

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

January 20, 1999 LR 16

implement appropriate procedures and, secondly, that they examine the laws, both of the state laws and local ordinances, the rules of our agencies, to see if we are creating barriers, and if those barriers exist to the use of collaborative processes that we need to bring those barriers down so that we may supplement the way that we do business in the state with the use of collaborative processes as an adjunct, not a replacement, as an adjunct to the way that we do business. Let me close by saying that in a lot of governmental forums, we have parties that seek a winner-take-all mentality. We certainly see it in the Legislature. One side tries to defeat the other side; the use of the majority to compel its point of view over a reluctant minority. We certainly have that in the judicial function in which we have a court case in which one party wants to defeat another party. And we have an executive branch, whose policies can be the same kind of winner-take-all mentality. What happens in the winner-take-all mentality is that you can have a temporary victory and then simply change forum and it never stops. You might win a zoning permit fight in a local jurisdiction in front of a planning commission, and what will happen? You'll go to the city council and they'll try to reverse it. Let's say you win in the city council and you've defeated the other side. Guess what happens to the minority? They take it to court. Then you have a court challenge in which you then invest monies in both sides to see who is going to win in court and, if they win at the trial level, then there's an appeal level to make sure that you can reverse who's going to win the case and have the winner-take-all mentality. What happens when you get to the Supreme Court and you have the victory there? Then they come to the Legislature and they rewrite the original law that gave rise to the court case and the action of the local political subdivision. It can be an endless circle in the pursuit of defeating utterly your enemies. Unfortunately, many of our processes are designed to go to a third party to choose, to get the third party to do what you want, to give you a benefit and to deny it to somebody else. A collaborative process requires those two contending parties to sit down and speak directly to each other, rather than to run to us, as Solomon, and pick between them and anoint somebody the victor and somebody the loser. It's why the collaborative process, as an adjunct, not a replacement, can serve at every level to force those contending parties to speak directly to