

Hopes for the Retreat

- More active role for localities
- Refining TJPDC's mission – one sentence
- Identify what else we could do – learn from other PDCs
- Explore new possibilities
- Enhanced communication mechanisms & engagement
- Regional coordination possibilities
- Templates for ordinances
- Clearer picture of organizational structure

Notes on Survey

Positives

- Legislative program is very popular
- Promotes regional cooperation
- Reflects where energies have been applied

Negatives

- Limited technical or tangible assistance/product
- Lack of clarity about scope of organization/activities
- No real update to other elected officials – face to face
- Limited attention to environment/housing/GIS
- Inconsistency in service

Information on other PDCs

Mission

- Regional cooperation and coordination
- Local technical assistance
- Reflect the jurisdictions in that region

Other observations

- Only PDC that reviews IGRs at board level
- No other PDC mentions legislation or homelessness
- Grant writing important in some PDCs

Information on other PDCs

Programs

- More emphasis on economic development
- Work together to be competitive as a region
- Water supply planning
- Solid waste

Relationship with Localities

- Based on direct work and services provided
- Diminished by plans that just sat on the shelf
- Limited services that provide tangible benefit
- Too much focus on projects, not enough on people
- MPO helps focus conversation on transportation
- HOME funds
- Related to capacity of locality staff
- Perceived value
- Could enhance with greater involvement with Planning Commissions
- Influence in relationship with VDOT

Relationship with Localities

- Respect for Legislative Liaison

Legislative Liaison as model

- Timely information
- Ability to do what localities can't do on their own
- Very focused, responsive, connected
- Visible presence
- Frequent communication to all elected officials
- Conveys a sense of power
- Clearly demonstrates value, relevance to localities
- Not duplicated at local level

Impact on TJPDC

- Can we cut the amount? Be prepared to identify the impact of a cut in budget.
- Is this an essential service? Communicate value provided in specific terms. Share talking points.
- Are there any results from the planning work? Focus on implementation, long-term cost savings.

Strengths

- Legislative Liaison
- HOME program
- Forward-looking planning work
- Technical expertise
- Comprehensive Plan development
- Insight to programs and funding – stewardship of the funds, financial analysis
- Usable publications – e.g. Eastern Planning Initiative

Weaknesses

- Lack of clarity
- Limited perception of the value of the work
- Not enough focus on tangible results
- Follow-through on projects
- Wide diversity of needs among the localities
- Staff turnover
- Irrelevance in face of budget stress

Opportunities

- Stormwater regulations, TMDL
- Shopping list of services – seek funds for significant activities, provide others within locality contribution.
- Grant writer. Administer grant if awarded.
- Support water supply planning
- Leveraging Legislative Liaison brand
- Provide services on consulting basis to localities – create a list of staff and capabilities
- Travel demand modeling, traffic impact assessments
- Environmental impact studies

Opportunities

- Historic-related tourism – Civil War sesquicentennial
- Stronger partnership with TJPED
- Work for VDOT
- Devolution of road maintenance

Lessons

- Be nimble and flexible
- Keep up self-evaluation
- A lot of opportunities to pursue
- Marketing effectiveness, quality and frequency of communication, talking points
- Make effective use of limited meeting time (eliminate IGRs?)

Ideal TJPDC

- Source of trustworthy advice – know what we're talking about
- Truth without bias
- Clearly defined areas of expertise
- Provide a forum for localities to share plans to ensure efficient use of resources and avoid duplication
- Easy access to expertise
- Create an environment where localities recognize their impact on other localities
- Strong housing program

Programs and products

- Environmental and energy programs
- Transportation
- Grant writing and administration
- Age wave planning, in partnership with JABA. Consider addressing in legislative program
- Powerful legislative liaison, linked to VACO, VML, other organizations. Action alert system.
- Brownfields
- GIS
- Regional recycling

Programs and products

- Joint purchasing (VACO does some of this); maybe an RFP service.
- Web site development, graphic design
- Facilitate on-line discussion (FOIA issues)
- Disability Services Board (DSB)
- Piedmont Sustainable Woods

Criteria for Making Choices

- Funding availability. What do we do now without any funding source?
- Alignment with/enhancement of staff capability
- No one else able or likely to undertake
- What is the tangible benefit to our member localities? Multi-jurisdictional applicability.
- Perception of equity across the board.
- Intangible benefits – long-term
- Connects with our mission and sustainability accords
- Likelihood of success, quantifiable results

Staff

- Build capacity to take plans to next level
- Expertise in zoning ordinances – translate intent into regulatory language
- Need more education about the staff to enable further discussion

Communication ideas

- Brief presentation during public comment period
- Short, frequent newsletters to elected officials
- Staff contact with elected bodies/locality staff
- Focus on one topic – occasional e-mails
- Build relationships with Planning Commissions
- Orientation for new Commissions, elected officials, planning commissioners. Specific ways we have supported localities.