



The City of Coopersville: Cooperation, Collaboration, and Consolidation Plan

The City of Coopersville has for many years sought options to reduce the cost of providing services to its citizens. It has always had a conservative fiscal policy when preparing its budget and has been involved in real strategic planning, budget workshops open to the public, and asking the hard questions such as “what if”. Below are a few actions taken that the City still prides itself on in managing its fiscal responsibilities. They are examples of creative approaches that were adopted to maintain a financially solid government for its citizens and its community.

- The City was one of the first in West Michigan to dissolve its Police Department and contract with the Ottawa County Sheriff’s Office saving hundreds of thousands of dollars over the course of years. The challenges were many but through cooperation and collaboration a successful partnership was achieved and still exists today. In fact other communities have shown interest in our law enforcement model with one city actually adopting a similar partnership a few years ago.
- Even before the Delphi Corporation announced its bankruptcy in October 2005 the City had made provisions to delay major capital improvement purchases, not fill certain vacancies in administrative staff, and began to prepare for a time that its largest tax payer may not be in business. Our efforts paid off because the City achieved its highest bond rating ever (A-) from Fitch Rating after Delphi announced its bankruptcy because of our fiscal responsibility and our fiscal management.
- Over the past few years the City’s conservative fiscal policy has resulted in our fund balance growing from 38% in the 2003-2004 Fiscal Year to 83% in the 2010-2011 Fiscal Year. Our plan was to continually build our fund balance because of concerns that the State of Michigan was going to lower state-shared revenue and observations about the economy in general. Because of our projections and the resultant management of those projections the City has surplus funds to offset projected deficits for Fiscal Year 2011-2012. Even when the City was projecting this deficit we achieved a higher bond rating, AA-. This was achieved again because of solid management by the City.

These are but a few of the actions taken by the City to better position itself financially if emergencies arrive or the City Council determines certain non-budgeted expenditures are required. Methodically planning to insure funds will be available for the City insures that essential services will be sustainable while funding from the State of Michigan declines, taxable values decline, and interest revenues declines.

Economic Vitality Incentive Program Cooperation, Collaboration, and Consolidation Plan as of: December 2011

Local Unit Name: City of Coopersville
County: Ottawa

Plan Available to the Public (check all that apply): In Municipal Offices Internet Website Other _____

Previous Service Consolidation(s)					
Service Consolidation	Date Consolidated	Jurisdictions Involved	Realized Savings/(Loss)	Description of Cost Savings/(Loss)	Other Consolidation Benefits
1. Law Enforcement;	January 9, 1996	Coopersville & Ottawa County	\$150,000 - \$250,000	Projections made indicated that the city's cost would increase at a greater amount than the Sheriff's Office while providing less services	More access to law enforcement tools & services at reduced or no cost to city
2. Fire Authority	January 1, 1991	City of Coopersville & Polkton Township	Approx: \$80,000 or more	Without contributions from Polkton Twp as a partner, the City would have to cover the entire cost of the Fire Dept.	The Fire Authority by its very nature saves money in that there is no duplication of services by either government.
3.Snow Plowing for Coopersville Area Public Schools	2000	City of Coopersville & Coopersville Area Public System (CAPS)	\$5,400 / Year	This is income for the city but certainly reduces costs for the school in equipment purchases and maintenance	
4. Hiring Freeze for Administrative and DPW Staff positions	2004 - 2009	City of Coopersville	\$177,552	Vacated positions were not filled based on budget projections showing possible deficits. Also, the need to	

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				increase budget's fund balance became a priority.	
5. Emergency Rescue	1991 Approx.	City of Coopersville & Polkton Township	\$20,236	The fees received are revenue but helps offset fixed costs.	The city & the twp benefit in that a medical first responder service is available at a reduced cost to both municipalities
6. Recreation	1995	Coopersville, Wright Twp, Polkton Twp, Chester Twp, Tallmadge Twp, Allendale, Ravenna, Crockery Twp, Grand Rapids,	\$26,600	The City provides a recreation program and welcomes anyone from the region to participate. Fees from participants outside the city help offset the cost of running the program.	
7. SWAP (Sentence Work Abatement Program)	1995	City of Coopersville, Ottawa County	\$9,000-\$19,000	SWAP allows the City to hire individuals at a reduced rate to perform tasks that require extensive manual labor.	
8. NEO Forum (North East Ottawa Forum)	1997	Coopersville, CAPS, Ottawa Sheriff's Dept, United Way, Polkton Twp, Tallmadge Twp	\$96,000	If the school and the City were the only participants the program would be unaffordable.	
9. MiDeal Purchasing Program	2004	Coopersville, State of Michigan	\$5,000 - \$20,000	The City participates in the MiDeal Purchasing Program that allows purchases made at larger discounts.	

