

# York Region – Northern Six (N6) Shared Services & Collaboration

## **Presentation:**

Finding Common Ground:  
Inter-Local Cooperation in Canada

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**CASH**  
& ASSOCIATES INC.

DEVELOPMENT • PROJECT MANAGEMENT • STRATEGY

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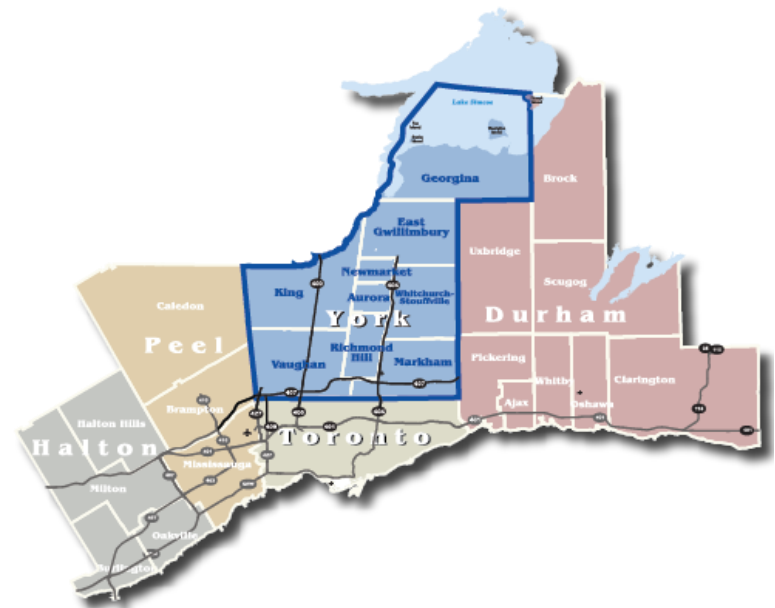
## Presentation Outline:

- Background and Introduction
- Major Projects and Initiatives
  - Solid Waste and Economic Development
  - Partnership Protocol
- Benefits, Challenges and Success Factors
- Q and A

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## Introduction - York Region

- York is part of GTA
  - 9 local municipalities
  - 1 regional municipality
  - 2016 Population = 1.1 million
  - Growth rate 2011-2016 = 7.5%
- Northern 6 (N6)
  - Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King, Newmarket, Whitchurch-Stouffville (WS)
  - Began “Shared Services” 2006



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## N6 Municipalities

- Represent about 25% of York Region population
- Census data shows size range from 24,000+ (King) to 84,000+ (Newmarket)
- Fully urban (Aurora and Newmarket), Yonge Street Rural/urban and cottage country (Lake Simcoe) with Highway 400 and Highway 404
- Oak Ridges Moraine, Greenbelt and Holland Marsh
- Slow and fast growth: Whitchurch-Stouffville was the 3<sup>rd</sup> fastest growing municipality in Canada between 2006 and 2011

