

Statement of Purpose

The cities of Independence, Lee's Summit and Blue Springs, Missouri, are working with the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) to explore and advance collaborative strategies aimed to benefit all three communities by expanding local government innovation that enhances public service, benefits employees, and optimizes customer service.

Background

Today, cities face increasing pressures to deliver quality services that meet growing citizen expectations with limited, finite resources. They value the public they serve and place great importance upon their staff, striving to support the public and their teams using “best in class” technology and principles. Funding mechanisms that have traditionally supported municipal services delivery continue to decline, yet cities’ challenges often transcend municipal boundaries. Common pain points include workforce and recruitment issues, public safety, infrastructure maintenance, and modernization of legacy systems and policies. Now more than ever, city leaders are focused upon good government. Out of necessity, they must look to ingenuity for imaginative, yet feasible solutions and must pursue strategic partnerships to fulfill fundamental needs and deliver best practices that drive innovation, employee excellence, and fiscal sustainability.

By sharing ideas and common systems, collaborative initiatives in the region have historically resulted in efficient solutions with positive impacts. Examples include the Regional 911 System, which has harnessed innovation and technology to benefit local communities and public safety.

The cities of Independence, Blue Springs and Lee's Summit (all located in eastern Jackson County, Missouri, sharing common borders) have well-established, cooperative relationships among both professional staff and their governing bodies. These jurisdictions also work closely with the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) as members of its Board of Directors, standing policy committees and participants in regional stakeholder initiatives.

Recently, deliberate conversations have occurred among these three local governments to identify and explore collaborative strategies and solutions aimed to improve excellence and innovation, for the benefit of employees, residents and visitors. The cities have requested assistance from MARC to facilitate discussion of potential initiatives and advancement steps.

Proposed Action Steps

With assistance from MARC, the three jurisdictions seek to:

- Cooperatively identify and explore innovative, high-capacity solutions, strategies and practices.
- Develop initial organizing principles for definition, evaluation, and advancement of desired initiatives.
- Advance solutions for proposal, including cooperative agreements and shared services, that streamline business functions and help deliver robust, high-quality citizen services.
 - Complete the Nationwide Cyber Security Review self-assessment on or before December 15, 2018; then discuss individual results and explore joint solutions to address identified deficiencies.
 - Work with the Government Training Institute (GTI) to assess training and safety programming needs and determine feasibility of a customized solution to serve all three communities.
- Expand the reach and influence of new and developing technologies.

The governing bodies of the three cities will be briefed on this initiative and asked to offer their insights on opportunities for joint exploration. Initial work facilitated by MARC would commence in fall 2018.

Ideas for exploration & potential collaboration:

Some initial ideas proposed by city staff include:

- Radio equipment maintenance/management
- Back-office operations (such as human resources and information technology, including cybersecurity management and electronic data storage solutions)
- Risk management, training and safety programming
- Recycling initiatives