

## Community Support

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

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“ Once citizens could see that their services would not decrease they were much more supportive.”

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*Case Study Interviewee, LGI Report 2010*

## Shared Perception of Need

- > A shared moment of crisis or opportunity creates impetus for partners to come together
- > Some crisis events are unique to each circumstance, others are driven by new service delivery requirements or mandates
- > A desire for a comparable level of services under a new cooperative effort is critical

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“ It was the perception of a future problem of limited landfill space that induced the municipalities and the counties to agree to a (combined) solid waste management system. ”

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*Upjohn Institute 2012 Report on Common Salient Characteristics of Intergovernmental Cooperation*


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Factor	Concerns	Resolution
Leadership	Someone was going to be a “loser” in the final equation	Key elected and appointed officials “got on the same page” about overall benefits to the region
Positive Impact on Services	Rural County residents felt services would decrease or they would become the stepchild	Greater expertise, depth of services and reduction of redundant efforts were highlighted
Shared Perception of Need	Not on the radar of most County residents – why does it matter?	Leadership showed potential for future cost avoidance

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Factor	Concerns	Resolution
Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Vendors all can't be trusted</li> <li>&gt; Our service will suffer</li> <li>&gt; We will pay more</li> </ul>	Create WBS and contract terms to ensure service performance
Community Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Services levels will for sure be compromised</li> <li>&gt; Really hadn't asked - just assumed they wouldn't like</li> </ul>	
Clear Fiscal Benefit	Savings aren't real – can't possibly be worth the effort to upset workforce	Savings spoke for themselves (rigorous methodology); and if they didn't – no change was made



Develop and disseminate an entirely new paradigm of collaboration, support it with networks of cross sector partnerships working together to create a prosperous region.

