

City of Memphis, Michigan Community Communication, Cooperation, Collaboration, Consolidation Plan

Introduction:

Consolidation is a word with history and emotion in this community. Discussions regarding consolidation are often based upon opinions and observations rather than facts – due in large part to the lack of an actual study on the impact of local consolidation.

One of the objectives of this plan was to disarm the word consolidation and begin a thoughtful, educated dialog around the topic of consolidation. And then, let an informed community make appropriate decisions. This plan will outline our current shared services, the recent investigations into additional shared services and plans for future consolidations and mergers of services with other government entities.

The City has focused on an ongoing efforts to work more efficiently as a region – many of which the community at large is unaware. There are numerous examples of successful and ongoing efforts of communication, cooperation, collaboration and even consolidation, all undertaken to improve services, increase programs and/or be more fiscally responsible. It is important to acknowledge these when successful and encourage additional efforts when appropriate.

The Memphis surrounding service area is a vibrant region with expanding potential for both economic development and quality of life for our citizens. It is important to create a climate in which we can move forward strategically to enhance our strengths and overcome our challenges together as a community what every shape that takes.

Through this report, we hope to provide a framework to create the next step toward answering the pervasive question: Should we consolidate services with other communities?

Taskforce Members

Daniel Weaver, Mayor

Larry Wilson, Councilman Mayor Pro-Tem

Donna Janssens, Clerk and Treasurer

Tim Franz, Fire Chief

Jessica Beels, Police Chief

Bart Dunsmore, DPW Director

Background:

Public Act 63 of 2011, introduced the Economic Vitality Incentive Program. Each city, village, or township that received a FY 2010 statutory payment greater than \$4,500 and fulfills the specific requirements for all of the three categories will be eligible to receive a maximum of 67.837363% of its FY 2010 total statutory payment (rounded to the nearest dollar). An eligible city, village, or township will receive 1/3 of the maximum amount for each of the three categories they fulfill the specific requirements for. The three categories are Accountability and Transparency, Consolidation of Services, and Employee Compensation. Each eligible city, village, or township must submit the certification form and required attachments for each category to qualify for payment. Any local unit that falsifies certification documents shall forfeit any future economic vitality incentive program payments and shall repay the state all economic vitality incentive program payments it has received. Detailed information regarding each category can be found in Public Act 63 of 2011.

To qualify for the Consolidation of Services portion of the EVIP, eligible local units must:

- Certify to the Michigan Department of Treasury (using form #4887) that by January 1, 2012 they have produced and made readily available to the public, a plan with one or more proposals to increase its existing level of cooperation, collaboration, and consolidation, either within the jurisdiction or with other jurisdictions. A plan shall include a listing of any previous services consolidated with the cost savings realized from each consolidation and an estimate of the potential savings for any new service consolidations being planned.
- Submit a copy of their cooperation, collaboration and consolidation plan, in accordance with the provisions of Public Act 63 of 2011, section 951(3)(b), to the Michigan Department of Treasury.

The Memphis City Council recognized that the topic was of sufficient interest that it deserved to be explored in a disciplined manner. Due to these requirements, a special task force was assembled to address the matter in an organized and responsible way.

The limited Task Force began meeting as needed in October 2011.

Mission:

The purpose of the Communication, Cooperation, Collaboration, and Consolidation Task Force is to suggest ways to improve the various ways government, private business and non-governmental organizations (NGO's) interconnect formally and informally to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes; relate those to the greater Memphis region; and suggest actions to retain, amplify, add or discontinue any.

Tasks:

1. Catalog existing cooperative services and the opportunities and issues they address.
2. Map the opportunities and issues not currently addressed by the existing cooperative services and identify any service gaps.

3. Suggest alternatives for the gaps, the basis for the suggestion(s), recommend a framework for resolving the gap(s).

Definitions:

The work of the Task Force was based upon the following definitions:

- Communication -- Periodic regular discussions that include consistent and constructive dialogue between local units. Communication is issue driven.
- Cooperation -- Doing things together, but separately. Local units agree to work side by side, but operate separately.
- Collaboration -- Two organizations acting as one, having a joint strategy to meet a common goal. Doing things together...together; creating a partnership while continuing to operate separately.
- Consolidation -- Merging of two or more organizations, created by dissolution of existing ones and creation of a single new one.

These are, in essence, a continuum. It is assumed if organizations are deemed to be at the cooperation level, they are already communicating in order to achieve the next level and so forth up the continuum.

One level is not necessarily superior to another; in some situations cooperation is sufficient, in others, consolidation may be the ultimate goal.

Working together at any of the four levels is designed to:

- capture economies of scale,
- create greater efficiency and enhanced services/programs,
- achieve cost savings,
- and generate a unified voice and vision so that accomplishments can be achieved together that would be impossible individually.

