

Enhancing Collaboration Checklist

The following Checklist summarizes key strategies identified by regional district (RD) Chairs and Chief Administrative Officers as ways to proactively resolve issues before they arise, make it easier to work through conflict and to help create a more collaborative culture. The strategies fall under three inter-connected themes – strong information-sharing practices, trusting relationships and a shared vision.

Information Sharing Strategies

- Ensure **early and ongoing communication** on issues between staff and elected officials to identify areas of concern early and help address them before they escalate.
- Organize **background information seminars** on complex issues that board members can attend to become better informed about issues before decisions need to be made at the board table.
- Keep **clear records** documenting context and rationale for decisions (e.g.: background on capital projects and reasons for a service arrangement) to have it available when the agreements come up for review.
- Share information** about regional initiatives with all interested elected officials in the RD through:
 - ✓ Council to Council forums
 - ✓ Regular e-mail updates from the Board Chair
 - ✓ At annual meetings with municipal Councils

Trusting Relationship Strategies

- Maintain a strong **Board Chair and CAO leadership team** through:
 - ✓ regular meetings
 - ✓ good dialogue
 - ✓ open and transparent communication on upcoming issues
- Provide opportunities for RD elected officials to build **informal relationships** beyond the boardroom over:
 - ✓ coffee
 - ✓ common meals
 - ✓ regional tours
- Foster **respectful working relationships** between board members and staff by building board confidence in staff through staff visibility and ensuring quality of presentations on issues.
- Ensure **strong working relationships** between RD and municipal staff through scheduling regular meetings to touch base on issues.

Shared Vision Strategies

- Tailor **strategic planning sessions** to the unique context of a regional district that start with identifying common issues to help build cohesion.
- Build a culture of continuous improvement through initiating **informal service reviews** to discuss, clarify and, if necessary, revisit and renegotiate the scope and terms of a service or by implementing **bylaw-based service reviews**.
- Foster **regional awareness** through:
 - ✓ “Get to Know your Region Tours” for board members and senior staff
 - ✓ “Board on the Road” meetings hosted by a different electoral area or municipality
- Manage difficult behaviour** at the board table through:
 - ✓ implementing the “No Rebuttal Roundtable” mechanism when dealing with a complex issue and allowing everyone to state their view on an issue with no interruptions
 - ✓ preventing the spread of misinformation by compiling information on contentious topics and establishing a common set of facts
 - ✓ uniting the board over expectations on behavior at meetings by implementing a Code of Conduct