



**The Center for Local  
GOVERNMENT**

**Center for Local Government  
2017-2022 Strategic Plan**

**2019 Progress Report**

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## **Section 1: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats**

- **Strengths**
  - For a small staff, we do what we do well
  - We provide good value to members
  - Members appear to like the programs we offer
  - We are responsive when members request assistance
  - We stay out of the legislative process
  - New office space makes us more credible as an organization
- **Weaknesses**
  - Small staff limits the ability to pursue larger projects
  - We need to keep data more current
    - We provide data given to us, but need to get better participation in order to keep the data current
  - More engagement in information sharing is needed (spot surveys, etc.)
  - More engagement from the members in program development is needed
- **Opportunities**
  - We have an opportunity to be a better advocate for members
  - We have an opportunity to expand the scope of our existing programs
  - We have an opportunity to aid members in smaller projects (e.g. grants or special projects)
  - We have an opportunity to promote efficiencies through e-mail blasts
  - Thing to perhaps consider: Is CLG better off with fewer, but higher paying, members?
- **Threats**
  - Growth: Are we growing too rapidly or too slowly? Survey input appeared to say that members are split on this question.
  - Competing entities with bigger scale.
  - Conflicts that come from contrasting member priorities (e.g. different priorities for the performance metrics group, conflicts between members that may spill over to CLG).
  - CLG must strike a balance between building consensus between member communities and moving a new program's development forward.

## **Section 2: CLG Goals and Strategies: Implementation Step**

### **Updates in red**

***Goal 1:** The Center for Local Government is the premier information hub for local governments in the Cincinnati and Dayton region. It is the first place that local governments look to when they need information.*

#### Implementation Steps

- Develop a code bank. This is a web resource where governments can download or view relevant policies and procedures from other governments.
  - The code bank is on the CLG website homepage. Current codes in the bank include:
    - [Compensatory Time Policies](#) (updated 2017)
    - [Employee Evaluations](#) (updated 2016)
    - [Investment Policies](#) (updated 2014)
    - [Leave Policies](#) (updated 2016)
    - [Mayor's Court Fee Schedules](#) (updated 2016)
    - [Personnel Manuals](#) (updated 2017)
    - [Planning & Zoning Fee Policies](#) (updated 2017)
    - [Social Media Policies](#) (updated 2014)
    - [Uniform Policies](#) (updated 2009)
    - [Indigent Burial](#) (updated 7/2018)
    - [Leave Request Forms](#) (updated 1/2018)
    - [Medical Marijuana](#) (updated 7/2018)
    - [Tuition Reimbursement Policies](#) (updated 2018)
    - [Credit Card Policies](#) (updated 2019)
    - [Organization Charts](#) (updated 2019)
    - [Police Department Budgets](#) (updated 2019)
    - [Council and Commission Rules](#) (will be uploaded 1/2020)
  - CLG also redesigned its datacenter in 2019. Part of that redesign includes a “budget” section that links to budget documents and JEDZ agreements
- Strengthen the Spot Survey program to be as effective as possible.
  - Assess whether CLG’s current spot survey software (SurveyMonkey) is the best option for disseminating and analyzing spot surveys.
    - Survey monkey remains the most cost effective and user-friendly of the options currently available.
  - Ask if a spot survey applies to the community filling it out.
    - After review, this option seems to take care of itself. Since each community isn’t required to respond to every survey, it can be deduced that only relevant surveys to the surveyed are being responded to.
  - Provide additional staff consultation to governments requesting spot surveys, to ensure that they are clear and efficiently designed.
    - CLG follows up with all who request a spot survey to ensure that the questions to be asked are directly of interest to the requestor and are clearly worded. CLG has instituted format changes to the spot surveys. This includes inserting more multiple choice and “yes/no” questions.