Previous Service Consolidation(s)

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10. Economic Development	1992	Coopersville, Ottawa County Economic Development Office (OCEDO)	\$25,000 - \$50,000	If the city were to assume the total costs in economic development activity it could not afford nor sustain this operation	Better coordination with other local governments and better access to activities inside and outside of the State of Michigan.

Additional Information:

Consolidation #1: Dissolved Coopersville’s Police Department and contracted with the Ottawa County Sheriff’s Office for law enforcement. The City could not afford its own police department that is equipped and trained in the same manner as the Ottawa County Sheriff’s Office

Consolidation #2: The City of Coopersville and Polkton Township created a Fire Authority in 1991. Actual savings is complicated in that the city would probably offer services to Polkton Twp and would be compensated in some fashion. However, having two separate fire departments would create wasted redundancy in all phases of operation.

Consolidation #3: The City provides partial snow plowing services to the school district and provides salt and sand for winter snow/ice removal. Estimated costs for salt is \$6,00 and is partially shared with CAPS.

Consolidation #4: Did not fill vacancies for Assistant City Manager, Deputy Treasurer, Deputy City Clerk, and one DPW worker. Total \$ amount is yearly.

Consolidation #5: Emergency Rescue is a medical first responder service provided by the City.

Consolidation #6: Recreation is still subsidized by the City because of its importance to quality of life issues and a desire to offer the youth of the City and surrounding communities safe and supervised activities.

Consolidation #7: The wide range of savings is due to various options available to the City if SWAP did not exist such as hiring a full-time employee or a number of part-time employees at a higher hourly rate.

Consolidation #8: Cooperative partnership that places a law enforcement officer and a counselor in the schools. The City participates because in the long-term if at risk students are helped early then the potential for illegal activity later is lessened thereby reducing law enforcement costs for the City.

Consolidation #10: Annual costs to the City for membership to OCEDO is \$2,310. This is significantly less than if the city hired a private consultant or hired someone direct full or part-time to focus on economic development activities from IFT administration to recruitment.

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Proposed Service Consolidation(s)		Error! Reference source not found.		Error! Reference source not found.
Service Consolidation	Jurisdictions Involved	Estimated Savings/(Loss)	Description of Estimated Savings/(Loss)	Other Consolidation Benefits
1. In process to streamline internal payroll process from manual to electronic	City of Coopersville	N/A	N/A	Streamlines process and reduces labor hours. Savings on hardcopies of vacation/sick time/personal day off requests. More information readily available to employees
2. More cooperation with Wright Twp & Polkton Twp with their Planning Commissions and zoning enforcement issues	City of Coopersville, Polkton Twp & Wright Twp	N/A	Savings made would be more long term especially if coordinated zoning on our borders and a more unified zoning enforcement.	Developers and businesses would have uniformity on projects that border neighboring communities.
3. Assessing Service	Ottawa County & City of Coopersville	N/A	Partnership w/ Ottawa County Equalization Dept for assessing service	There would be an enhanced level of access for citizens and businesses for same cost. Actual dollar savings have not been calculated at this time.
4. Shared Crossing Guard	Coopersville & CAPS	\$5,500	Seek reimbursement for 50% cost sharing with school	
5. Contract IT Services w/ School	Coopersville & CAPS	\$10,000	Contract with school for IT services to reduce current expenditures from private sources at this time	
6. Providing Additional Services to Polkton Twp	Coopersville, Polkton Twp	\$2,000 - \$10,000	Continue discussions on options to share in routine maintenance operations	

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Additional Information:				
Consolidation #1: The City has begun to slowly implement this system in the past month with total immersion over the next 12-18 months. When the system is 100% implemented, more of the internal paper processes will be eliminated while at the same time allowing for more and more information available to the employees.				
Consolidation #2: Coordinated planning is an on-going process and as more effort is applied to this issue greater success will be achieved in the long-term.				
Consolidation #3: This option is under study at this time. There are more questions than answers but the City is confident there are benefits to this scenario.				
Consolidation #5: IT services are an increasing cost to most cities and organizations. The City is constantly studying ways where technology and the maintenance of that technology can increase efficiencies and reduce administrative costs in all aspects of the City's operation.				
Consolidation #6: Discussions have already taken place on ways we could partner on maintenance tasks such as plowing and mowing. Discussions will naturally continue as opportunities arise.				