



TLG and LMC 2016 Case Study Application
Future Ready Communities



DUE: September 4, 2015

Email to: Ryan Spillers at rspillers@transformgov.org

COVER PAGE

- 1. Case Study Title: Digging Through Trash Finds Overflow of Savings
2. Case Study Category (Select only one, selection identified by highlighting your choice):
Planning for Your Future
Reinventing Local Government
Blinders
Creating an Inclusive Community
Community Networks
3. Jurisdiction Name: Manatee County Government
4. Jurisdiction Population (US Census): 352,000
5. Would you like the application to be considered for our Rapid Fire Session?
YES NO
6. Project Leader (Primary Contact for case study notification):
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1. Presentation title and description of the innovation. *100 word maximum.*

This session will focus on utilizing cross-functional teams to find savings in every area of the government. The specific focus will be on the evaluation of County dumpsters and opportunities from savings by digging through the seemingly insignificant. The dumpster project engaged various partners throughout the county and what started as a simple project turned into an involved yet successful project. During this process, it was learned not to assume that someone else knows the answer and to always validate.

2. When and how was the program, policy or initiative originally conceived in your jurisdiction? *100 word maximum.*

The Property Management Department in Manatee County maintains multiple facilities throughout the County. Budget concerns initiated a cost and productivity analysis of waste management that yielded a commendable savings in recent years. However, the expenditure trend continued upward. It was believed that food waste from the County's jail cafeteria was the

culprit. Research and consideration for a future waste-to-energy or waste-to-gray water technology was nixed due to the discovery that 90% of this food waste was feeding on-site livestock. A county-wide audit of waste receptacles and services commenced due to this finding.

3. How exactly is the program or policy innovative? How has your innovation changed previous processes, products or services? *100 word maximum.*

A cross functional team of manual effort in combination with ArcGIS Technology (geographic information system) created a progressive approach to research and analysis within the County. An intern launched the project with a spreadsheet and utilized aerial photography, pictometry, global positioning systems, visual identification, verification, modification, asset location and documentation. Employee efforts of tracking, documenting, communicating, visualizing and participating in the project produced invaluable information and empowerment to the staff. Due to this process, assets which are our dumpsters, are now observed, located, and documented in our asset inventory.

4. Explain how the program or initiative substantially stretched or improved the boundaries of ordinary governmental operations. *200 word maximum.*

Despite extraordinary efforts throughout local governments, fiefdoms still exist. Aggregating a cross-functional team by utilizing great minds and ideas for a more efficient government is the best way to topple them. Dissolving the boundaries unconsciously built between management, departments and individuals is what led to success.

This project poked through conventional boundaries by mixing modern perspectives with a traditional process. Historically, charges for multi-departmental services, including solid waste collection were centrally billed resulting in a lack of financial oversight. Dumpster charges were considered “the cost of doing business” and little evaluation was done for the frequency of service or size selections of the receptacles. Determination was the first individual step. The results required expertise from other departments. Establishing the idea that it was safe for employees to share information and freely communicate thoughts and ideas took time that was well spent. Communicating by email and phone limited the accuracy, information and delivery. Small meetings grew into larger meetings with front-line supervisors and managers which was no small task. The meeting allowed for timelines, budgets, and progress reports which resulted in a network of shared information. Assignments were allocated and responsibilities were given. This network soon became a team.

5. What individuals or groups are considered the primary initiators of your program? How does the innovation engage stakeholders or demonstrate high performance teaming? Were strategic partnerships and/or community networks developed as a result of the innovation? *200 word maximum.*

The Property Management Director is the department’s unofficial ‘chief innovator’. Confined within an allocated budget, he is continuously analyzing current practices and using innovative methodologies to enhance operational and procedural activities including; facilities, maintenance and employee production. Overlooking the diverse and copious volume of operations, the Director has been successful at integrating the biodiversity of the administration and staff, while addressing current routine issues and advancing the County into a more financially innovative, sustainable and energy efficient process.

The Dumpster project started with minimal financial output, including the selection of a part-time intern to begin collecting easily accessible data. As the information accumulated, the project engaged internal stakeholders as well as those outside the department to ensure all facets of the project were considered. A team from fiscal services, custodial, utilities (including recycling), information technology, parks and grounds employees worked with comptroller representatives, solid waste providers and private sector partners. The challenge was integrating individual, divisional and departmental information to find and correct inefficiencies within the dumpster chain of methodology. It was important to recognize what efficiencies could prevail, but also to encourage future team developments and opportunities by telling the dumpster tale

6. If a private consultant was used please describe their involvement, identify the consultant and/or firm and provide contact information. *100 word maximum.*

N/A

7. To what extent do you believe your program or policy initiative is potentially replicable within other jurisdictions and why? To your knowledge, have any other jurisdictions or organizations established programs or implemented policies modeled specifically on this project? Please provide verification of the replication. *200 word maximum.*

This initiative is easily replicable within other jurisdictions. Cross-functional teams have the ability to look at any facet of their organization and make an impact through communication, discussion, research and collaboration. Several outcomes were not fully anticipated. While the savings are substantial, so is the asset mapping and management that is behind the savings. The exercise included standardizing and detailing the assets of the county providing for a longer term replacement plan and combining the data to make it accessible. The project was so successful that it was presented to County Administration. The initial dumpster project located unincorporated dumpsters for the entire County. Once the preliminary results were received, the Property Management Department went into greater detail and focused on Property Management accounts first. During the presentation, a discussion to use this project as a blueprint for the other departments to analyze their best use of dumpsters and trash savings was decided. The other departments that utilize the majority of dumpster accounts include Utilities and Public Works.