- In 2019, a time estimate was added to each spot survey through an algorithm developed through SurveyMonkey. Most surveys take less than 7 minutes to complete.
- Ensure that CLG’s surveys focus on accurate information that is relevant to the CLG.
  - Membership
    - Form an Annual Survey review committee, to review and recommend updates to the CLG Annual Survey every two years. This would include identifying information that CLG is not collecting that would have utility to members, as well as eliminating information that CLG IS collecting that does not have utility to members.
      - In 2018, CLG formed an Information Sharing taskforce to provide input on a complete overhaul of the CLG Datacenter program. This program is powered by an open source software package called Knack, and is housed in the member log-in section of the CLG website. CLG also received a \$5,000 grant from the Duke Energy Foundation to fund the development of a new CLG Datacenter.
      - In 2019 the redesigned CLG datacenter was launched. Features of the redesign include:
        - More specialized tabs in the Knack dashboard to make finding data easier: With Knack each tab exports into a single spreadsheet. Under the old system with fewer tabs, users had to guess where certain information was stored, and when they exported into excel, they would have large spreadsheets with more irrelevant information to their search. By increasing the tabs on the new Knack dashboard, users will have an easier time finding what they are looking for, and the spreadsheets they export will have a higher percentage of relevant information.
          - The old datacenter had service profile, PTO, part time employee, pay practices, comp/overtime, longevity pay, health insurance plan designs health insurance general information, pay data and CAO pay data tabs.
          - The new datacenter has profile, tax rates, budgets, employee census, part time employees, PTO, overtime/comp time, pay increase policies, holidays, health insurance general information, health insurance plan designs, dental, vision, life, pay data and CAO pay data.
        - Primary source materials when appropriate: The old CLG datacenter has questions pertaining to leave policies and budgets. The new datacenter simply asks for leave policies and budget documents. Providing primary source material eliminates transcription errors or misinterpretation of survey questions pertaining to the budget or to leave. Upon the recommendation of CLG members, JED and JEDZ authorizing documents are also included.
        - Data scrubbing: A best practice adopted by mature data operations (e.g. the City of Cincinnati) involve auditing and “scrubbing” data submitted by the governments to ensure accuracy. The CLG Program Development Director called and followed up with



**Goal 2:** *The Center for Local Government is the focal point for engagement between local governments in the Cincinnati and Dayton region, especially amongst our diverse member communities.*

### Implementation Steps

- Identify opportunities for members to build relationships with each other.
  - Establish CLG CAO forums, to build relationships between CAOs and to provide an informal information sharing apparatus. These forums are held twice per year.
    - CAOs are asked to come with one discussion topic to share with their peers. CAO forums led to CLG facilitating a connection between communities and the Greater Cincinnati Waterworks (GCWW) to find a way to fund GCWW's lead service line replacement program.
  - Establish a community spotlight in the CLG Newsletter.
    - In 2019, West Chester Township, Washington Township, Springboro, Liberty Township, Montgomery and Mason were all spotlighted. A community is spotlighted by submitting an article to be posted in the CLG Newsletter. A call for articles goes out to every CLG member before all but the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Newsletter.
    - *(Note that this section only contains progress that happened in 2019. Please refer to previous Strategic Plan Updates for progress from previous years).*
  - Conduct an engagement survey: "What strategies should CLG use to enhance inter-member engagement?"
  
- Enhance communication between the Dayton and Cincinnati areas.
  - Host a Dayton / Cincinnati CAO Idea Exchange
  - Identify CLG services that could benefit Dayton area governments, especially ones that cannot participate in MVCC.
    - The CLG Leadership Academy was expanded to MVRMA governments, as the MVCC Academy has been focused only on MVCC members. CLG marketed the SWORRE program to the Dayton area, leading to Brookville joining CLG. Horan continues marketing CLGBP in the Dayton area.
  
- Study the establishment of a social media presence.
  - CLG's twitter presence is slowly expanding, and is currently at 52 followers. This is up from 30 at the end of 2018. A study of the people following CLG's account indicates that it is primarily staff from local governments, local government accounts themselves, or elected officials.
  
- Increase engagement of member communities in identifying and developing potential programs.
  - Establish taskforces built around programmatic goals
    - This is standard procedure for CLG. Examples include the new Information Sharing Taskforce, Leadership Academy Taskforce, the Service Delivery Metrics Taskforce, etc.

