

Best Practice

White Butte Planning Commission

CONTACT

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THE PRACTICE

The mayors and reeve of the municipalities bordered directly east of Regina gathered to talk about creating an informal regional committee group to discuss issues of common concern. The intent of the group was to meet monthly and look at ways to cooperate. The group hired a consultant to determine commonalities and goals of the group, and identify the challenges and roadblocks for the combined entity. The group applied for funding through the Planning for Growth program. There are currently two subcommittees – highways and fire and protective services, with more being considered for some of the short term priorities. The initial concern for each of the partners was the safety of the travel corridor that runs through the region. The other subcommittee was set up to focus on fire and protective services and is currently working on options of how those services can be delivered cooperatively, maintaining and/or improve current service levels, equitable funding and ongoing operation options for the region. A third committee, in the process of being formed, relates to recreation.

THE PROCESS

The long range goals of the White Butte Planning Commission will be to look at common service and development bylaws and fee structures, common wording within the Official Community Plans for each municipality and potentially, one official community plan for the region. White Butte's members commit to one meeting per month, with the various subcommittees meeting monthly, or as needed. Representatives for the subcommittees aren't limited to council members, but are picked from each community depending on the expertise needed for that subcommittee.

THE RESULTS

There are not a lot of immediate benefits to be seen in such a collaboration, with the exception of potential savings on material acquisitions (sand, pipe, equipment, etc.), depending on the economies of scale within the area; however, the long-term potential cost savings on the operations side are significant. By looking at the options for centralizing the services provided by the member municipalities, redundancy can be eliminated and services can be improved.

LESSONS LEARNED

Member municipalities appreciate the opportunity to discuss common issues. Inter-municipal cooperation is crucial for municipal governments to realize economies of scale and efficiency.