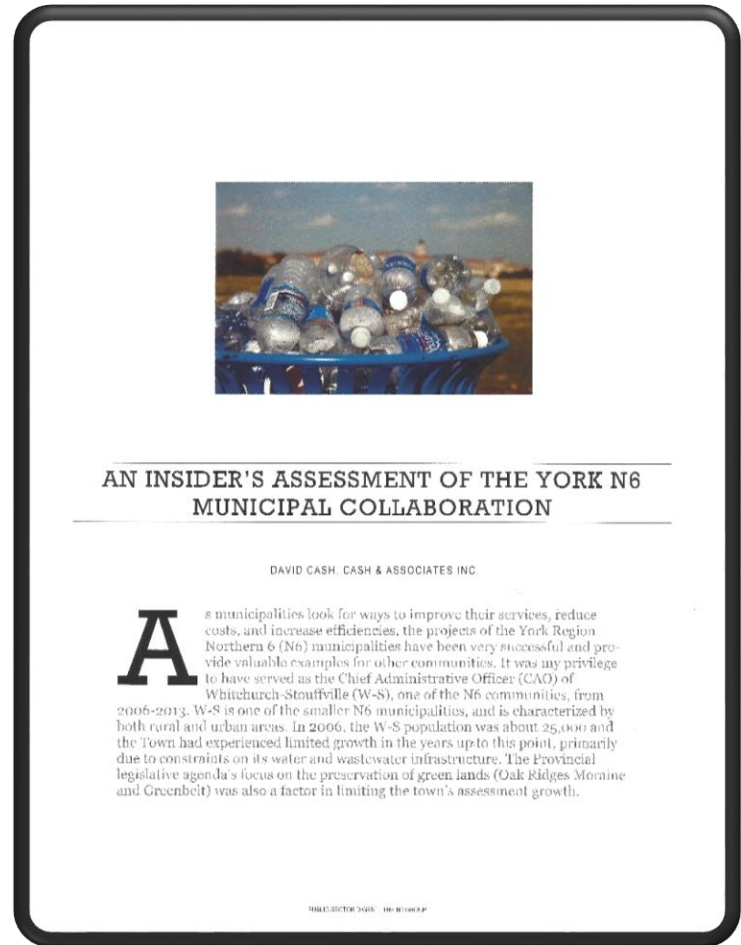
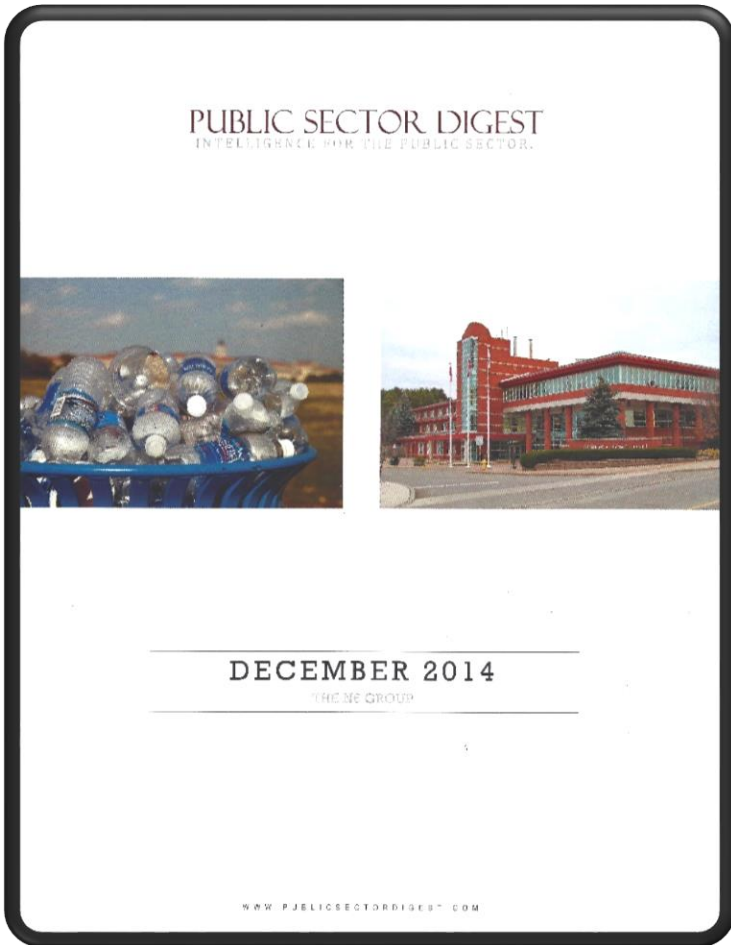


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## Background – David J. Cash

- Cash & Associates Inc. (2014)
  - Management consulting; primarily to municipalities
  - Focus on economic development; urban planning policy and growth management; service delivery review and organizational assessments
  - Municipal clients – York Region; Scugog; Newmarket; Innisfil Georgina and East Gwillimbury
  
- 30+ years experience in municipal sector – lower & upper tier
  - Economic development; urban planning/development; project management and senior administrative positions
  - CAO in Whitchurch-Stouffville (2006-13)
    - Founding member: York Northern 6 or “N6”

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## History of N6 Collaboration:

