The Regional Call and The Local Government Response
New Cities Project
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Regions are the answer.
What’s the question?

Q. Where do people Live?
Density, MSAs and CMSAs, 1997

Q. Where does industry cluster?
Source: Council on Competitiveness

Q. How does America vote?
Source: Mass Inc.

Q. How Does America Compete?
“Not The World is Flat”
- It isn’t so much that the US competes against China and India
- Regions compete against other similar regions
- In high tech, San Jose & Austin compete against Bangalore and Guangdong
**Other Questions**

- "Where do 90% of the people spend 90% of their lives?"
- How do businesses think and act?
- What is the geography necessary to lead the “good life”?
- What big domestic issue doesn’t come home to a regional scale?
  - Economic competitiveness and sustainability?
  - Access to jobs and opportunity?
  - Quality of life (parks, arts and culture)?
  - Environmental issues (water, land use, agriculture, global warming)??
  - Transportation?
  - Homeland security?
  - Disaster preparedness and relief!

**BUT...Regions are Political Orphans!!**

- Tip is still right
- How many local public officials run for office as a “regionalist”?
- Region = average of state and local
- Isn’t regionalism either a Communist plot or an unnatural act?

**The Challenge**

- Traditional business, government and civic responses are not adequate
- Collaborating across boundaries (geography and sectors) is necessary to tackle issues at a regional scale. Collaboration is hard work.
- Sometimes, new structural approaches will be necessary. Other times, regional “pickup teams” will be sufficient to achieve results.

**A New Framework for Regional Decision-making**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Leadership</th>
<th>Regional Stewardship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One jurisdiction, one organization</td>
<td>Multiple jurisdictions and organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Specific problem or goal</td>
<td>Integrated vision for the region</td>
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<tr>
<td>Single network</td>
<td>Diverse collaborative networks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commitment to an idea/cause</td>
<td>Commitment to place</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Why Use Regional Approaches?**

*(Don’t Do it if You Don’t Have To!)*

- There’s a gap.
- It might be a crisis now, or it could be.
- There’s a really big opportunity out there.
- The lack of resolving this is hurting me.
- We have tried everything else.
- This issue is really complex.
- Someone else will do it to us if we don’t.
- The burdens aren’t that bad, and there are benefits.

**The NLC/ARS Guide to Local Governmental Collaboration**

- Authored by Joan Riehm (former Deputy Mayor of Louisville, ARS Chair, and John Parr, former CEO and now Senior Advisor to ARS)
- Outlines the options (the what)
- Offers examples and case studies
- A short overview of the “how” (the civic campaign)
- Give me a card and I’ll get you a copy
The Range of Regional Approaches

Relationships  Formal Partnerships  Structural Change

Local Gov't Collaboration 1

The Front Nine

1. Informal Cooperation (e.g. Denver: Metro Mayors)
2. Interlocal Service Contracts (e.g. Tri-County, Montana)
3. Joint Powers Agreements (JPA) (e.g. Central AK Transit)
4. Extraterritorial Powers (e.g. NC)
5. Regional Councils/Councils of Governments (e.g. KC)
6. Federal Encouraged Single-Purpose Regional Bodies (e.g. DVRPC in PHL)
7. State Planning and Development Districts (SPDDS): (e.g. Northwest MS)
8. Contracting (Private): (e.g. Camirillo, CA)
9. Regional Purchasing Agreements (e.g. Mesa, AZ)

Local Gov't Collaboration 2

The Back Eight

10. Local Special Districts (e.g. Metro Water, CHI)
11. Transfer of Functions (e.g. Erie County, NY)
12. Annexation (e.g. Sugar Land, TX)
13. Special Districts and Authorities (e.g. Triborough, NY)
14. Metro Multipurpose Districts (e.g. Portland, OR)
15. Reformed Urban County (e.g. Allegheny County, PA)
16. Regional Asset Districts (e.g. Denver, CO)
17. Merged/Consolidation (e.g. Louisville, KY)

This Isn't New or Different

“Regionalized taxes and/or services are everywhere...Every metro area [of the 27 largest metros], except Houston, has a number of services that are delivered over an area larger than the legal boundary of the center city.”

“Sharing specified functions and limited regional taxation are common regionalized activities.”

Wharton Real Estate Center

How? Take it One Step at a Time

- Begin the discussion - stakeholder groups
- Define the problem, identify the assets
- Survey the public
- Find the right solution
- Win the campaign
- Implement!

What's this all About?

- A: Providing better services?
  (effectiveness = doing the right thing)
  OR
- B: Saving money?
  (efficiency = doing it right)

Answer: Yes, but A will probably hold up better, and resonate more, than B
What Does the Future Hold?

- This current is only flowing in one direction, and it’s going to get more powerful.
- Embracing regional problem solving will be more and more a part of the job description of elected officials (local, state, federal).
- The challenge is clear: collaborate or ????

About ARS

- A national organization of public and private leaders dedicated to building globally competitive, sustainable regions.
- ARS supports regional leaders by sharing best practices for regional development, teaching civic leadership skills, and advising on strategies for breakthrough regional results
  - ARS Learning Network
  - Advisory Services
  - Action Research

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