

**Alliance for Regional Stewardship
National Forum on Regional Stewardship
Concurrent Session: Multi-State Regional Issues
Thursday, May 5th
10:15 – 11:45 a.m.**

Multi-state regions face unusual circumstances due to their very nature. Cross-jurisdiction collaboration, especially across state lines, can be particularly demanding—and highly rewarding. Representatives from three multi-state regions will discuss these unique regions.

Moderator: Joan Riehm, Deputy Mayor, Louisville Metro

First needed to think about what the region looked like...Econ. prof—perspective of 28 city region comprised of communities in KY and IN

David Robertson, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

Balancing interests of two states, district, small and large communities...Challenge of geography and scale...

MPO designation provides transportation venue for decision-making...Challenge of voluntary organization...Time for Regional Council re-invention...

COG has spun off a Regional Affordable Housing Trust to complement local affordable housing efforts...

Need to make a stronger connection between land use and transportation planning

Land use planning remains the prerogative of local gov'ts...transportation planning largely a regional activity.

Concentrate transportation investments in growth and activity centers? How to address this challenge?

"Full service COG" provided the venue for communication among first responders

DC Metro system only major transit system in US w/out dedicated source of revenue; need to raise the operating budget every year.

Board members never take off their local hats, but do wear their regional hats at WashCOG.

David Warm, Mid-America Regional Council, Kansas City, Missouri

Context of KC....population and geography; configuration of local gov't. and special districts
State line is basically a residential street...provides a relatively seamless border; with relatively equal populations...

Divisions and segregations w/in KC...

Growing, but not by much...stable region; no crisis to spark change...

Having a state line is a "big fat hassle"...need to do everything twice...don't dwell on it; works hard to deal with the challenges...

Process....

Intermediary role of external orgs.

- MARC
- Foundations
- Civic Council
- United Ways as community change agents
- Tend to have a high level of collaboration around specific issues, rather than regionalism in general...
 - Top – down model
 - Deliberate organizing strategies

□ Results

Collaboration is difficult, but not impossible...depends on the issue....Life Sciences, Youth Agendas,
 Issues requiring broad-based support beyond leadership...Mixed success...
 "Big systems issues"...equity, economic competition...Not much success at all

Lessons learned

Regionalism is a means, not an end.
 Needs to find the intersection betw. regional and local concerns
 No one entity can solve an issue, but anyone can stop it...Building trust is the real agenda...

Tom Wright, Regional Plan Association, New York, New York

NY metro's scale (NY/NJ/CT) makes comparison with other regions difficult...

Enormous range of development, density, gov't. fragmentation...

Uneven growth in metro area...which affects transportation and land use patterns...

Process? What process?

- No multi-state MPO planning...
- Port Authority has become dysfunctional...Saw itself doing the "heavy lifting" of the big projects...No planning capacity...
- RPA only place where bi-state issues get discussed; but no authority and power...
- Competing big projects replace any dialogue or coordination
- Open space planning/acquisition is the only arena where metro-wide cooperation occurs.
- Sept. 11, 2001 was the single event that showed the interconnectivity of the region...A third of the people who lost their lives, were from NJ...Pending fiscal crises may bring jurisdictions together...

Q&A/Comments

How to deal with going to DC for the regional issues that the federal gov't. controls?

DW—Inform the region about federal issues; form coalitions around them...Impact often diluted as only part of the region is probably concerned...Don't unite around the big systems that affect regions controlled by the feds...it's all about money...

TW—Need to figure out the next layer, beyond funding, how the federal gov't. affects regional decision-making that precludes regional collaboration.

DR—Existing national associations need to have a stronger voice...Reliance on status quo institutions...Need to play the game by the current rules...

Role of private sector in regional planning?

TW—Need to look at alternative options...Concern with how they'll be managed...Need to understand the consequences of new methods of financing public services/capital projects...

Role of regions to frame national policy vis-à-vis transportation and economic competitiveness?

DW—Regions are the only place where such conversations can/will occur...Congress only concerned about returning money to their districts...Challenge is for urban regions to understand their regional identities and frame issues around those identities (Marc Weiss).

TW—Maybe the scale of regions are too small...people acquaint themselves with sub-national regions before identifying with metro regions...