

Regional Planning 101:

A NW MN Perspective

SWAA Winter Training
2025

Partnership/Cooperative

Come in all forms, sizes and types

Informal:

Who you seek input from/Who calls you
Who do you work with/Who works with you

Formal:

Contract for Service – Customer/Service Provider
Joint Powers Board – Legal Partnership

NW MN: Why we opt for Regional Partnerships

Share the load – each partner brings something to the table

Reduce cost – safety in numbers

Economy of Scale / Buying Power

Belief: Together we can achieve what alone we cannot
(NW 9-Co H&S – 14 unlined LF's to 2 Regional lined LF's)

Funding: One 'big' allocation for many Co's same issue v. many 'small' allocations for many individual Co's same issue.

(1 - \$20M MRF for all 4 Co's v. 4 - \$10M MRF's for each Co)

NW MN: How we put them Together

Identify the issue, obstacle or concern

Identify who in your 'partnership' has same v. opposite concern

Start discussion – issues, concerns, find commonalities and differences

Evaluate needs, inputs, options

Evaluate others with similar concerns – or – others who may be a solution

Repeat

NW MN: Who Makes a Good Partner

Existing Partners

Neighboring Communities

Communities that Have Similar Systems/Programs

Someone that has what you need – or needs what you have

People with Integrity, Work Ethic and Commitment

BAD PARTNER TRAITS: *Dissimilar programs and organizational structure, demonstrated history of not following through, out for themselves or don't pull their own weight.*

NW MN: How do you start ?

Talk, Talk & Talk Some More

Meet and talk again

Look for opportunities that address needs – or create opportunities

Everyone do research, gather data, explore cost – and meet and talk

Repeat until project either falls apart or project comes together

Meet, talk, firm up roles/responsibilities/obligations/commitment then ACT

Polk County Electronic Waste Collection Project – 2011

\$89,700 MPCA - \$124,000 Project

Many Individual Issues “Fitting” Together:

Illegal Dumping of Tires/E-waste/Appliances @ Recycle Center

Building/Lot Next to RRF Loan Default

Recycle Contract Coming Due

Need For Cold Storage Space

MPCA had Recycle Grant Opportunity

Polk County Electronic Waste Collection Project – 2011

Options:

Relocate Public Recycle Site Across Street

Address Items Illegally Dumped -
Prioritize

Cold Storage of Baled Recyclables

Essential Improvements to Use Building
Form Partnership & Apply for Grant



Polk County Electronic Waste Collection Project – 2011

Selecting Partners:

Who has same issues/concerns v. Who has opposite ?

Determined “opposite” would make better Partner

Identified which neighboring Counties had issue with
‘opposite’ situation

Contact & Discuss Wants/Needs/Issues

Polk County Electronic Waste Collection Project – 2011

Setting It Up:

Got commitment to all work together
Identify obligations, roles, responsibilities
Polk applied for Grant on behalf of Group
Communicated updates and issues
Met before roll-out – worked through process
Standard working relationship

.

PROGRAM IS STILL IN USE

9 Co NW Regional Hub & Spoke Project – 2023

\$99,000 MPCA - >\$130,000 Local

Exploring Solutions to C&D LF Issues

Concern by Multiple Counties about Lack of Options for
C&D Management:

Existing Unlined C&D LF Closure Costs

Lined/Collect Leachate in LF Option Costs

Alternative Options Available

9 Co NW Regional Hub & Spoke Project – 2023

Partnership Began @ 6 Co Adv. Brd Mtg (RRF)

Discussed “Could your issue be my answer”

Began Meeting on C&D Topic

**Contacted Other Neighbors Deemed Good
Partners**

9 Co NW Regional Hub & Spoke Project – 2023

9 County Group Began Meeting

SWA's Believed Worthy Project to Study

**Got Commitments from All – Filed for MPCA
Grant RFP**

MPCA Denied Funding

9 Co NW Regional Hub & Spoke Project – 2023

9 Co Group Met w/MPCA for Discussion

MPCA Supportive of Effort

Planning Grant Offered – 9 Co Group Applied

Funding Approved

9 Co NW Regional Hub & Spoke Project – 2023

Beltrami & Hubbard Took Lead – Hired Consultant

Commitments by All Partners (Monetary/Role/Result)

Regular Meetings – Share Data / Discuss Options

Drafted Report – Shared with Co Boards

9 Co NW Regional Hub & Spoke Project – 2023

Met w/Boards to Review Report Options

Commitment from All to Apply for Bond Funds to
Implement Report Findings

Budget & Applications / Legislation / Bonding Tours

2024: No MPCA CAP Grant / No EPA SWIFR

H&S Broke Down into Parts & Applied For MPCA Grants

Regional Planning 101:

Take-aways:

Regional Planning Efforts are Only as Good as Partners

Partnerships are Great Options for Addressing
Large issues – Not Alone In It

Shared Goals – Commitment – Good Ideas
& Communication Required For Success

Projects Success is Measured by How Long they Endure
AFTER Grants Expire

Thank You !

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