- 2006 meeting of N6 Mayors and CAOs ----- concludes that partnerships amongst the six, in whole or in part, could provide efficiencies and/or service improvements
- N6 Councils all approve collaboration and co-operation:
  - Focus on “administrative and/or operational efficiencies” (stay away from political “footballs”);
  - Service areas of common interest
  - Demonstrates smaller York municipalities working together
  - Operates in a manner to retain individual community identities



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## First Major Initiative: Internal Audit

- All six did not have Internal Auditor
  - Too expensive and infrequent use
- Contract Auditor retained by Region of York
  - 4 of the 6 agreed at outset, then all 6
  - Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with York
  - Region manages and schedules Auditor over 12 months
- Cost-sharing: initially population/assessment formula and full cost recovery by York (hourly charge back to users )
- “Risk Assessment” for each, shows individual and common areas of concern and sharing of best practices





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## Process used by CAOs

- Success of Internal Audit project helped to develop 4 stage approval process:
  1. Baseline Review – ID tax base items to save or avoid \$
  2. Project Review – Preliminary review – seed money
  3. N6 CAO Approval – Go/No Go
  4. Council Approval – Staff reporting (public) – usually 1 version.
- Annual meetings with Mayors to review status, accomplishments and maintain their support

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## Summary of Other Major Projects

- Solid waste collection/recycling (10 year contract)
- Economic development and promotion
- Staff training, learning and development
- Web site redevelopment
- Drinking Water Quality Management System
- Insurance and risk management services
- Animal control



Aurora • East Gwillimbury • Georgina  
King • Newmarket • Whitchurch - Stouffville

### Recent Projects:

- Fire and Emergency Services Master Plans
- Septic maintenance inspection services
- Arborist services (Emerald Ash issue)

Note: each N6 municipality leads one or more of the projects, issues RFPs etc.  
Not all 6 are involved in all projects.

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## Solid Waste and Recycling

- All 6 municipalities participated
- Consultant hired to research & develop joint RFP
- One municipality issues RFP/Tender – 10 yrs.

### Features:

- Service level change – “Green Pail”
- Each has own service levels – bag limits.
- “Cancellation for Convenience” clause
- Performance standards - liquidated damages
- Joint launch, with shared communications, customer call centre, complaint tracking
- Collective savings over 10 years (2007-17)
- N6 partners RFP for another 10 yrs in 2016
  - Costs for 2017+ will increase



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## Economic Development

- Smaller communities and limited resources
- Each municipality has own ED, but shares N6 costs
- EDOs meet to recommend joint projects to CAOs:
  - Developed “N6 Brand” - awareness
  - Broadband Assessment and Business Retention and Expansion projects
  - Trade show banners, brochures, e-newsletter, FAM tours and conferences.
- Supported by York Region ED



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## Partnership Protocol (2015)

- Developed after 10 Years (to formalize practice)
- Partnership evolution requires this “formalization”
- Guiding principles:
  - Sharing Ideas
  - Exploring opportunities without sacrificing own needs
  - Not every project has to have all 6
  - Fair cost-sharing models
  - Supporting change to successfully implement
- Following a defined process:
  - Assessing a partnership initiative (own or consultant)
  - Creating and executing a Partnership Agreement
  - Managing the partnership initiative
- “Resource Sharing” has separate protocol

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## Wrap Up: N6 Challenges and Benefits

- Challenges:
  - Resource constraints – how to sustain?
  - Maintaining communications
  - Leadership (CAOs and Elected)
    - Continuity
    - Priority
    - Equitable sharing
- Benefits:
  - Financial – costs avoided and/or \$ saved
  - Enhanced customer service
  - Shared knowledge and experience
  - Recognized entity – More Clout!
  - Good PR – builds public confidence in local government



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## Wrap Up: Critical Success Factors

- Collaborative spirit and openness:
  - Mutual trust and respect (leadership)
- Joint benefit is also valued over own interests
- Starts with “Opportunity Assessment” (no risk)
- Governance:
  - CAO’s meet regularly and must be hands-on
  - Administrative and operational focus
  - Mayors meet and support
  - Council approves & supports. Reporting results



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## N6 Collaboration

- Why not start with your own Opportunity Assessment?
- Questions and Answers



- Economic Development
- Urban Planning Policy
- Municipal Strategy & Structure

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