

NLWJC - Kagan

DPC - Box 013 - Folder 012

**DPC [Domestic Policy Council] -
AG Collaboration Process**

To: Those Attending AG Reno's 9/11 Meeting
From: Kent Markus, DOJ Deputy Chief of Staff
Subject: Meeting Purpose
Date: September 8, 1997

MEMORANDUM

For some time, Attorney General Reno has been keenly interested in two ways in which collaborative efforts can make scarce federal support for communities go further and improve the efficiency of that support. Whether one is discussing grants, training, technical assistance, direct services, or any other form of federal assistance which is provided to communities, collaboration unquestionably increases the efficacy of those efforts.

As the accompanying two pages indicate, Attorney General Reno is interested in having a broad, general discussion about two questions:

- 1) How can federal agencies administering overlapping areas of jurisdiction better collaborate in their support activities for communities?
- 2) How can we assist communities in more strategically and more easily accessing federal support which is available to them?

The Attorney General looks forward to seeing you on Thursday to discuss these and related matters. Please feel free to contact me at 202/514-3008 if I can be of assistance prior to the meeting.

FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITIES
(STIMULATING INDIVIDUAL SELF-SUFFICIENCY)

I) The Status Quo

a) Federal support for communities

The federal government provides support for communities in a wide range of different forms including grants, training, technical assistance, direct services, human resource commitments, and others.

b) The need for federal collaboration

Because the allocation of these resources is based upon the organization of the federal government into agencies with large, and frequently overlapping, areas of jurisdiction, federal agencies often provide support to communities which is similar or complimentary to support being provided by other federal agencies. Unfortunately, there is no simple way of knowing about and coordinating the support being provided to communities by a sister agency which is similar or complimentary to the support being provided by one's own agency.

c) The need for community collaboration

Experience shows that communities are more effective when their efforts to tackle community problems include a collaborative community group, involving all community stakeholders, which diagnoses each problem, inventories community resources, and develops a shared community response for each problem. Unfortunately, communities have no simple way of knowing about or accessing the federal support which they need. In addition, most federal efforts do not explicitly motivate communities to diagnose their collective needs in order to prioritize their requests for federal assistance. Consequently, federal support is not as effectively targeted as it might be.

d) The need for action

Increased collaboration at the federal level and increased collaboration at the community level would increase efficiency, reduce waste and would free up resources needed to allow the federal government to do even more to assist communities.

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2) What can be done

- a) Gather information about the support which the federal government provides to communities -- directly or indirectly -- and organize it in a simple, community-oriented manner, written in plain English. (Such an effort, with a "community needs" orientation, would be different from other existing or "in development" sources of information like the Catalogue of Domestic Federal Assistance, or the NPR State and Local Gateway Project.)
- b) Establish an interagency working group which would use the information to evaluate federal domestic discretionary spending to detect underfunding, overfunding, and opportunities for federal collaboration.
- c) Provide the "federal support" information to communities in as many ways as possible to assist them in knowing about and accessing support the federal government is providing. Possibilities would include:
 - Internet web site
 - Publications
 - Federal single points of contact physically stationed in communities throughout the country (i.e. - locally based federal government ombudspersons for communities)
 - Federal single points of contact physically stationed in Washington, assigned to communities (i.e. - Washington based federal government ombudspersons for communities)
- d) Provide communities assistance in developing (and incentives to develop) collaborative community stakeholder groups for diagnosing their programs, evaluating their resources, and prioritizing their needs for federal support.
- e) Other