Task #1: Catalog existing cooperative services and the opportunities and issues they address.

This Section of this plan was created to list and evaluate activities, programs and services which impact the City of Memphis local unit. Each was assigned a level of shared services (Communication, Cooperation, Collaboration, Consolidation) based upon the knowledge of Task Force members. The chart is a living document, as there continues to be movement in each direction. It provides a broad overview, and is not intended to be a comprehensive listing of all such activities within the community.

The "Shared Services Table" below is organized by identifying which of the current shared services and the extent to which the City is involved. It was determined that if there was collaboration or consolidation, additional information was important to provide. In those areas, we noted the parties involved.

By cataloging these efforts within the community, the Task Force determined there is a significant amount of “C” (at some of level) taking place within the community. These efforts range interagency meetings (Communication) to the City of Memphis regional Fire Services Contracts (Collaboration) efforts to the cooperative services agreement for Police (Cooperation).

The document identified many more areas of cooperation/collaboration than commonly recognized within the community.

Current Shared Service Areas and Levels			
City Department	Service Area	Shared Svcs Lvl	Description
Clerk/Treasurer Dept	School Election	Cooperation	For school elections, local units take turns hosting elections and financing said services.
Memphis Police Department	St Clair County	Collaboration	Dispatch services consolidated for all service areas covered by Memphis Police Department
Memphis Police Department	St Clair County	Cooperation	Live Scan(Fingerprints), Datamaster(Breathalyzer), Booking, Prosecuting Attorney Services, Court Services.
Memphis Police Department	St Clair County	Cooperation	Police Services Mutual Aid Agreement
Memphis Police Department	Macomb County	Cooperation	Police Services Mutual Aid Agreement
Memphis Police Department	Macomb County	Cooperation	Live Scan(Fingerprints), Datamaster(Breathalyzer), Booking, Prosecuting Attorney Services, Court Services.
Memphis Police Department	State Of Michigan	Cooperation	Crime Lab Services
Memphis Police Department	State Of Michigan	Cooperation	ES Team Services (SWAT/SRT)
Memphis Police Department	City of Richmond	Cooperation	Non-Contracted Mutual Aid Agreement
Memphis Police Department	City of Armada	Cooperation	Non-Contracted Mutual Aid Agreement
Memphis Police Department	City of Romeo	Cooperation	Non-Contracted Mutual Aid Agreement
Memphis Police Department	City of Capac	Cooperation	Non-Contracted Mutual Aid Agreement
Memphis Police Department	City of Yale	Cooperation	Non-Contracted Mutual Aid Agreement
Memphis Police Department	City of Richmond	Communication	Services communications and team building
Memphis Police Department	City of Armada	Communication	Services communications and team building
Memphis Police Department	City of Romeo	Communication	Services communications and team building
Department of Public Works	City of Richmond	Communication	Communication and sharing of supplies and equipment as needed. Non-Contracted Mutual Aid Agreement.
Memphis Fire Department	Richmond Township	Collaboration	Contracted Fire Services
Memphis Fire Department	Riley Township	Collaboration	Contracted Fire Services
Memphis Fire Department	Wales Township	Collaboration	Contracted Fire Services
Memphis Fire Department	Columbus Township	Collaboration	Contracted Fire Services
Memphis Fire Department	Macomb County - All fire departments in County	Collaboration	Fire Services Mutual Aid Agreement
Memphis Fire Department	Macomb County - All fire departments in County	Communication	Fire Chief Association Meetings
Memphis Fire Department	St Clair County - All fire departments in County	Collaboration	Fire Services Mutual Aid Agreement
Memphis Fire Department	St Clair County - All fire departments in County	Communication	Fire Chief Association Meetings
Memphis Fire Department	City of Richmond	Cooperation	Shared Training Classes
Memphis Fire Department	Emmett Township	Cooperation	Shared Training Classes
Memphis Fire Department	Kimball Township	Cooperation	Shared Training Classes
Memphis Fire Department	City of Armada	Cooperation	Shared Training Classes
Memphis Fire Department	City of Romeo	Cooperation	Shared Training Classes
Memphis Fire Department	Berlin Township	Cooperation	Shared Training Classes
Memphis Fire Department	Port Huron Twp	Cooperation	Shared Training Classes
Memphis Fire Department	Marysville	Cooperation	Shared Training Classes
Memphis Fire Department	St Clair County	Collaboration	Dispatch services consolidated for all service areas covered by Memphis Fire Department
Memphis Fire Department	St Clair County	Cooperation	HAZMAT Materials Reponse Team
Memphis Fire Department	Macomb County	Cooperation	HAZMAT Materials Reponse Team
Memphis Fire Department	Richmond/Lenox EMS	Cooperation	EMS Services
Building Department			As needed Building, Electrical, and Mechanical Inspectors

Task #2: Map the opportunities and issues not currently addressed by the existing cooperative services and identify any service gaps.

