



UPPER SHORE REGIONAL COUNCIL

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Maryland General Assembly

Doris S. Mason
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October 8, 2014

Re: 2014 – 2015 USRC Collaborative Needs Assessment Survey

Dear Survey Partner;

I appreciate your participation in the Upper Shore Regional Council's Collaborative Survey and although you have seen the results, I thought I would offer you an overview of what we learned. 26 local, municipal, state and federal agencies across the Eastern Shore region responded to the survey. This included state and federal funders. The organizations to which our responders belong are listed below:

Queen Anne's County Office of Tourism; Kent County Chamber of Commerce; Mid-Shore Regional Council; Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board; University of Maryland Extension Kent County; University of Maryland, Cecil County Extension; University of Maryland, Regional Office of Cooperative Extension; Dorchester County Chamber of Commerce; Eastern Shore Higher Education Center; Chesapeake College, Workforce and Continuing Education; Chesapeake College, Academic Planning; Dorchester County Board of Education; Queen Anne's County Government; Washington College, Center for Environment & Society; Washington College, Administration; Cecil County Office of Economic Development; County Commissioners of Kent County, Maryland; Queen Anne's County Chamber of Commerce; MD Small Business & Technology Development Center, Maryland TEDCO, Washington College, GIS Department; Caroline County Chamber of Commerce; Caroline County Economic Development Corporation; USDA.

Why was there a need for a collaborative survey?

There is a growing need for collaborative organizations to utilize their respective resources to find solutions to meet today's planning and economic challenges. This is especially true for rural areas of the country. Thanks to your responses to the USRC's Collaborative Needs Assessment, our findings support that assumption!

The survey was designed to assess how our partner organizations can establish and maintain a close region-wide working relationship through: 1) Becoming aware of what each collaborative organization provides; 2) Highlighting the niche differences to avoid overlap and duplication of services; 3) Determining the common unmet service needs in the field; 4) Collaborating across state and county lines access greater amounts of federal funding to address our needs.

Summary of Findings:

Our findings report that many of our partner organizations desire to collaborate to promote local goals. The most noted counties interested in those types of partnerships were: Queen Anne's, Caroline, Talbot, Cecil and Kent. 12.5% of our partners would be interested in promoting goals on a multi-state and regional level.



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Summary of Findings (cont.):

Respondents found the most overlap in services among partners in the following services areas: Economic and Workforce Development. 75% of respondents wanted to form collaborations specifically to address an identified significant problem. The survey also found that having clearly defined roles for all group members was most important in regards to forming alliances. One of the main concerns respondents had in regards to the success of partnerships was related to the allocation of resources, and ensuring that all in the group would have equal and fair access to those resources. Additionally, 29% of respondents would like to collaborate jointly to access USDA grants.

The above is a summary of the key findings of the survey. Again, thank you for participating in our survey. Please do feel free to contact me at (410)-810-2125 with further questions, or discussion points regarding our collaborative survey, and where you think we should go from here as we strengthen our partnerships across our region.

Sincerely;

Doris S. Mason, MSW
Executive Director

CC: USRC Executive Bd.