

City, County, and Regional Cooperation

(NOTE: The following course outline is based on previous offerings and is only intended to provide a general overview of the topics which are covered. The actual agenda used for the next offering of this course is subject to some variation.)

Course Title

City, County, and Regional Cooperation

Course Length

6 Hours

Course Description

This course, offered at a joint training session with the Association County Commissioners of Georgia, provides participants with a general overview of the role and function of municipal and county governments and explores the benefits of intergovernmental cooperation at the local and regional levels. Perspectives are shared by city and county elected officials and staff from jurisdictions that have created an environment of mutual trust and respect.

Learning Objectives

Participants will:

- Explore the structural similarities and differences between cities and counties
- Examine the importance of and some methods for building trust
- Learn about the importance of and the opportunities for regional cooperation
- Be exposed to the perspectives of city and county staff, elected officials, and attorneys in the challenges and opportunities for cities and counties to work together
- Hear the perspective of the media in the importance of working together

Agenda / Outline

This course is intended to focus on enhancing the working relationships between cities and counties and between jurisdictions on a regional basis.

8:30 – 8:45

WELCOME AND OVERVIEW

-Moderator

8:45 – 10:00

**Does Governmental Structure Encourage Cooperation?
City Roles, Responsibilities and Structure**

County Roles, Responsibilities and Structure

- What is unique about city and county structure?
- Does this uniqueness impede cooperation?
- What issues most often lead to litigation between cities and counties and how can they be avoided?
- What has been the impact of the open meetings act on city county cooperation?
- Is there a role for mediation and binding arbitration in disputes between cities and counties and how can these approaches be encouraged?

10:00 – 10:15

BREAK

10:15 – 11:00

Regional Cooperation: Why it should be of interest to you

- Why is regional cooperation important?
- What are some things that need to happen to bring it about?
- What are some of the tools or resources available to cities, counties or regional agencies?
- What are some of the issues (i.e. GRTA, green space, water, air quality, regional economic development) which need to be considered?

11:00 – 12:00

Staff Perspective on Cooperation

- County Manager

- City Manager

(30 minutes each)

- What is the role of staff in encouraging cooperation among city, county and regional? How is staff performance enhanced or diminished from cooperation or lack of cooperation?
- What are some stories of cooperative ventures in your community that were the key elements to success?

12:00 – 1:00

LUNCH

1:00 – 1:45

Elected Officials Perspective on Cooperation

-Mayor
-Commission Chair / Commissioner
(20 minutes each)

- How can elected officials build a trusting relationship with their city, county and regional counterparts?
- What have you done or plan to do to facilitate or bring about better cooperation?
- What are some successes or challenging situations you have experienced – and what seemed to be the key elements to the successes and/or failures.

1:45 - 2:15

A Media Perspective on Cooperation

-Media person

- *What does it look like to the community when governmental bodies do not cooperate?*
- *Does the public really care whether or not governmental bodies cooperate?*
- *Should the media report events in a manner which promotes cooperation?*
- *Should the media use discretion in reporting local government conflict in order to enhance the image of the community?*
- *Does the media have a role in promoting cooperation between local and regional governmental entities?*
- *What role can media play in promoting a spirit of cooperation?*

2:15 - 2:30

BREAK

2:30 - 3:15

A Regional Simulation and Process Discussion

-Moderator

3:15 - 3:30

WRAP-UP/EVALUATION