The mapping process also helped to pinpoint areas within the community where additional opportunities of working together exist. These range from a general perception that the police department would benefit from improved communication/cooperation/collaboration for training with other local units to potential opportunities in the area of single-service organizations such as utilities.

Three areas were specifically identified for additional study. They are:

- **Police Services.** An investigatory study into consolidation of the northern 6 townships and the cities within those townships has been an ongoing effort. To date, this study has found the idea to be cost prohibitive for the City of Memphis. The current services would diminish without additional savings for the City. On further review, it might be possible to provide adjacent townships police services without current police coverage and services to the citizens of the city being impacted.
- **Fire Services.** This community is quickly becoming a regional fire service center. The fire coverage area has grown in the past five years due to the combination of price, response times and ISO rating of the Memphis Fire Department. To continue to facilitate this growth, the fire department is an area which may benefit from additional study for potential cooperation, collaboration or consolidation efforts to help with seamless fire coverage for our citizens, enhanced services and improved efficiency. We do not have a concept paper on this specific area because this is a recent finding, it may encompass various adjacent local units, and the inability to gauge financial impact results through this Task Force.
- **Regional Parks and Recreation Facilities Planning.** As the community grows, so does the need for large, often capital-intensive projects which serve the entire community. Separate, and sometimes competing, communities may potentially hold back such projects. A community-wide committee should be created to study these issues.

Through discussion and research, it was determined that the efforts of this Task Force would be best served by primarily focusing on government. It also appeared from earlier discussions that the community at large was primarily concerned with the question of the consolidation. As a part of the Task Force process, areas of communication, cooperation, collaboration and consolidation within private industry that service the city were not explored, and specific segments were identified which would benefit from additional work and study.

As we focused in on the area of government, it became clear that in addressing the opportunities and issues surrounding the discussion of consolidation, three questions should be considered:

- Does this effort reduce cost and/or increase services?
- Does it provide additional clout for the region?
- Does it help create a unified vision/accomplish larger projects for the region that could not be accomplished independently?

Task #3: Suggest alternatives for the gaps, the basis for the suggestion(s), recommend a framework for resolving the gap(s).

Would we be better off as a consolidated community? Would consolidation make life better for the citizens of the community? Can the greater good outweigh the difficulties? Clearly these questions continue to reverberate across the community.

It appears people believe that consolidation will save taxpayers money through a reduction of duplication of services. It is important to understand that a larger city would not necessarily be more cost effective to operate and manage. For example, pay scales may vary within the independent communities, whereupon a consolidated community would have to address these inconsistencies.

Additional observations of the Task Force include:

- Community discussion often moves immediately to “consolidation” of services as the only alternative to the present. Task Force members have come to understand that it is important to look at changes at the functional level and not necessarily focus on form of government.
- The Task Force recognized the importance of capturing opportunities for increased communications, cooperation, collaboration and consolidation rather than protecting self-interests.
- It is also important to understand what the goal really is as outlined in the three questions in the section above. A strong will at various levels will be needed to accomplish additional movement forward – whether that is improved communication, increased cooperation, additional collaboration or complete consolidation – recognizing that it may be difficult and sometimes even painful.

As a Task Force, we believe that City of Memphis and the larger Memphis region is strong with the continuing potential for economic development, new jobs, new tax dollars and an improved quality of life. As a community it is important that we move cooperatively and strategically to ensure continued economic vitality in a highly competitive market.

It may be important to start deliberately and work at the services level, examining what areas can be more easily moved into some level of the “4Cs” while the bigger issues of actual consolidation are being studied. It is important to validate opportunities to move common issues through the 4 C’s continuum. The challenge of this approach may be creating the momentum necessary to drive the process.

Recommendation: Because of the complexity of the issues as well as the number of governments involved (potentially four cities and two counties), it is beyond the scope of this Task Force to undertake the next necessary step to thoroughly study the issue of the consolidation. In addition, it is difficult for representatives of the community to study the issues without the perception of bias.

It is our recommendation that an independent study be commissioned to address the questions, challenges and opportunities identified throughout this report.

At their regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Memphis on the 6th day of December 2011 the following Council members were present: Davis, Mossoian, Schneider, Weaver, Wilson, Zukas, R and Zukas W.

The Community Communication, Cooperation, Collaboration, Consolidation Plan was approved for submittal to the State of Michigan Department of Treasury. The motion was made by Council member Wilson supported by Zukas, R and adopted by a vote of 7 to 0, the Council members voting as follows:

YES: 7

NO: 0

ABSENT: 0

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE WITHIN Communication, Cooperation, Collaboration, Consolidation Plan was passed by the vote indicated on and members present were as indicated.

Donna Janssens
City Clerk