**Goal 3:** *The Center for Local Government has a diverse membership base, and will grow that base in sustainable fashion in order to enhance efficiencies between local governments.*

Implementation Steps

- Identify and reach out to potential CLG member communities in the Dayton area: Identify unique Dayton-area needs that may drive CLG membership. (Shared service that exists in Cincinnati but not Dayton / Township involvement / small community involvement)
  - Study areas where CLG's strengths can address need areas for Dayton area governments, especially townships.
    - As mentioned in the previous goal, CLG identified SWORRE as a potential area for expansion into the Dayton region. In 2017, CLG reached out to West Carrollton, Brookville and Moraine. West Carrollton participated in the bid process but not the contract. Brookville fully participated and joined CLG.
- Increase CLG membership within the 10-county service area in a general sense
  - Brookville and Colerain Township joined CLG in 2017. Membership growth was even in 2018. **Trenton joined in 2019. Wyoming and Butler County both committed to joining in 2019, with membership start dates on 1/1/2020.**
- Pursue a peer based recruitment strategy led by Board members (e.g. Board members or other CAOs assist ED in recruitment by providing peer to peer education on the benefits of CLG membership)
  - Although no formal strategy has been developed, board members have helped identify potential CLG member communities.
- Identify non CLG member communities who may benefit from existing programs.
  - This is a continuing process.



**Goal 4:** *The Center for Local Government identifies new opportunities for governments to work together, and works to enhance its current programs.*

Implementation Steps:

- Increase CLG's utilization of grant resources to fund program development (e.g. LGIF, LGIP, Program Development Fund, private foundations)
  - CLG utilized a Duke Energy Foundation grant of \$5,000 to redesign its Datacenter in 2019. CLG also received a grant for the 2020 Leadership Academy program in the amount of \$2,000.
  - *(Note that this section only contains progress that happened in 2019. Please refer to previous Strategic Plan Updates for progress from previous years).*
- Continue to identify commonalities between governments, either in terms of challenges or opportunities, and work with those governments to identify solutions that can be achieved together.
  - CLG facilitated a connection between communities and the Greater Cincinnati Waterworks (GCWW) on the lead service line replacement issue in 2018.
  - In 2019, CLG worked with Colerain Township, Fairfax, Miami Township and others to create a traffic calming device lending bank. CLG also worked with Silverton, Madeira, Anderson Township and Cincinnati on a potential multi-government wind powered electricity aggregation program, although it did not come to fruition.
- Establish CLG as an option for governments looking to conduct special research studies or similar projects.
  - Program Development Director Jeremy Worley performed a GIS project for Colerain Township, and a fire staffing project for the Little Miami Joint Fire and Rescue District.
  - CLG conducted a Council Election Comparison Study for Amberley Village.
  - *(Note that this section only contains progress that happened in 2019. Please refer to previous Strategic Plan Updates for progress from previous years).*

**Goal 5:** *The Center for Local Government is a respected advocate for local government interests, and will work to maintain and build upon our reputation and public image.*

#### Implementation Steps

- Identify areas of collaboration between local governments and school districts
  - School Districts were invited to the 2019 mental health training series.
  - CLG partnered with the Hamilton / Clermont Information Technology Center (ITC) to conduct cyber security training in January of 2019. ITCs are state agencies that function as the information technology arm for school districts in Ohio.
  - CLG continues to look for partnership opportunities with the Hamilton County Educational Service Center (ESC) and the Hamilton / Clermont ITC.
  
