

Village of Dexter

Cooperation, Collaboration, and Consolidation Plan

December 20, 2011

Purpose: To document existing efforts and propose a new effort to increase efficiency and save money.

Background: The State of Michigan requires communities to submit a plan prior to January 1, 2012 as a requirement to obtain Economic Vitality Incentive Program funds. The plan must include previous efforts towards cooperation, collaboration, and consolidation along with resulting/anticipated cost savings and efficiency improvements. The plan must also contain at least one new proposal for future cooperation, collaboration and consolidation and give estimates of any potential savings and efficiency improvements through these future efforts.

Current and past cooperation, collaboration, and consolidation examples:

Construction Projects

In 2008 the Washtenaw County Road Commission and the Village of Dexter collaborated to remove the Mill Creek Dam and reconstruct the Main Street Bridge. The Bridge had fallen into such serious disrepair that the weight limit was very low. Underneath the Bridge was a dam that had been in place since the early 1900's. Through a collaborative effort the Bridge was replaced and the dam was removed. Following the removal the Village has moved forward with creating a park in the area of the former dam impoundment. This collaboration resulted in improvements in safety, environmental health of the Mill Creek, the aesthetics of the area and the creation of an additional 4 acres of open space for area residents. Cost savings resulted from collaborating on permitting, consulting, contract issuance and construction by completing the dam removal and bridge replacement as one complete project.

In 2011 the Village entered into a collaborative agreement with the Washtenaw County Road Commission, Huron Clinton Metropolitan Authority and Washtenaw County Parks to provide a connection to the County's Border to Border Trail through the Village. Leveraging the funding available to all four organizations made construction of an additional 3 miles of new trail, which connects to an existing 13 miles of trail, possible.

To provide connectivity to a new subdivision, the Village is partnering with the Washtenaw County Road Commission to provide design and construction services for a new sidewalk. This effort will save the Village approximately \$10,000 in design services.

Police Services

The Village of Dexter contracts for police service from the Washtenaw County Sheriff Department. The Townships of Webster and Dexter also contract with the Washtenaw County Sheriff Department for Service. The Village participates in resource sharing with Dexter

Township and Webster Township that allows the Village (and the two Townships) to receive 24-7 police coverage. If the Village were to create its own police force it would cost approximately \$500,000 more per year and provide a lower level of service to our residents.

Fire Protection

The Village is a member of the Dexter Area Fire Department (DAFD). The DAFD was formed in 1985 under the Urban Cooperation Act and provides fire service to Dexter Village, Dexter Township, Webster Township and a portion of Lima Township. An estimate is not available regarding the cost of the Village providing its own fire service; however it would not be unreasonable to expect that 24-7 coverage would require a substantial capital investment and likely a minimum of \$600,000 of increased yearly expense.

Economic Development

Two businesses in the Village have recently requested to obtain funds under the State of Michigan Brownfield Redevelopment statute. To carry this request out the Village utilized the services of the Washtenaw County Brownfield Authority instead of creating its own Brownfield Authority. Utilizing this established Authority saved the costs (personnel, attorney, etc) associated with establishing and maintaining a Village specific Authority.

The Village participates in a regional economic development effort to promote the natural features of our area. Involved in this "Gateway" initiative are the City of Chelsea, Chelsea Chamber of Commerce, Waterloo Recreation Area, Pinckney Recreation Area and the Ann Arbor Convention and Visitor's Bureau.

Tax Collection

The Village Treasurer has the responsibility of collecting personal property tax on Village businesses. When these accounts become delinquent, the Treasurer works with the Treasurers of Scio Township and Webster Township to bring the accounts into compliance. Working together saves legal/auction/personnel fees that would be necessary if each entity attempted to gain compliance on their own.

Public Transit

The Village is a member of Western Washtenaw Area Value Express (WAVE). WAVE is a non-profit service organization that exists to provide affordable transportation to older adults, persons with disabilities, and other transit-dependent individuals in western Washtenaw County. Providing this service to our residents without the assistance of the collaborative effort would require a capital investment for vans and the ongoing payment of drivers and a program manager.

Regional Planning

The Village engages in regional planning activities through participation in the Chelsea Area Planning Team/Dexter Area Regional Team.

Utilities

When the Village was looking for a second source of water for the community, the Dexter Community Schools allowed the use of their property for a test well. When it was discovered that a suitable aquifer existed on the property, the Village and School District signed a long term lease for the property, giving the schools revenue and allowing the Village to establish a redundant water source for the community.

Historic Preservation

Gordon Hall is a historical property located just outside of the Village limits. When it was put up for sale in 2006, the Village was part of a collaboration between the Dexter Area Historical Society, Webster Township, and Scio Township to donate funds to allow the Historical Society to purchase the property. The purchase saved the mansion and has resulted in the creation of two conservation easements on the surrounding property to protect it from future development.

Stormwater Management

In 2009 the Village formed a partnership with the Dexter Community Schools that allowed them to become a nested jurisdiction under the Village's MS4 Stormwater Permit.

The Village is a member of the Huron River Watershed Council - Middle Huron Cooperative which is a group of communities that have been working for several years to contest phosphorous loading standards in the watershed. Collaborating on this initiative has saved all involved communities from paying individually for their own representation in this effort.

The Village is a member of the Huron River Watershed Council – Middle Huron Program and Stormwater Advisory Group. Participation in this group provides assistance to the Village in meeting our MS4 Stormwater Permit requirements.

Building Department

The Village utilizes the services of the Washtenaw County Building Department for all building inspections within the Village. Utilizing this Countywide service prevents the Village from having to contract out for or provide this service internally.

Future Efforts:

Fire Protection

The Townships of Dexter, Scio and Webster along with the Village have been meeting over the course of two years to join together to form a larger regional fire department. This effort should

be completed in 2012 and will result in an approximately \$70,000 savings to the Village due to the use of an updated cost allocation model. The consolidation will also increase service and overall efficiency of the department.

Connectivity

The Village will be partnering with the Dexter Community Schools as they establish their Safe Routes to School Program. Participating in this program will provide the community with grants that will be used to increase the amount of sidewalk available throughout the community along with providing other upgrades to increase pedestrian safety.

Assessing Services

The Village has initiated the process for incorporation as a Home Rule City. Our petition has been found legally sufficient by the State Boundary Commission and the Director of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs. A public hearing on the boundary is scheduled for January 2012 as the next step in the process. If the Village should be successful in achieving Cityhood, it is likely that the Village (City) would investigate some type of shared assessing service with the Townships of Scio and Webster. This idea is not something that can be certain at this point in time, however, we believe it could be a future area where cooperation could result in both efficiency and cost savings.