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NORTHWEST SMALL CITIES SERVICES

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INTERCITY FLIER

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Northwest Small Cities Services engages in a wide range of services to meet the needs of small cities in the states of Washington, Oregon and Idaho. We will periodically send this newsletter to elected officials and staff of small cities to let them know what we are working on and how we might be helpful in your jurisdiction.

Finding Connections

• Is there trouble in your city between the Council and Mayor? • Do you have a split in your Council that can't get along? • Is there a faction in your community that just is never satisfied?

For solutions to these problems and others, we turn to Finding Connections. Finding Connections is our name for ways to communicate effectively with others to achieve your objectives – by meeting your own needs and theirs. In Finding Connections, we teach communication skills used in interest-based – or mutual gains – negotiation. In each of our newsletters, we will offer a tip that can help you succeed in these difficult situations. Although none of these will necessarily work entirely on its own, you will find tools in this column.

In prior issues of this newsletter, we described defining the issue at hand, identifying the interests – the underlying needs that each party has with that issue – brainstorming options that would meet each interest, and evaluating those options. In this column, we discuss **using consensus to get a solution**.

Many times we think of consensus as unrealistic, a process that only slows us down from getting things done. But in moving to durable agreements based on conflicting interests, consensus can be a helpful tool. In this case, consensus means that every party to the discussion can “live with” the solution. By working to reach that point, there will be real buy-in to the final outcome.

How is consensus achieved? By agreeing to ground rules under which those who withhold consensus will explain what needs must be met to reach consensus – and those in the majority for a particular outcome agree to try and meet the minority interests. Proposals are modified by the group until all of the parties can agree their interests are met and can “live with” the outcome.

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Changes

Congratulations to the many newly elected city council members and mayors! Here at NWSCS, we also have changes.

After years of serving as our President, **John Howell** stepped down (though he remains on the Board of Directors). Thank you, John, for your years of dedication and leadership as President of Northwest Small Cities Services.

Newly elected NWSCS President **Stu Creighton** is no stranger to small cities. A former Mayor, and recently retired from Boeing, he serves on the City Council of Normandy Park. Stu is generating many new ideas for NWSCS initiatives.

Newly elected Board member **Rich Yukubousky** is familiar to many of our readers because of his role as Executive Director of the Municipal Research Services Center. Rich offers creative new ideas for both projects and financing. Welcome Rich!

At their last meeting, the Board of NWSCS added **small counties** to the mission of the organization – so we will extend services to small counties that have many of the same resource issues and needs as small cities.

We also have a **new location**, in Olympia (see the address on the masthead above) – though our telephone number and fax remain the same.

Grant-Writing Help

Northwest Small Cities Services will help you write a grant application at no cost to you unless you get the grant! We fold our cost of grant-writing into the project cost. If you would like help writing a grant, call Cynthia, 206-523-1176.

Meeting Today's Challenges Together

Capacity building through Community-wide visioning and planning ♦ Capital facilities plans ♦ Rate Studies
Grant writing ♦ Technical assistance in public works, finance, personnel, technology ♦ Conflict resolution
Interim City management services ♦ and more

A 501(c) (3) non-profit organization ♦ On the web at: <http://www.nwscs.org>



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Capital Facilities Planning Model

Most jurisdictions are required by the Washington State Growth Management Act to develop and maintain comprehensive plans and capital facilities plans. The State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED) has developed a capital facilities planning model that can be very helpful to small jurisdictions in producing their mandated plans. This model uses templates that are Word- or Excel-based and uses pre-established forms and formulas to estimate costs of needed projects and prioritize them. It also provides many sample narrative pages to use in developing a final plan. Using this model can save a small city many thousands of dollars in consultant costs.

CTED has extended our contract to be available to small cities and some counties and Tribes who need assistance using the model. To reach us, contact Lynn Kohn, Senior Planner at CTED, 360-725-3042. If the help you need to develop your plan goes beyond the services offered through CTED, we can contract directly with you at a reduced consulting rate.

Retreats

Northwest Small Cities Services is facilitating several City retreats for mayors and city councils the quarter. If you have not yet planned a retreat for your Council, do consider one. It can help get all the new members on the same page with longer tenured members. Additionally, it can be helpful in updating your city's annual goals.

For retreat facilitation or training for your Council or staff on interest-based process skills (communication or negotiation), contact Cynthia at 206-523-1176.

Engaging Your Public

NWSCS partners with NW Collaborations to help cities with their public involvement needs. To get ideas for engaging your public in developing a vision for the City – or to plan public processes for facility siting, road work, or plan development – and to sign up for the NW Collaborations newsletter - go to the NW Collaborations web site at www.nwcollaborations.net.

Small City Surprises

On our travels around the state, we see delightful surprises in small cities. Here are two:

- The stunning winter wonderland sparkle of ice on the rocks and on top of the running water of the Methow River just before it joins the Columbia at Pateros
- The splendor of Fall at Cosmopolis

Finding Connections, cont'd

Resolving controversy through consensus-based decisions results in greater satisfaction than the conventional majority vote approach because the outcome is a win-win solution – and there is no loser.

Small Airports

These days nearly every community with an airport has issues – noise, encroachment by development, or other community based concerns. In some cases, it's the opposite: how to keep the airport running when it's an essential service to the community but there is little revenue to maintain the field.

Northwest Small Cities Services has staff with airport experience, including regulatory expertise, planning, and airport-community problem-solving. Call us at 206-523-1176 if you would like consultation on your airport issues.

Need a City Administrative Manual?

Many cities know they need administrative policies but don't have them – or know they need to update their existing policy manuals but can't quite get to it. Sometimes cities think they need attorneys to draft their policy manuals.

In the process of helping one city develop an administrative policy manual, Northwest Small Cities Services has developed a manual template and an expedited process to help small cities create or update theirs at a very low cost.

If you would like help updating your City's administrative policy manual, call us at 206-523-1176.

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