

An evaluation of working group process and structure

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Working Group Leader Lunch

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Evaluation questions asked about...

- Factors leading to successful completion of work plans
- Barriers to completing the work plans
- Improvements over the status quo / absence of working groups process
- Unique or innovative processes
- Impacts achieved or expected

Methods

- Interviews (N=41) with participants in 4 groups
- Mix of qualitative and quantitative analysis
 - Working group structure and processes
 - Outputs, outcomes, and impact
 - External environment
- Particular attention to unique or innovative processes

Findings



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Working group structures

- Membership
 - Diversity of membership is a strength
 - Opportunity to increase community representation
- Purpose and goals
 - Collective action is needed to address the working group issues
 - Consistently defined across membership

Core working group processes

- Convening
 - Increased strength and quality of connections
 - Strong and open communication (formal and informal)
 - Strong leadership drives outcomes
- Learning
 - Individual, organizational, and operational learning
 - Developing, synthesizing, and understanding new information

Outputs and outcomes

- Work plans – primary output of the groups
 - Benefit from diverse inputs and open process
 - Heightened timeline and time constraints in the process
- Implementation – programs, policies, and projects
 - Varied timelines and progress
 - Issues related to transition from planning to doing
- Impact on the corridor and region
 - Improve transit-related development
 - Improve quality of life for communities

External environment

- Political environment and the effect of government
 - Elections and the public discourse
 - Resource constraints
- Social environment and the effect of history
 - Historical disenfranchisement
 - Organizational histories

Considerations and conclusions



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Considerations for collaboration

- Leverage and highlight
 - Collective action and understanding of purpose/goals
 - Shared benefits to diverse sets of members
 - Open and fluid communication
- Monitor
 - Clarity in decision-making
 - Optimism among community leaders
 - Be mindful of history

Considerations for work plan development

- Openness and trust ensure quality and validity
- Catalyze and leverage resources for..
 - Process (“glue” money)
 - Implementation (“do” money)
- Working group processes can improve work plans through...
 - Inclusiveness of input (diverse membership)
 - Quality of information (learning component)

Observed innovation

- Connectedness
 - Bringing in different perspectives
 - Cross-sectoral and cross-jurisdictional
- Shared learning
 - Process was not just about the product
 - Increases member benefit
- Products – new tools and approaches

Final thought – diverse perspectives

- Diversity in membership, stakeholders, perspectives, and input:
 - Increases the overall quality and validity of the products
 - Adds to the time and resource constraints
- Is particularly important in the context of building connections
- Importance of building trust and addressing history

Discussion

Questions?

Comments?



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