

The Intergovernmental Cooperation Working Group will make suggestions to improve the collaboration between and among regional governments and institutions. The first meeting was held on June 1, 2010 in downtown, at Centennial Plaza. The discussion focused on requests for more information and to gather a baseline understanding of the scope for this element. The discussion was organized into three topics: “with whom should we cooperate,” internal cooperation, and external cooperation.

The Working Group interpreted the first topic broadly, naming institutions, municipalities, City departments, and the Federal Government. One comment called out “national initiatives relative to stimulus funds.” This implies that the City could benefit financially from aligning with government agencies and larger jurisdictions which contain the City, for example, the State of Ohio and Hamilton County. Working Group members also suggested that the City partner with some private and non-government institutions including universities, the United Way, and the Urban League.

The discussion topics about internal cooperation and external cooperation were more focused on process, or how the City should communicate to facilitate cooperation. A theme emerged from this topic regarding community councils, specifically that the City should foster them with funding and community building initiatives. The intention of building stronger community councils is to equalize their influence on City actions and make that interaction more democratic. This theme also brought forth concerns about disparate treatment of Neighborhood Business Districts.

Finally, the Working Group discussed ways that Cincinnati could improve its relationship with external organizations. This portion of the discussion focused mainly on bordering municipalities. There are a few methods that the group mentioned. One of these is to be a leader in the region with respect to economic activity, technology infrastructure, major development projects, as well as social policies, and further, to lead by example. One issue that came up throughout the Working Group discussion is that the City does not take advantage of technology, and that doing so would greatly facilitate communication and cooperation.