The Future of Government

New Models for More Effective Governance

Shared Leadership Trending
The future of government lies in the simple realization that government, operating alone, lacks the capacity to address and resolve grand public challenges—environmental sustainability, economic opportunity, health care, homelessness, immigration, infrastructure and other challenges of equal severity.

The old order of vertical government hierarchies operating in tens of thousands of individual silos is giving way to new horizontal models of Shared Leadership with multi-sectoral networks of public, private and non-profit leaders sharing the responsibility for designing and executing new hybrid approaches and solutions:

- **Cybersecurity**: State of Georgia establishes a multi-sectoral partnership of government, education and private companies to train the next cybersecurity workforce generation;
- **Homelessness**: City of Seattle partners with Bloomberg Philanthropies, a network of non-profit service providers and private landlords to establish a holistic approach;
- **Opioid Crisis**: City of New York forms strategic alliances with non-profit Medical Addiction and Recovery Centers (MARC) and private hospitals to establish a more effective effort;
- **Traffic/Urban Mobility**: Miami-Dade County partners with non-profit, City Innovate Foundation (CIF), and private technology and transportation to address congestion and urban mobility;
- **Infrastructure**: Washington, DC, launches a public-private challenge and partnership to build and finance green infrastructure as a more effective alternative to control flooding and pollution.

Visions for the Future of Government
The current trend of multi-sectoral problem solving is a focus of public administrators as they discern a roadmap to change, the future and new models to improve the effectiveness of public service:

- In May, 2018, The Future of Public Service summit (“The Summit”) was hosted by Suffolk University’s Institute for Public Service, and sponsored by the American Society for Public Administration;

The Summit and New Localism provide a bridge to the future. Each offer a sometimes similar and sometimes contrasting perspective on the current state of government, a vision for the future of government and the required skill sets for future public administrators to effectively lead and manage the future public service models envisioned by each:

Baseline: The Current State of Government

*The Summit*
Participant Frederick S. Lane, Professor in the School of Public Affairs at Baruch College, City University of New York, compared the current state of government—what he called the eviscerating federal
government capacity and its potential trickle down to state and local governments-to the history of American sewer pipes. “They became old, rusted and were not always maintained”. The “4Es”-economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity—“got lost”.

**New Localism**

Katz and Nowak conclude that the federal and state capacity is declining as a result of runaway partisanship. The federal and state governments, while continuing to play a vital role in certain areas, are no longer reliable partners to resolve grand public challenges. National and State dysfunction has resulted in a power shift from national and state governments to cities and metropolitan communities.

**Comparison**

The Summit and New Localism have a similar theme of declining federal capacity and dysfunction, New Localism relates the root cause to partisanship and the Summit cites general decay. While the Summit, cites a lack of capacity trickling down to state and local government, New Localism provides an exception and power shift in favor of local government.

**Vision: The Future of Government**

**The Summit**

The Summit forecasts widespread use of public-private partnerships (P3s) by government at all levels to outsource risk and stimulate privately inspired innovation that improves effectiveness. Homogeneous and exclusive government will give way to more diverse, inclusive, sensitive and participatory government. Future government will move from process to outcomes achieved by P3s. Government silos will give way to networks of P3s advancing government reach and effectiveness.

**New Localism**

New Localism predicts a continuing shift from government policy to local and community problem solving. While Federal and State governments labor under partisan gridlock, localities and communities have the better capacity to solve problems. Command and control government will give way to government flexibility and adaptability in achieving desired outcomes. Government hierarchies will shift to horizontal teams engaged in problem solving. Government silos will be replaced by diverse and inclusive multi-sectoral networks of public, private and civic actors targeted to a community’s grand public challenges.

**Comparison**

The Summit sees a future of improved government function through widespread use of P3s, while New Localism sees improved governance through the national/state power shift to local communities with the greater capacity to solve problems. The Summit and New Localism foresee government silos giving way to diverse and inclusive networks and moving from hierarchy and process to teamwork and outcomes. The Summit’s future lies in the structural improvement of government and New Localism’s future lies in improved community governance with a broader focus on economic, social and public vitality.
Required Skill Sets: Future Public Administrators

The Summit
The future Public Administrator must be intentional about the resources and contributions required of private partners to achieve P3 goals and objectives. Greater accountability and oversight are necessary as are new data analytic skills to measure progress against established metrics of success. Internal government management skills will be enhanced by the external knowledge and skill to lead and manage private partners. Future Public Administrators must understand and ensure public and private values are aligned and the government’s core values are achieved by the P3.

New Localism
The future Public Administrator will require the knowledge and skills to provide an affirmative vision that clarifies, inspires and serves as a catalyst for improved community economic, social and public vitality. Serving as a “connector” by recruiting and engaging the public, private and civic leaders necessary to achieve an affirmative vision as a working team is essential. Establishing metrics, measurement and data analytics to track multi-sectoral impact are required to create evidence based governance. New Localism requires a capacity to build a culture of collaboration.

Comparison
The Summit sees the future Public Administrator building the necessary skills to manage P3s and ensure value alignment. New Localism sees the future Public Administrator with the leadership skills to establish an affirmative community vision and lead a culture of collaboration around the vision. The Summit and New Localism see the acquisition of data analytic, measurement and metric skills as essential to meet the need for greater accountability, oversight and evidence based management and leadership.

Pathfinding for a Better Future
The Summit and New Localism offer common themes and a path forward for a future of better and improved governance:

- Broken Federalism - Diminishing Federal capacity to serve as a reliable partner.
- Diversity – Diverse, inclusive, adaptable and flexible government.
- Shared Leadership – Multi-sectoral networks achieving hybrid solutions.
- Accountable – Evidence and outcome based new forms of governance.
- Learning – Required multi-sectoral management and leadership skills.