- Continue to partner on regional initiatives that align with CLG's mission
  - Identify CLG's strengths and how they can be utilized in relation to regional initiatives (e.g. CLG's facilitation strengths, dissemination strengths, etc.)
    - CLG is sponsoring the Northern Kentucky University (NKU) Masters in Public Administration (MPA) Mentorship Program. The first nine participants were connected with local government managers in 2018.
    - CLG is working with governments and GCWW on lead service line removal
    - CLG partnered with the Lindner Center of HOPE on mental health training.
    - CLG partnered with the Hamilton / Clermont Cooperative ITC (see above).
    - CLG is on the planning committee for the 2020 Connecting the Dots Summit- focused on first ring suburbs. Other participants include the Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC), Xavier University Community Building Institute, the Port Authority, Hamilton County, and the Village of Silverton.
    - CLG presented at the 2019 Hamilton County Shared Services Summit.
    - CLG was invited by the Greater Cincinnati World Affairs Council to present to a visiting delegation of Ukrainian officials.
  - Continue to work with the Much in Common Initiative and other similar initiatives.
    - The Much in Common program evolved into a series of local government forums for elected officials. Through this program, CLG developed the partnership with the Lindner Center of HOPE referenced above.
    - See references to the Connecting the Dots and Shared Services Summits above.
  
- Establish strategic partnerships with other appropriate service organizations (e.g. regional chambers of commerce, Ohio Kentucky Indiana Regional Council of Government (OKI), etc.)
  - CLG formed partnerships with the Hamilton / Clermont Cooperative ITC, the Lindner Center of HOPE and the NKU MPA Program in 2018. CLG connected governments and GCWW on the lead service line replacement issue. CLG continues to serve as the Secretariat to the Cincinnati Area Management Association (CAMA).
  
- Actively seek recognition for CLG accomplishments, as well as the accomplishments of our member governments
  - CLG received the 2019 Intergovernmental Cooperation Award from the Ohio City/County Management Association (OCMA) for the Leadership Academy program.

- CLG's executive Director was invited to present to the Ohio Municipal Clerks Association (OMCA), the Southwest Ohio Tax Officers Association (SWOTA), the Hamilton County Shared Services Summit, and the Greater Cincinnati World Affairs Council.
- *(Note that the items above only contains progress that happened in 2019. Please refer to previous Strategic Plan Updates for progress from previous years).*
- More press releases- either pertaining to CLG or to local government accomplishments.
- Also use our influence to defend local governments in the press.
  - CLG has historically written letters to the editor or submitted guest editorials relating to local government. CLG continue to look for opportunities to do this moving forward.

**Goal 6: Ensure CLG is prepared to withstand contingencies.**

Implementation Steps

- An aggressive recruitment program should make up for any revenue shortfall up to \$15,000. This gap can be closed in one of two ways:
  1. Recruit four new governments at the \$3,825 level OR
  2. Recruit the City of Cincinnati at the \$15,000 level. Each of these two scenarios will require the concerted effort at all levels (staff and board) to identify and recruit new governments.
    - **As of 2019, no such shortfall exists. The CLG Board voted to reduce the \$15,000 membership dues level to \$7,500 in 2019. With Butler County joining CLG in January of 2020, CLG has made up the \$7,500 shortfall from this dues reduction. Trenton and Wyoming will also be paying \$3,825 in 2020.**
- Establish a branding and marketing plan.
  - CLG will modernize the appearance of its printed marketing materials and Annual Report.
    - CLG’s marketing materials were updated in 2018 and again in 2019. CLG has taken on a consistent branding and color scheme for all Annual Reports, Program Lists, training invitations, etc.
    - CLG reformatted its newsletter in 2018, and updated this format to the new color scheme in 2019.
    - **CLG will redesign its website in 2020.**
  - The CLG Annual Report will become a cornerstone tool in the CLG marketing strategy to potential members.
    - New or potential members receive a CLG Annual Report, CLG’s new marketing brochure, a CLGBP one-pager developed by Horan, an updated Program List, and a copy of the CLG Strategic Plan.
- CLG will also review membership dues levels. Membership dues were last updated in 2006.
  - CLG should annually assess membership dues levels, and determine whether they reflect the current economic conditions to help close any potential revenue shortfall or growth opportunity.
    - **CLG reviewed membership dues levels as part of the 2020 budget process, and decided to keep them the same in 2020.**

*Thank you for reading CLG’s 2019 Strategic Plan Progress Report. Please refer to the 2017 and 2018 Strategic Plan Progress Reports for information from prior years (available upon request). We look forward to continuing to work toward the goals established in our 2017-2022 Strategic Plan over the next few years.*