



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: ___Service Sharing at the Speed of Light _____
2. Case Study Category (Select only one, selection identified by highlighting your choice):

Planning for Your Future	Creating an Inclusive Community
Reinventing Local Government	Community Networks
Blinders	
3. Jurisdiction Name: __City of Montgomery, OH _____
4. Jurisdiction Population (US Census): _____10,210_____
5. Would you like the application to be considered for our Rapid Fire Session? (Rapid Fire presentations are fast-paced, entertaining, interactive presentations. Each jurisdiction will have five minutes to make their presentations using 15 PPT slides set on auto-forward primarily containing photos/graphics. Participants will be seated at round tables to facilitate an energetic idea exchange. A cash bar will be available.)

YES	NO
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6. Project Leader (Primary Contact for case study notification):
Name: __Matthew Vanderhorst _____
Title: _Community and Information Services Director _____
Department: ___ Community and Information Services _____
Phone Number: ___ 513-792-8323 _____
eMail: _ mvander@ci.montgomery.oh.us _____
US Mail Address, including zip code: __ 10101 Montgomery Road, Montgomery, Ohio 45242 _____
Twitter Account: _@MontgomeryOhio _____

List additional presenters contact information below:

1. Presentation title and description of the innovation. *100 word maximum.*

Service Sharing at the Speed of Light

The City of Montgomery, Ohio and Sycamore Community Schools created a technology service sharing partnership that improved the information technology resources for both organizations and created a lasting partnership for future innovation.

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

The City of Montgomery and Sycamore Community Schools have a long-standing professional working relationship and meet regularly to discuss local and regional issues that affect both organizations. Late in 2012, the technology directors from both organizations met to discuss the challenges they faced and potential opportunities for cost savings and service enhancements. It was during this initial meeting that the seeds were sown for a much larger vision of service collaboration for information technology services.

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

With the support of senior leadership, the technology directors of both organizations first met to gauge interest in pursuing a service collaboration effort. The value in doing so was immediately apparent and efforts were soon taken to perform an assessment to discover how technology services were delivered by each organization, where there were similarities, what resources were needed to provide those services and where efficiencies could be realized through collaboration. Consideration had to be taken to ensure E-Rate rules were not broken, potentially jeopardizing technology funding for Sycamore Community Schools, something that City of Montgomery was not affected by.

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

The City of Montgomery had a need to install a fiber-optic connection to its public works facility to improve operations. Typically, this would have been accomplished by leasing a connection from one of the local telecommunications companies because of the distance to the facility. The cost to lease a connection of sufficient bandwidth to address current needs and future growth was always cost prohibitive for such a small organization. During the above mentioned meetings between both organizations this need was discussed and plans were made as to how Sycamore Community Schools could help solve the problem and, in turn provide a benefit to them, as well as the City. Sycamore had not been in the business of providing a professional service to another organizations in the past and the City had not contracted for such a service from a public organization. Both organizations had to develop a formal support level agreement, contractual terms, and a fee structure that was fair to both and feasible to implement. This was unfamiliar territory for both organizations.

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 primary initiators of this endeavor were Matthew Vanderhorst, Community and Information Service Director for the City of Montgomery and William Fritz, Technology Director for Sycamore Community Schools. The goal for both individuals and their representative organizations was to find ways in which service to the community and internal staff could be improved through collaboration. Different organizational operating guidelines had to be overcome and the team had to develop and implement a plan that satisfied the needs of both organizations which have different missions. To the team's benefit, both organizations have similar work cultures that foster innovation, collaboration, process improvement, and creative problem solving and employee ownership in the success of the organization. Creating a team that consisted of members from organizations with similar values created a powerful combination of talent and a desire to improve service for the greater good. This partnership has turned into an integrated cross-organizational team that continually meets to build on the successes of the initial project and has served as a model for other departments to follow in their collaborative efforts with other organizations.

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

A private consultant was not used.

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 model is certainly replicable by other jurisdictions. In fact, a nearby community, Wyoming, Ohio, created something similar and it served as our initial inspiration. What makes our model different is that Montgomery didn't contract with Sycamore Schools to provide all technology support but instead created a collaborative partnership that continually reviews all technology services and combines resources to produce the best outcome for both organizations. Put another way, instead of creating an agreement where one organization benefits from the services of another, we work to develop ideas that are mutually beneficial.

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

Instead of leasing a connection from a telecommunications provider, Montgomery installed its own fiber optic cabling from City facilities to Sycamore facilities for a one-time cost of \$20,000. The cost to lease a similar connection would have been approximately \$14,000/year. In lieu of paying a private company, Montgomery pays \$9,000 per year to Sycamore to support the connection and provide two hours per month of network engineering support for other technology projects, resulting in a savings of \$5,000 per year compared to leasing a similar connection. This resulted in a four year return on investment for the City and has allowed Sycamore to hire a full-time network engineer, a win-win. Additional savings were realized through the installation of a shared telephone system, replacing the aging systems in each organization. Sycamore saved money because of the additional purchasing power of a larger project and Montgomery saved an additional \$6,000 per year by not having to pay for support for its own system. In

total, the City of Montgomery saves \$11,000 per year and has provided Sycamore Schools the resources they need to provide service to the City and their students, teachers, and staff.

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.*

The most significant obstacle was recognizing that if each organization continued to operate in a silo, they would not be able to provide the most efficient and high quality service to their customers. This was quickly overcome because of the existing relationship and through the support of the executive leadership in each organization.

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.*

Along with the physical technology improvements, the most significant outcome is an ongoing collaborative partnership between two organizations who serve the same community but have different missions. By combining technology resources, both organizations now have the capability to provide better service at a lower cost.

The existing costs and the savings, compared with contracting with private companies, has served as our baseline. When ideas are being developed, one of the criteria is always the cost/benefit of performing it in-house or contracting out.

Success has been measured by the continuation of the relationship which didn't end with the completion of the initial project. The team continues to meet to further develop the initial networking project to many future service improvements and innovations.

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 featured in the April 2015 issue of the Ohio City/County Management Association (OCMA) newsletter. The article described the collaboration, its success, and future plans.

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

Not applicable.

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.

Since technology plays a role in some of the outcomes of our collaboration, we could play on that idea in our presentation and possibly use technology props to keep the audience engaged. One of the more significant outcomes of our project has been the collaboration. We could create a table-top discussion to allow the participants to talk about potential service sharing opportunities that they could image and what the first step would be to get it started.

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

This project would not have occurred without first having a foundation of a long-term professional working relationship among senior leaders in both organizations. This camaraderie and vision of an ever improving future for the community set the tone for all future collaborations.

The continued teamwork among the technology staff from both organizations has set the stage for many future possibilities. Now that the foundation has been set, and some successes have been realized, the team is visioning future possibilities. For example, the upcoming installation of fiber optic traffic signal controls will expand the network reach even further facilitating the possibility of expanded public Wi-Fi, something not economically feasible for one organization before this collaborative partnership. This would benefit both organizations as it would aid economic development for the City and help Sycamore expand their initiative of offering Wi-Fi access to students in underserved areas to allow them after-school access to school resources.