8. What were the costs? What were the savings? *100 word maximum.*

The cost for this project included staff time to research, meet and review. While this time was significant, savings from this project have been even more so. To date, the county has identified over \$86,000 in recurring annualized savings and a one-time credit of \$23,000 was discovered and owed to the county for services. By removing unnecessary dumpsters and upgrading with solar-powered trash compactors, the county has improved the aesthetics of a local public park and is utilizing a renewable energy technology. While these amounts are significant, there are more opportunities for savings within other departments and incorporated locations.

9. Please describe the most significant obstacle(s) encountered thus far by your program. How have they been dealt with? Which ones remain? *200 word maximum.*

Apathy and ownership created an obstacle. Many do not understand the philosophy of incremental savings, therefore, it carries no significant impact. Initially, when a minimal monetary amount accented, it was thought to be trivial. These results did however, establish a team and garnered further financial appreciation for the project.

Lack of consistency and inaccurate data created unanswered questions. There was no methodical placement for departmental assets and documentation. Employees working in the same department did not have similar information, nor did they have access to certain information. Respective departments offered different information including individuals providing mismatched data. An additional current obstacle was the absence of internal communication and affable interactions. Before the project gained momentum, there was a lack of desire to share information. Rather than hitting a dead-end, copious communications efforts were placed to gain correct data. This created displeasure, confusion with mixed and duplicated results. A disgruntled community neighbor was also encountered. Advertisements were handed out to home association members with the location of a nearby park dumpster. Once explained that was not the intended use and also illegal, discussions ended.

10. What outcomes did this program or policy have? What baseline data did you collect? How did you measure the change based on the intervention, and why do you believe in the credibility of this assessment? *200 word maximum.*

The dumpster project started out as an unremarkable, typical government endeavor. What made this particular task different, was utilizing new perspective, an unrelenting search for factual data, and a modern and very simple approach. An intern started the project and there was no pressure to get it done quickly. The motivated intern believed that if a project is going to be tasked, it must be done correctly and the main motivator was the accuracy of data. Many questions and concerns were discovered regarding the complacency, inaccuracy, communication and collaboration of participation. It was clear that there lacked a symbiotic relationship. The unmistakable outcome was cost savings and the continual advancement the County is making towards energy and sustainability, including the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions emitted from unnecessary waste management pickups.

The original spreadsheet was collected by Fiscal Services and given to the GIS department for verifying and documenting purposes, including asset management. It became apparent the data was outdated and at times, invalid. Combining physical labor and technical capabilities, a new and credible list was created. The vast contrast between the two documents interrupted the outdated and broken down "business as usual" mindset, followed by a desperately needed intervention.

11. Has the program received any press or other media coverage to date? If yes, please list the sources and briefly describe relevant coverage. *100 word maximum.*

This project was formatted into a Story Map graphic organizer and presented to the Manatee County Chamber of Commerce in downtown Bradenton, Florida, as well as various internal organizations. The original Story Map presentation is currently located on the internal employee iNet and the external County website @ www.mymanatee.org.

12. Please provide web links where the innovation can be seen/tested (in the case of something that is web-based) *100 word maximum*.

The original Story Map presentation is currently located on the internal employee iNet and the external County website @ www.mymanatee.org.

13. Please provide any key references and their contact information who can be interviewed/called to discuss the innovation and its impact. *100 word maximum*.

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14. You've been to a lot of conferences. TLG should be a unique experience for everyone. Describe how your case study presentation will be different than other conference presentations. *200 word maximum.*
- How will you make the session creative and unique?
 - How do you plan to be both entertaining and educational?
 - Include a description of how your session will facilitate group activities and/or interaction.

What discerns this detritus tale from others is the open visionary access into the daily routines which include the intermittent ugly truth between employee interactions and communications. Teamwork is taught and stressed in a majority of workplaces around the world, but many do not discuss the everyday components of daily teamwork interactions. Pressure, time constraints, performance, preference, charisma, emotions can amass inadvertent and unconscious social and internal challenges. This honest insight can help remove the stigma of workplace frustrations and form a platform for openness, cross-functional conversations and pour the first concrete slab to create change.

Turning the ugly truth of teamwork and recycling into attractive professional etiquette, this narrative story involves 125 dumpsters, an intern and a team, bound by duty, forced by garbage to play nice and share their trash together to find an \$86,000.00 prize!

The feature will use the creative Story Map application from ArcGIS Technology. This will enable the gallery to tour the tale and debris of "The Demeanor and Impacts of Trash." Photographic images, aerial photography, global positioning and satellite imagery will display and aggregate the various methodologies of; visualization, verification, modification, determination and documentation involved.

15. Anything else you would like to add? *200 word maximum.*