

## Collaborative Governance Initiative

# The smarter way to build win-win solutions in municipal government

Is your municipality wrestling with...

- an increasingly complicated public policy environment?
- a greater diversity in population than ever before?
- various stakeholders who all want a voice in public policy?
- trying to meet a range of priorities with limited resources?
- finding ways to build more collaborative working relationships?

You are not alone. A recent survey of chief administrative officers in Alberta indicated that more than half feel they need training in mediation, negotiation, and interpersonal communication skills to help them address an increasingly complex business environment.

That's where the Collaborative Governance Initiative can help.

## Municipal Dispute Resolution Services

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## Proactive solutions to local challenges

For more than a decade, the Municipal Dispute Resolution Services team has been helping municipalities create the resources they need to deal more effectively with contentious issues and challenging interpersonal relationships.

Whether it's help with internal processes or with setting up a more collaborative way to deal with municipal neighbours, we can help. Our emphasis is on local solutions that use procedures crafted by the individuals involved.

## A better way to move forward

The Collaborative Governance Initiative helps local governments explore how to better resolve conflicts, manage processes, and design new systems for their organization.

The Initiative is a preventative approach that ideally looks at improvements before problems arise (but we can also help if you're already stuck). A framework is provided to help municipalities evaluate how they manage external and internal issues. Then, once an assessment is complete, organizations are encouraged to develop new ways to manage these issues through enhanced policies, procedures, evaluation processes and training.

## Creating better internal processes

The Collaborative Governance Initiative can be used in a number of areas within organizations:

- public policy disputes
- municipal administration disputes
- organizational and administrative conflicts
- contractual / employment disputes
- intermunicipal cooperation protocols

## Let MDRS provide the support you need

Grants of up to \$50,000 are available for assessing current management practices and designing new systems for managing disputes cooperatively.

A matching grant of \$30,000 is available to support the development of detailed implementation plans, including training and evaluation.

The Municipal Dispute Resolution Services team will also provide consultation and support for initial assessments, selection of consultants, preparation of Requests for Proposals, and evaluation of proposals.

## Improving external working relationships

Our experience has shown that cooperative processes build win-win scenarios that improve business relationships over time. We have seen an increased desire among municipal employees and officials to work this way too. Sometimes, all that is needed is a modest amount of training or outside expertise to move an organization in this direction.

To this end, an Intermunicipal Cooperation Protocol is included in this Initiative. It helps municipalities proactively address contentious intermunicipal issues such as water use, waste management, transportation, land use, recreation, emergency services, economic development, and more.

The Initiative also provides financial assistance for municipalities to hire private facilitators who can help them develop intermunicipal cooperation agreements.